

HELP AND FOOD

FOR THE

Household of Faith.

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NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

IT is edifying to consider how the familiar references to the Old Testament in the New Testament take for granted that "the Scripture" is the word of God; and that it is the very air that faith breathes, and the food on which faith lives, and its light amid darkness. "It is written" put Satan to flight; it was the Lord's weapon against him.

"Take, my brethren, the prophets," says James, "who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Thus Scripture refers to Scripture as what cannot be gainsaid — as a living reality — and something we are supposed to know, and to submit to. The "prophets" are living realities; and so is Job and his wonderful history: just as any well instructed child in a Christian family to-day, or in a Sunday-school, is taught and becomes happily acquainted with these precious sacred histories and teachings as the sure word of God.

"What saith the Scripture," Paul says, as we say, What says "the Book," that is, *the Bible*? "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Gen. xv. 6). This one verse is enough for faith. The same God speaks in Genesis who speaks in Romans. It settles the great question of eternal moment for the whole world —

for all time — the one way of approach to God is by faith. Genesis xv. 6 says so—that is enough; and the soul reposes in the word of Him “who cannot lie.” How wicked the critic who would dare to cast a shadow of doubt upon that Word: “Better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.”

Thus we have the believer's start marked out from the Old Testament; and we have already had before us the testing of the wilderness way, and encouragement from the example of the prophets and of Job. To this we add another quotation, setting our “hope” before us, to complete this portion of our article. “Again Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles trust (hope);” and then Paul adds, “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xv. 12, 13). Thus our hope is presented, the “hope of the glory of God.” In this same chapter, we learn that “whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

We add here some more quotations, to show how full an outline of the Old Testament is contained in the references to it in the New; so that if the Old Testament were destroyed, one would have a considerable acquaintance with it by the quotations from it in the New.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews alone gives a general outline. “The worlds were framed by the word of God;” then, “Abel offered to God a more

excellent sacrifice than Cain;" "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death," and "By faith Noah . . . prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Then, "Abraham when he was called . . . went out;" and "by faith sojourned in the land of promise." "Through faith also Sarah . . . was delivered of a child when she was past age," and a multitude sprang from one who was "as good as dead." Then we have Abraham offering Isaac, and we are told that he had faith that God was able to raise him from the dead. Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and their crowning acts of faith are mentioned; and the faith of Moses' parents, and his own faith and separation from Egypt. Then Jericho is mentioned, and Rahab, and Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah, and David, and Samuel, and, last mentioned, "the prophets" take us on to the close of the Old Testament. And all this accompanied by comments by the Spirit of God. This is a precious consideration, that the Spirit of God should teach us in the New Testament by His own record in the Old. It is His own record all through; and so in chap. iii. 7 we have, "as the Holy Ghost saith," and then follows a quotation from the Old Testament. Again and again, in Hebrews, instead of saying, "It is written," we have quotations from the Old Testament as the words of the Holy Ghost. Thus in chap. x. 15: "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us," and then follows a quotation from the Old Testament concluding with, "and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"—that is, this quotation from Jeremiah is the Holy Ghost's witness *to* us. This would have a special influence with Hebrews. It has no reference to the Spirit's wit-

ness *in* us, which is not presented in this epistle. What is presented is, rather, the perfect offering and the Great High Priest, and we the sons of Aaron.

In Heb. iii. the coming up out of Egypt is referred to, and the forty years in the wilderness. "For some when they had heard did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was He grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcases fell in the wilderness?"

In Stephen's address we have mentioned Abraham's call, and reference to Isaac and Jacob and Joseph, and the famine, and the oppression of Israel, and the birth of Moses, and his rejection by his brethren, and his being sent as a deliverer—a type of Christ Himself. "This is that Moses which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, Him shall ye hear. This is he . . . to whom our fathers would not obey." The tabernacle of the wilderness is mentioned, and also the fact that it was made "according to the fashion" that Moses "had seen;" a witness that accords with that of Heb. viii. 5: "As Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount." All that is told us therefore about the tabernacle is a message from God—from heaven—as is every part of Scripture. The possession of the land under Joshua is mentioned, "the days of David" also, and his desire to build a dwelling-place for God, and how "Solomon built Him a house." Last, the prophets are

referred to: thus completing an outline of the Old Testament, as in Heb. xi., already before us.

In Paul's sermon at Antioch, he passes rapidly over the calling of Israel out of Egypt, and their failure, or rather God's forbearing mercy towards them in the wilderness, and His giving them judges until Samuel the prophet, and then king Saul; and "when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king." And this is a resting point, arrived at after this rapid introductory review. The resting point is "Jesus." "Of this man's seed (of David's seed) hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus," and thereafter it is the glad tidings. The rejected One is the Saviour. "God raised Him from the dead . . . and by Him all that believe are justified from all things."

Let us note the wisdom of the Spirit in this ministry out of the Old Testament Scriptures. In Stephen's farewell appeal to rejecting and unrepentant Israel we have prominently set before us the doings of the people; they rejected Joseph, and rejected Moses—a double type of the rejected Christ. Then Stephen brings home the charge, "As your fathers did, so do ye." In the previous rehearsal he had said, "Our fathers," taking his place with them in their sin; now he changes the pronoun and says, "As *your* fathers did, so do ye." He takes his place with Christ, outside the camp, and is stoned to death. This is the closing drama of the moral history of man. But now in Paul's address at Antioch, we are beyond the dark shadow of the history of the first man and his unchangeable enmity to God; and we have the glad tidings of the resurrection of

Christ, and of forgiveness and justification by Him, for the worst of sinners. How suitable that he should pass rapidly over the early history of Israel, to arrive at the announcement of the glad tidings about Christ.

In comparing such portions of Scripture, characteristic words or phrases are interesting and instructive. In Stephen's address the phrase, "Our fathers," is prominent, and what they had done. In Paul's, God's doings are prominent, from His choosing their fathers, until He raised Jesus from the dead. In the one case, we have "the patriarchs moved with envy sold Joseph into Egypt," and "our fathers found no sustenance" and "so Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers;" and "another king arose" and "evil entreated our fathers." And he (Moses) supposed his brethren would have understood, but they understood not." And again, "This is he . . . to whom our fathers would not obey, . . . saying unto Aaron . . . as for this Moses . . . we wot not what is become of him." But in the other, we have, "The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers and exalted the people, . . . and . . . suffered their manners in the wilderness; and when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan . . . and after that He gave unto them judges . . . and God gave unto them Saul . . . and when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David . . . Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour," Jesus: and after speaking of His rejection and death, "but God raised Him from the dead."

The comparison is impressive and instructive: a contrast that is perfectly drawn by the hand of God

—it is the end of the Old, and the beginning of the New. In the one picture, we have the misery and wickedness of man; in the other, the glorious work of God: the Holy Spirit's ministry to us from the treasury of the Old Testament in the light of the New.

How all is bound together—the Old and the New—as one glorious and perfect whole; bound together by indissoluble bands, as God's testimony to man—for God's glory and for blessing to man.

May we study this wonderful record with devout humility. "The humble (the 'meek' in *A. V.*) will He guide in judgment; the humble will He teach His way" (Psa. xxv. 9). E. S. L.

LEPROSY.

(Continued from page 317.—Dec., 1906.)

WE will now consider what is the proper procedure to pursue when priestly discernment finds a case to be a plain, manifest case of leprosy. We read, "The priest shall look on him and pronounce him unclean." We have already seen that the word of God determines for us what leprosy is. There should be no hesitation in declaring a person to be what the word of God says he is. No considerations of any kind, whether personal or not, should deter us from accepting as the truth the unequivocal judgment of Scripture. We need to remember always that the judgment of a case is not ours. The word of God judges it for us. We are responsible to acknowledge the judgment which the word of God gives. It is not *our* judgment that

makes a leper unclean. We declare him to be unclean because the word of God tell us he is so. It is thus a very simple matter. It is just a question of obedience to what the word of God declares. It does not matter whether it is leprosy in a person, in a garment, or in a house; the case being determined by the word of God, we are to submit to its judgment.

But this is not the whole matter. When according to the word of God a case of leprosy in a person is plainly manifest, there must be no hiding or covering over the fact. The leper's "clothes shall be rent, and his head bare" is the express command of the Lord. The marks or signs of his uncleanness must be put upon him. He must not be unclean to the elders and fathers merely, but to all. He must not be unclean to a few—just the prominent and leading brethren, but everybody must be shown that he is under the condemnation of the word of God. Divine holiness will vindicate its claims, and challenge any one to show just ground for questioning its requirements. God demands that His people stand openly with Him in His abhorrence of sin.

Submission to God in putting upon the leper the marks of his uncleanness will result in his own proclamation of his defiled condition. Publicly manifested as a man who is living in wilful disobedience to the word of God, in antagonism to the holy will of God, he is a witness of his uncleanness.

Again, we read, the leper "shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." The camp of the Lord must not shelter an unclean person. "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" is the commandment of the apostle. It is

not only that he is to be refused his place at the table of the Lord, but he is to be denied all Christian fellowship, and this as long as the plague of leprosy is upon him—as long as he continues in his defiled condition. How much sorrow and trouble has resulted from forgetfulness of this plain requirement to “put away from among” ourselves! How often Christian intercourse has been maintained with one who has been publicly branded as unclean! How thus such an one has been comforted and encouraged in his course of evil! What a solemn thing to thus interfere with the discipline of the word of God!

In the case of leprosy in a garment we find there were two distinct forms of procedure. In the one case the whole garment was burned in the fire; in the other, the part in which the leprosy was, was rent out of the garment. In the first case it is clear that what is set forth is that the whole condition of things in which we move, or live, is evil: the foundations on which our practical lives are built are not according to God—are unholy. They must be given up. The destruction, the burning, of the entire garment tells us this plainly.

In the case where only a part of the garment was affected it was first washed and then watched. The washing with water typifies the subjection of our circumstances, the conditions in which we move, to the word of God. If after doing this the evil remains, unchanged in its manifestation, then the garment is to be destroyed. Whatever the appearance of the external parts, however satisfactory they seem to be, the evil is seated in what underlies, in what is fundamental. Hence the whole condition is unholy, and must be

abandoned. But if, on the other hand, the submission of our circumstances to the test of the word of God proves that the evil is not in the underlying foundations on which our practical lives rest, then that part of our external circumstances, in which the evil is, must be given up—that part of our external life that is not according to God. How all this tells us of God's concern about our ways! Holiness surely becomes those who are in relationship with a holy God.

We must look now at the procedure in the case of leprosy in a house. First, in connection with the application to a believer's home. Let us notice that the instructions concerning leprosy in a house were given in anticipation of Israel's dwelling in the land of Canaan. In their possessing that land we have a type of the believer's entering, by the power of the Spirit through the word of God, upon his heavenly inheritance. One may ask, Is it possible that leprosy should be connected with this? When I read, "When ye be come into the land of Cánaan, which I give to you for a possession, and I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possessions," I answer it is possible. Is it not true that a believer ought to establish his dwelling-place on Christian ground? Should it not be a Christian home? A home where heavenly things shall be enjoyed? Surely this must be admitted. But, alas! how many such homes have become leprous! How much activity of inward evil there has been in connection with heavenly things! Have not the things of Christ, the things where He is, been often prostituted to worldly and fleshly ends? Plainly, leprosy in a believer's home is quite possible.

But how shall it be treated? First, the owner of the house shall "tell the priest." If we see indications that there is something wrong in our homes; if we feel that somehow God is not getting His true place; if it seem to us that the things of Christ are not used in holiness, let us submit our homes to the scrutinizing eye of God, testing them by the revealed mind of God given us in His written Word.

The next point is that while this examination is going on, there must be proper effort to protect all who dwell there. There should be no hasty publication of the evil, no unnecessary occupation with it. It should not be allowed to become a matter of public gossip. At this stage it is simply a question of what the trouble really is. This is to be discovered by priestly exercise. "Emptying the house" speaks of godly care and concern lest there be unnecessary defilement through hasty and unnecessary occupation with the evil. But if after patient examination and careful watching it becomes evident that serious evil is there, then proper effort must be made to correct the condition of things. Taking "away the stones" tells us of removing what seems to be the source of the evil. "Scraping within" of clearing away the results of the presence of evil. "New stones," "other mortar" and "plaster," plainly point to effort to reestablish the home according to the holy claims of God as declared in His written Word. If now after all this effort to save the house the evil again breaks out and it become thus evident that the evil is not in some special part, but in the very constitution of the house, then the house must be destroyed. No home must be owned as a Christian home that is not at least established on Christian

ground and maintained according to the truth of Christianity.

Another matter must also be mentioned. We read, "Moreover he that goeth into the house all the while that it is shut up shall be unclean until the even." While a professed Christian home is under suspicion, and is being examined, and watched, there should be no expressed fellowship with it. To enjoy its hospitality would be to pursue a course or way that would expose us to the condemnation of the word of God. It would be contracting defilement which we could only remove by submitting ourselves to its claims upon us, and this would involve confession of having acted contrary to those claims. Only so could we "wash our clothes."

To "go into the house" even was to "be unclean until even." I take it that this applied to the priest who examined the house as well as to any one else. The very occupation with evil, however necessary, is defiling. It has effects on the mind which remain and do not pass away except we return to what is our normal state—occupation with Christ and His Word. How solemnly all this speaks to us. It is true, it is not leprosy that is contracted by the one who has been obliged to have to do with it, yet the having to do with it temporarily defiles, and there is need of special application of what God has written to one's self, of an examination of one's ways and circumstances in the light of the truth of God.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

A New Year's Hymn.

IN Jesus our hopes are all centered;
 On Him our attention we fix;
 For we by Thy goodness have entered
 One thousand nine hundred and six.

We thank Thee for constantly guiding
 Our steps through the years that have fled;
 And in Thy safe keeping confiding,
 The paths of the future we tread.

May we, from all error defended,
 In knowledge and wisdom increase;
 And may there to us be extended
 The blessings of comfort and peace.

And since Thou hast thus far inclined us
 To set our affections above,
 The leaves of the record behind us
 We leave to Thine infinite love.

Though we may at times be defeated,
 And seem to be hoping in vain,
 We know when Thy plan is completed
 With joy we shall see Him again.

The signs of His coming invite us
 Each day with glad service to fill:
 His Word and His Spirit unite us
 In loving and doing His will.

Keady, Ont.

T. WATSON.

NOTES OF READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

At the Manchester, Kans. Conference Oct., 1905.

Chap. iii. 15-iv.

(Continued from page 323—Vol. xxiii.)

WE have now the covenant that God made with Abraham considered in relation to the law.

Ques. What is a covenant?

Ans. Our verses. 15, 16, and 17 clearly tell. It is a promise made by God of something which He pledges Himself to do—the purpose of His own heart—by which a special relationship is formed between Him and the one to whom He makes the promise. In the case of Abraham now before us there are no conditions whatever, as we may see in Gen. xiii. 14-17, again in chap. xv., and again to Isaac and to Israel. If we turn to Exod. xxxii. 11-14, we shall see how Moses pleads this unconditional covenant at the very time when Israel deserved to be cut off for their ways. Nothing whatever can check God from the fulfilment of such a covenant. "Thou swarest by Thine own Self" makes it secure, whatever be the people's ways. But in Exod. xix. and xx., there is another covenant made with the people—a conditional one. This is quite distinct and apart from the other, and, without affecting in the least the former, it brings in the dealings of God with the people because of their sinful ways. In 1 Kings viii. 23-53, Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, refers to this conditional covenant.

It is the unconditional covenant which we have in our lesson here. The grace of God in Christ—that sovereign grace which saves to all eternity, and without any

conditions whatever, every poor sinner who believes in Jesus—is in nowise affected by the governmental ways of God upon those saved people, however severe they may have to be sometimes. So, the law which was given 430 years after God had made the promises, could in no wise hinder the fulfilment of the promises. It was not a condition imposed upon the unconditional grace, for conditional blessing is no grace at all. It was a totally new thing, introduced to prove to the people that grace was their only hope. Law then is given long after grace has been proclaimed, that men may learn how hopeless is their case except through sovereign grace.

Moses was the mediator of law between his people and God; and Christ is the Mediator of grace between His people and God; but both covenants are of the God who is One in all His mind, and who ordained both for the fulfilment of His one purpose. How grand are God's ways! How worthy of being searched out by us. He gave the law to teach us how desperately sinful we are; His law bringing out man's sin as transgression, so that in our despair we might turn to Christ and learn that we can become children of God only "*by faith in Christ Jesus.*"

Ques. What is the difference between transgression and sin?

Ans. Sin is the outgoings of our sinful nature without the sense of its being forbidden. Transgression is the same under the sense that God forbids it, and this produces *guilt*. It makes sin "exceeding sinful."

Mark one very rich thought in this chapter: In ver. 16, the Spirit applies to Christ what the letter of the promise to Abraham applies to Isaac. We see

in this how Christ fills the mind and heart of God. Isaac—real fulfilment of the promise as he was—was only a figure of Christ who is the true Seed of Abraham. But in ver. 29, we, believers, are also called Abraham's seed. Does not this show the divine oneness in which we stand with Christ? And, whatever be the government of God upon us on the way, this oneness with Christ is what the grace of God has formed, and it never changes. In this New Creation oneness "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female. Peter's gospel left the Jew still a Jew, and the Greek still a Greek, but Paul's did not. It was a revelation beyond Peter's, ushering in far deeper and more blessed things. It was taught to Paul by the Lord *in heaven*, whilst Peter had been taught by the Lord *on earth*. And you find in Scripture that the position the Lord occupies when He gives a revelation has much to do with the character of the revelation He gives.

Chap. iv. introduces to us the difference between the children of God before Christ came and since. They were born of God just the same as we are; children of God just the same as we are; possessors of eternal life just the same as we are. But they had not the intelligence of it as we have; nor the comfort of it therefore as we have; nor the power of it in their souls and for their lives as we have; for since Christ has come and accomplished redemption, the Spirit has come and taken His abode in us. This was not before; the Spirit wrought in and with the people of God but did not dwell in them. *We* can have the comforts and joys of an accomplished redemption, but *they* could only look forward to its being accomplished. They had the

dark cloud of the sufferings of Christ between them and the glory, whilst with us this cloud is past, and with unveiled faces we can look into the glory into which we may be transferred at any moment.

So, by the appointment of God, they were just where a little child is by the appointment of his father—under tutors and governors—and, though lord of all, differing in nothing from a servant.

Ques. But they were not mere servants, were they?

Ans. No, no more than a child is a mere servant because he is, for the time being, placed under tutors. There had to be a training for our souls which could be done effectually only in this way. What a blessing to us all this is. And indeed though *we* are not by the appointment of God under tutors any more, yet what practical lessons for us in all this. How much of legal bondage we sometimes pass through before we fairly enjoy our God-given place as sons. And when we do, we wake up to find that Christendom in general is but one vast Judaism—all “fallen from grace.”

But whatever Christendom in general has become, the truth remains; Christ has obtained an eternal redemption for us by His blood; we *are* saved eternally by it; we know it because God says so; “and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” None of the Old Testament saints could use that cry. The least of the New Testament saints uses it freely, even if hampered and befogged by the legal teachings all around.

Ques. So then though we be not in our true Christian state, yet we are not in the Old Testament place.

Ans. Quite so. Else how could we teach believers? For teaching believers is instructing them in what belongs to them in Christ, that we may present them perfect in Christ Jesus, that is, as men who have apprehended the rich grace of God toward them and have grown thereby into a true Christian state.

From ver. 9, he rebukes them for returning to law instead of going on to acquire that Christian state. He reminds them of his "infirmity of the flesh" when he brought the gospel to them. The gospel of God's grace was so sweet and blessed to them that they did not despise its messenger because of that infirmity. Why had they so changed? Why was he now, as it were, pushed aside by them? Was it not because the "blessedness" had left their souls through receiving a gospel which was not *the* gospel?

Then from ver. 21, he seals his instruction by introducing the two sons of Abraham, one by the free, the other by the bond, woman. The free woman is the type of grace, and of the Jerusalem above, whose children we, who are of faith, are. The bond-woman is law, and the earthly Jerusalem, whose children are those who earn their way by law-keeping. And grace with her children has ever been an object of persecution by the children of the law. Grace abases man, law exalts him. Grace exalts Christ; law makes Him of no effect—for law-keepers need no Saviour. Grace binds the heart to Christ and constrains us to a path of obedience to Him in all things; law makes man self-important and leaves him self-willed. So therefore "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." How sweet is the last verse of our lesson. "So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

(To be continued.)

COMMANDED.

IN trustful reverence we ask,
 What has the Saviour said
 To those who in the sunlight bask
 And in His footsteps tread?
 That human souls in every land
 May know the living way,
 What did our risen Lord command
 His messenger *to say*?

As those who do in Him believe,
 And Him as Saviour own;
 We would unto His teachings cleave,
 And follow Him alone.
 And as we view His nail-pierced hand
 This question ask we now,
 What did our risen Lord command
 Believing ones *to do*?

Where there is grief and woe and shame
 And discord, fear, and strife;
 We would, as those who love His name,
 Hold "forth the word of life."
 We ask with those who waiting stand
 And hope His face to see,
 What did our risen Lord command
 His faithful ones *to be*?

Keady, Ont., 1905

T. WATSON.

ALL IN ONE.

THE apostle Paul in writing to "the saints and faithful brethren in Christ" at Colosse, after giving most exalted views of the One in whom they believed, says, "*Christ is all, and in all*" (Col. iii. 11).

As believers, we should see, in the light of other

portions of the precious Word, how fully He is all to us. That Word assures us as follows:—

1. We are saved *by* Him (Luke xix. 10; 1 Tim. i. 15)
2. Dead and risen *with* Him (Rom. vi. 7, 8; Col. ii. 20; Col. iii. 1).
3. Complete *in* Him; accepted *in* Him; yea, seated in the heavenly places *in* Him (Col. ii. 10; Eph. i. 6; ii. 6).
4. Separated *to* Him (John xvii. 6-19; Rom. vii. 4; Eph. v. 25-27; 2 Cor. xi. 2).
5. Heirs *through* Him (Gal. iv. 7).
6. Waiting *for* Him, or should be (1 Thess. i. 10; 1 Cor. i. 7).
7. Soon to be *like* Him and with Him in the Father's presence, and there forever, without spot, and without fear (1 John iii. 2; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Eph. i. 4).

In short, "possessing Christ we all possess;" yes, now, and in sure hope (1 Cor. iii. 21-23; Rom. viii. 32; Rev. xxi. 7).

Say, then, is not Christ all? Is He not enough? Should we not be satisfied with Him? Yes, so satisfied with Him that we shall be willing that any modern Ziba may "take all" beside (2 Sam. xix. 29, 30)—each one able exultingly to say,

"I have seen the face of Jesus!
Tell me not of ought beside;
I have heard the voice of Jesus!
All my soul is satisfied."

Happy if it be thus with us, however low our place in the vale of tears! If we have truly found our *all* in *One* we can gracefully bow to the loss of all else.

R. H.

THE WORDS OF AGUR.

Prov. xxx.

THE last two chapters in the Proverbs are an appendix to the book—the words of Agur to his pupils Ithiel and Ucal, and the words of King Lemuel, taught him by his mother.

Sometimes in the word of God much rich blessing and wholesome food for our souls is couched in but a few verses, yea, in but a few words. Let us see what instruction we can gather from a few words in the beginning of this 30th chap. of Proverbs.

Agur, means, “assembler,” i.e. a member of the wise men’s assembly. All through this book of Proverbs the wise and the foolish are contrasted—in fact all through the word of God. (See Matt. vii. 24–27 and xxv. 1–13.) Thus God’s children are the wise, and never more so than in the Christian dispensation when indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and are all “assemblers,” being in the true assembly, Christ’s body.

Agur was the son of Jakeh. Jakeh means “pious,” or “obedient”—the suited character of those who are the assemblers to Him who is Head of the assembly. What rich blessing is attached to obedience. “To *obey* is better than sacrifice, and to *harken* than the fat of rams.” Is not obedience everywhere, in both Old and New Testaments, enjoined on the people of God? May our God imbue us all with a spirit of piety and reverent obedience, so that we shall never treat with the least indifference the most obscure passage we find in His Word. For as Agur says: “Every word of God is pure.”

The man spake unto Ithiel. Ithiel means, “God is existent,” or “God is with me.” “To this man will

I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word" (Isa. lxvi. 2). How fittingly then Ithiel follows Jakeh. Let this have a voice to us to-day, dear brethren. Being in the assembly (of the wise), piety and obedience should go hand in hand with glad heart and willing step wherever that He may lead; and thus God will be *with* us and be a *Father unto* us.

Agur spake to Ithiel and Ucal. Ucal means, "I am able," hence, prevail, or overcome. Now, in one sense, all the Lord's people will prevail through the Captain of their salvation, for He has overcome death and judgment and their great adversary; but is there not a *practical* overcoming of evil in the professing Church? Surely there must be. Who can read carefully the second and third chapters of Revelation and not think so. All Christians are not practically men of God, but a "man of God" *practically*, is one who stands before God awaiting His commands. Such an one is sure to prevail, for; as Caleb said long ago, "We are well *able*"—his faith counting upon God who would give them strength. May the Lord teach us to meditate on these things in His presence, that the fruits thereof may be manifest in our daily lives.

In the few following verses we get vividly expressed the spirit of self-judgment—a very wholesome thing for the people of God at all times. In ver. 4 Agur turns from wretched self and inquires after God. All these questions are now clearly answered in Him who has come from the Father's bosom and made Him known to us.

I trust in these last days the Lord will make His Word inexpressibly precious to His people, so that

as the horizon darkens, the path—the *narrow* path—may become brighter and brighter till grace is crowned with glory. Amen.

E. H. VAN. L.

THE GOSPEL.

THE gospel itself must be our object. May the Lord keep that fresh and immediate upon our hearts continually! It is the gospel itself, the tale of God's unmeasured love, and which heaven calls the earth to listen to, that bears with it the real and abiding blessing to our souls. It is the entrance of the living God—God of all grace as He is, through the testimony of the Son of His love—into our hearts that sheds abroad the light, the liberty, the victory there, and is the seed in us of eternal life. As one has said: . . . "There is much in Christianity that may take a strong hold of the imaginative faculties, and give a high species of enjoyment to the mind; but the most important part of religion in relation to sinners is its *necessity*. The gospel has not been revealed that we may have the pleasure of feeling or expressing fine sentiments, but that we may be saved; the taste may receive the impression of the beauty and sublimity of the Bible, and the nervous system may have received the impression of the tenderness of its tone, and yet its meaning, its deliverance, its mystery of holy love, may remain unknown."

J. G. B.

JESUS, THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF FAITH, HEB. XII. 2.

ALL the witnesses for God spoken of in Heb. xi. are for our encouragement in the path of faith; but then there is a difference between them and Jesus. Accordingly the apostle here singles Him out of all.

If I see Abraham, who by faith sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country; or Isaac, who blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come; or Jacob on his dying bed of blessing and worship, they have all run their race before; but in Jesus we have a far higher witness. Besides, in Him is the grace to sustain us in the race. Therefore in looking unto Jesus we get a motive and an unfailing source of strength. We see in Jesus the love which led Him to take this place for us, who, "when He putteth forth His own sheep, goeth before them." For, if a race is to be run, we need a fore-runner. And in Jesus we have One who did run before us, and has become the Captain and Completer of faith; in looking to whom we draw strength into our souls. While Abraham and the rest filled up in their little measure their several places, Christ has filled up the whole course of faith. There is no position that I can be in, no trial whatever, that I can endure, but Christ has passed through all and overcome. Thus I have in Him One who presents Himself in that character which I need; and I find in Him One who knows what grace is wanted, and will supply it; for He has overcome, and says to me, "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world"—not, you shall overcome; but, I *have* overcome. It was so in the case of the

blind man (John ix. 31, &c.) who was cast out of the synagogue; and why? Because Jesus had been cast out before him. And now we learn that, however rough the storm may be, it does but throw us the more thoroughly on Christ, and thus that which would have been a sore trial does but chase us closer to Him.

Whatever turns our eye away from Christ is but a hindrance to our running the race that is set before us. If Christ has become the object of the soul, let us lay aside every weight. If I am running a race, a cloak, however comfortable, would only hinder and must be got rid of: it is a weight, and would prevent my running. I do not want anything to entangle my feet. If I am looking to Jesus in the appointed race, I must throw the cloak aside: otherwise it would seem strange to throw away so useful a garment. Nay, more; however much encouragement the history of antecedent faithful witnesses in Heb. xi. may give, our eye must be fixed on Jesus, the true and faithful One. There is not a trial or difficulty that He has not passed through before me, and found His resources in God the Father. He will supply the needed grace to my heart.

There were these two features in the life of Christ down here. First, He exercised constant dependence on His Father: as He said, "I live by the Father." So the new man is ever a dependent man. The moment we get out of dependence, we walk in the flesh. It is not through our own life (for, indeed, we have but death) that we really live, but by Christ, through feeding on Him. In the highest possible sense He walked in dependence on the Father, and for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despis-

ing the shame. Secondly, His affections were undivided. You never find Christ having any *new object* revealed to Him so as to induce Him to go on in His path of faithfulness. Paul and Stephen, on the other hand, had the glory revealed to them, which enabled them to endure. For when heaven was opened to Stephen, the Lord appeared in glory to him, as afterwards to Saul of Tarsus. But when the heavens opened on Jesus, there was no object presented to Him, but, on the contrary, *He* was the object of heaven; the Holy Ghost descends upon Him; and the voice of the Father declares, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Thus, the divine person of the Lord is always being witnessed to. The apostle here lays hold of the preciousness of Christ in the lowliness into which He has come; but he never loses sight of the glory of Him who has come there. So when I get Christ at the baptism of John, I see Him at the lowest point (save in another way on the cross); and finding Him there, I find all the divine compassion of His heart.

TO A SERVANT OF CHRIST.

2 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

MAY He who formed the earth and skies.
 In His own wisdom make you wise
 And give that blessing which implies
 For highest service fitness;
 May He to you Himself reveal,
 Refresh, uphold, defend, and heal,
 And give you strength and grace and zeal
 To be His faithful witness.

A WHOLESOME LESSON.

LUTHER wrote, "At one time I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers which beset the Church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. She replied, 'Do you not know? God in heaven is dead!' I said to her, 'How can you talk such nonsense, Katie? How can God die? He is immortal, and will live through all eternity!' 'Is that really true?' she asked. 'Of course,' I said—still not perceiving what she was aiming at; 'how can you doubt it? As sure as there is a God in heaven, so sure is it that He can never die.' 'And yet,' she said, 'though you do not doubt that, you are still so hopeless and discouraged!' Then I observed what a wise woman my wife was, and mastered my sadness."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ques. 1.—Is Phil. iii. 10, 11 moral? or does Paul really desire to go through death and resurrection?

Ans.—To properly grasp this passage we believe it is of primary importance to understand the character of the Epistle. Philippians is the epistle of the Christian race. But a race exists only by virtue of an object to be reached at the end.

On his way to Damascus, Saul the proud Jew, the zealous keeper of the law, and therefore the persecutor of Christ ("for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" Rom. x. 4), had evidently been arrested by a wonderful vision. Jesus Himself, from the glory where He was, had appeared to him. Then He had revealed to him, as never before to any man, the wonders of the grace that had come by Him. This had captivated his heart, and henceforth made his adorable Saviour in glory the sole Object to run after and to win. He had

had a glimpse of Him in glory, exalted there in the power of resurrection, and this glimpse had set him longing for the full knowledge of Him, and for that perfect likeness to Him which can only be reached there, at the end of the race.

Morally, in his soul, he of course already knows the power of this, for it is the power of it in his soul which urges him on in the race at the end of which the desired Object is to be had. And if in running after that Object—true to it in all his practical life—he must needs suffer, pass through death even in violence, as his Master had, it matters not. Christ Himself won, and perfect likeness to Him reached, he would then be satisfied. Until then he could not, would not be satisfied. No matter how much of the race had been run, and no matter how well, he could not stop therein self-complacency, but must run on to the end, when he would reach the Object of his heart. So may we run in company with that beloved man, our pattern as to object, even as Christ is our pattern as to character.

Ques. 2.—What is the interpretation of Phil. i. 28?

Ans.—To be "adversaries" to those who hold, and preach, and practice "the faith of the gospel" is sufficient evidence, already here, of the righteous doom which awaits such adversaries. For, what but good accompanies that precious faith? and what but God's love to man is manifested in it? To be adversaries to it therefore is proof positive of being enemies of God and lovers of sin, the end of which is eternal judgment. On the other hand, to suffer for Christ's sake and the gospel's is proof of being on God's side, objects of His love and partakers of His salvation. The sufferings of Christ and His people, inflicted by the world, is like a black cloud hanging over it. What terrors will be theirs when it bursts upon them! What mercy it is to be of the world no more!

Ques. 3.—Is Eph. iv. 13 present or future?

Ans.—It is both. The gifts of ver. 11 are for the perfecting of individual members of the body, that they may in turn fulfil their own proper functions toward their fellow-members of the body, and thus perfect it in the knowledge of Christ until it reaches the perfect man—Christ with His Church seen as one in glory.

NOTES OF READINGS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS

At the Manchester, Kans. Conference Oct., 1905.

Chaps. v., vi.

(Concluded from page 18.)

THESE closing chapters of our Epistle are chiefly taken up with admonitions based upon the teaching we have gone through. Thus he exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty which the grace he has developed in his instruction has made theirs, and not be again under the yoke of law.

Ques. Why is Paul in verses 2 and 3 so much opposed to circumcision, whilst in Acts xvi. he circumcises Timothy?

Ans. Because here it means to put Christians under law, which is the destruction of Christianity; whilst in Timothy's case, being the son of a Jewess, he was classed as a Jew, yet, because of his Greek father, he had never been circumcised. He was thus justly under reproach among "the Jews which were in those quarters." In his case there was *no principle involved*; Paul therefore circumcises him to remove the prejudice that was against him. When there is *no truth in question* he makes himself all things to all men to better serve them.

With the Galatians it is all different. They are Gentiles, and to circumcise them is Satan's work, for it involves the whole principle of Christianity. It says, in principle, that Christianity is an appendage to Judaism, whilst in truth it is *a wholly new thing*, straight from heaven, delivering the Jew from Judaism and the Gentile from heathenism. Circumcision restores law and destroys grace. It makes

Christ useless. Law had proved the hopelessness of man in his sins. Now Christ had come, had died, had obtained an eternal redemption for us, and faith, appropriating this salvation, produced love to the Saviour—a love which desires to serve Him, and thus brings fruit to God. The moment law is introduced it interferes with these blessed ways of grace, and ruins Christianity. And what is Christendom now, whether Protestant, Romish, or Greek, but a vast ruin of Christianity where grace has ceased to be known save by a few who are really strangers in it.

Note ver. 9. The same occurs in ver. 6 of 1 Cor. v. There they harbor evil practice; here evil doctrine. In both cases it "leavens the whole lump." A people linked together by one common tie are all affected if they allow evil to abide among them after due effort to correct it. "Israel hath sinned" said God in Josh. vii. though only *one* among them is the transgressor. The whole nation feel their responsibility and put it away. Had the Galatians judged that leaven among them, and the whole Church of God continued in that judgment, what a different condition of things would have resulted.

Ques. What would have become of Israel if they had refused to find out the transgressor and put the evil away from among them?

Because of the unconditional covenant of God with Abraham, He would doubtless have preserved them as He is doing now for the fulfilment of that covenant, but they would have ceased to be able to conquer the land any further. They had already ceased by their defeat before Ai.

Ques. What is conquering the land a figure of for us?

For us it is laying hold by faith of the purposes of God for us—of all the blessed things which His grace has given us title to, and which He has revealed in His Word. We are spending a few days here together, not only to fortify ourselves in what we already possess, but to lay hold of more of that which belongs to us in Christ. If we knowingly, in indifference, allow evil of any character to abide among us, our progress in the things of God is at an end. We can conquer no more, but are more likely to lose what we have already got. You will always find that the men whom the Lord uses to recover fresh ground for His people, are men who have freed themselves from complicity with evil. They are thus “sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use.”

Mark ver. 11. *Law* brings no persecution, for it is a human principle—so much for so much—therefore man does not oppose it. But *grace* is ever persecuted, for it humiliates man. It flows from the *Cross*, and that, while it provides salvation for man, declares him an undone sinner needing that salvation indeed. Every revival by the Spirit of God is unfailingly marked by a fresh sense of the grace of God, and therefore by a fresh exaltation of the cross of Christ.

But, in ver. 13, this blessed liberty we have under grace is not to be used to please our evil nature. Liberty given to our souls is not for liberty to practice evil, but good. A man longs to please God but finds himself incapable of it through sin. Redemption sets him free, not only from condemnation, but also from the enslaving power of sin, that now he may be free to do the will of God. The flesh is still

there, as we see in ver. 17, to oppose the Spirit, but the Spirit is there too to oppose the flesh, and the Spirit who dwells in us is stronger than our flesh, and, if ungrieved, gives us victory over it. Our flesh or old nature has no good in it; our new nature received in new birth has no power in itself, though pure and holy in all its aspirations and desires, but the Holy Spirit given to us gives power and effectiveness to the new nature, and so we have no excuse whatever for allowing our flesh ever to have the upper hand of us.

Note ver. 18. To go back to law for the rule of life is an insult to the Spirit, as going back to law for justification is an insult to Christ.

Then in vers. 19-23 we have the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit contrasted—the course of the ungodly, and the character of the children of God. What an awful thing to think that that “flesh,” which can do such works, is, as implied in ver. 17, still in every child of God. How it should constrain us to abide in Christ, keep near to Him, lest it have power over us and produce any of those dreadful works.

On the other hand how lovely the chain of fruitfulness, the development by the power of the Spirit of the divine nature which is in us. The law could never produce this. It can, and does, condemn the works of the flesh, but the Spirit of God alone, dwelling in us through grace, can produce the character which God loves, and which the law approves.

Ques. What is the force of ver. 25?

It teaches that if we are alive by the Spirit, that is, born of the Spirit, we are to act accordingly; for by becoming Christ's we have pronounced death upon our flesh and all it likes and lusts after. We have

given up the envies and emulations which activate this world, "to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven."

The first verse of chap. vi applies the Christian character toward one who is overtaken in a fault. It is not a wilful course of evil, but *a fault* into which a brother has fallen, and the way to restore him. We thus bear one another's burdens. But if we are proud, and think ourselves something while we really are nothing, we shall find at the end our true measure. God, who knows us well, and judges everything aright, will give us as we have sown. This is as inexorable as the sowing of your fields; If you sow oats you do not reap wheat. Let us then search ourselves earnestly, and court God's searching too, that we may be self-deceived in nothing. Only this brief life to live for Christ, to deny self, to suffer with and for Him, and then an eternity of glory.

In ver. 12 he returns to the great subject of his epistle to give a final word. Law has no persecution, and to avoid that it was being pressed upon the Galatians by certain teachers, though neither they nor any one else kept it; but in this way they could glory in man, in his morality and good deeds. "God forbid" adds the beloved apostle, "that I should glory save in *the cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world." There is no honor in this, but only suffering. "A new creation," however, rises out of this, perfect and beautiful in the eye of God, and now for us the rule of life.

Ques. What are "the marks of the Lord Jesus" in ver. 17?

They are the scars he bears on his body from the blows and wounds he has received as a proclaimer of the Cross of Christ. Many among the Christians of his as of our day, sought to belittle, to ignore or set him aside, for the light he shed all around disturbed and condemned many, and hindered them from their selfish desires. His scars told what the motive of his life had been. Brethren, may it be ours.

LEPROSY.

(Continued from page 12.)

IN looking at the application of leprosy in a house to the local assembly, the first thing to remark is that the "owner of the house," is clearly a type of Christ. It is He who by His Spirit produces in the souls of those who seek subjection to the word of God, a sense of a condition of things not in accordance with the Word. But there must be no hasty judgment. Christ in us, like Joshua of old, is dependent on Eleazar—that is, on the exercise of the priestly service of Christ in heaven. The "owner of the house" telling "the priest" speaks of this dependence. There is to be no dealing, even with evil, apart from this priestly work—no having to do with it in independency of Him in whose blessed hands God has put all the affairs of His beloved people.

If there is this dependence upon the priestly service of Christ, there will be due consideration of the spiritual state of all in the assembly in undertaking to deal with the evil. The priest was to "command that they empty the house before the priest go into it" to inspect it. There should be no unnecessary occupation with the evil—no hasty publication of it,

no occupying the minds and hearts of the saints with it—without regarding their ability to have to do with it, and endeavoring to protect them from contamination and infection with the evil. This speaks of the need of the ministry of the Word by which a suited spiritual condition of soul shall be maintained or established.

This done, the evil of which there is suspicion can then be investigated: "And afterward the priest shall go in to see the house."

But in investigating the matter there is need for the same patient care that we have seen was enjoined in all the other cases of leprosy. It should be manifest whether it is a real case of evil. There should be no procedure to judgment on what is merely suspicion, or on a matter that has not been made perfectly clear, so that any conscience enlightened by the word of God will be clear about it. It must be manifest that it is a real case of present activity of evil.

If now this is ascertained through priestly exercise, (the ministry of the mind of Christ, of His attitude towards the evil) the next question is, Is the evil merely local—that is, in some individual, or a few individuals? Or, is it fundamental—that is, is it in the constitution of the house? Does it permeate and characterize the assembly, or is it characteristic of some individuals only? To ascertain this the first step is to deal with the individuals in whom the evil seems to be—the centres and sources of it—the persons who seem to be this. The command of the priest was to be, "Take away the stones in which the plague is." This, put into New Testament language, is, "Put away from *among yourselves* that

wicked person." The character of the holiness of God, who dwells by His Spirit in the house of God, is such that no profane person can be owned as being proper material for that house. It is not merely that the person is to be rebuked, or put under discipline, or even denied the privilege of breaking bread. He is to be put "into an unclean place," which means much more than all this that we have spoken of. It means that, as characterized by the evil manifestly working in him, he is unfit material for a place in God's dwelling. He is to be denied all Christian fellowship. Liars, railers, blasphemers, and such like persons are not Christians. If a believer be such, it is not his profession that constitutes him a Christian in practice. Even he must be "put away," denied all Christian fellowship, treated as unfit for Christian intercourse. For those who heartily submit to the claims of divine holiness, his place is the "unclean place without the city,"—that is the place of judgment.

Having put away from among ourselves the individuals in whom the evil seemed to centre, it devolves on us next to seek to remove the *effects* of the presence of evil. Submission to the priestly exercise of Christ will result in what is typified by "scraping the house within" and "pour out the dust that they scrape off without the city into an unclean place." This will be solemn work, yet necessary and wholesome. There will be need of freeing ourselves, by conformity to the claims of the word of God, from all the influence that an evil that has been among us has wielded over us. We have not done all when we have put away the wicked person. Exercise of conscience, examination of heart in the light of the

truth should not end here, but go on still. Alas! how general is the failure here! May the Lord stir us up to covet not only the removal of the wicked from among us, but deliverance also from the dust of wickedness—the unholy effects of its presence.

Getting thus into conformity with the mind of Christ as to what is suited material for the house of God, we will be able to maintain the claims of divine holiness. As those who are co-builders with God we will maintain the true character of His dwelling-place. "Stones" and "mortar" of divine formation (that is, those in whom, by the power of the Spirit through the word of God, the Christian character is formed) will be the material which we will regard alone suited for the construction of God's house. The thought underlying our work as builders "together with Him" will be, The "temple of the Lord" is not to be defiled.

But suppose now after all this effort to remove the evil, and remedy the effect of its presence, the evil again breaks out, and it turns out that the trouble is not merely local or in some individuals, but in the fundamental construction of the assembly, what then is to be done? We are still dependent on the priestly activity of Christ. When the priest found the plague broke out again he was told he must "break down" the house and "carry" all the material of it "out of the city into an unclean place." An assembly manifestly wrongly constituted, characterized by evil, the plague of evil being not simply in individuals, but in the constitution of the assembly itself, has no title to be owned as an assembly of God. Submission to the priestly service of Christ, by which we come into conformity with Him in His thoughts

about such an assembly, will lead us to disown it, as representing the house of God in the locality where it is. To those whose thoughts are formed by the mind of Christ it will be a profane thing, and to be treated as such.

But some one says, Where is there any scripture for judging or cutting off an assembly? I answer, here it is in Lev. xiv. 45. It may be said, Oh, that is an Old Testament scripture, and does not apply. Well, the Lord and the apostles again and again used Old Testament scriptures to enforce New Testament doctrine. Following their example I do not hesitate to use the above passage in the way I have done. But further, we are told that Old Testament Scripture "is profitable" for us, was "written for our admonition," and this shows that even what is written about leprosy in a house has some application which is true and good for the present time. If we are able to gather what the application is, then we may legitimately use the passage in enforcing the application. If the application is right according to the mind of the Spirit, then the passage applied is authoritative, and demands our submission as to what has upon it the stamp of divine authority. It will be said, perhaps, the cutting off of assemblies is not taught in the New Testament, and cannot therefore be New Testament doctrine. But is it not taught in the New Testament? Does not the apostle tell us to follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, *with* them that call on the Lord out of an unmixed (Greek) heart (2 Tim. ii. 22)? If then the unmixed heart ceases to characterize an assembly; if, while professing to be an assembly of God, it is characterized by unholiness, and is thus condemned by the

word of God, how can I be obedient to Scripture unless I judge it or cut it off? Is my hand tied to evil because it is an assembly, instead of an individual? Must I own in an assembly evil I condemn in an individual? Is not such an assembly a vessel to dishonor from which I am to separate? It is scriptural then to cut off assemblies, if they become characterized by a plague of evil—to treat them as profane.

There are yet other lessons to be noticed. Even necessary occupation with evil in an assembly is defiling. "He that goeth into the house all the while that it is under inspection defiles himself. From the defilement even the priest, it would seem, could not escape. It was defilement which lasted *only* till the evening. Spiritually, when occupation with evil is *over* and there is return to the rest that returning occupation with the word of God gives, the defilement passes away. If going into the house while it was under inspection was defiling, how much more "lying" in it, or "eating" in it! The defilement in the two latter cases, however, was of a different character. "Lying" and "eating" in the house would seem to express a certain measure of fellowship with what is at least suspicious. It suggests the thought of carelessness about evil, if not of open opposition to what is being done to bring it to light. How much of this there is. It is plain that here we have the symbols of improper conduct in connection with an evil that is being inquired into. To clear one's self of this, the clothes must be washed. One's conduct in connection with an assembly that is under inspection needs to be brought into the light of the word of God, and its judgment of it submitted to. May we all have grace for it!

How all this instruction with regard to leprosy solemnizes the soul. God is plainly impressing on our minds that holiness becomes His presence. He would have His people in the constant sense of it. Let us hear His appeal to us to care for and guard the holiness of His name.

C. CRAIN.

(To be continued.)

OUR PLEA.

Rev. xxii. 20.

"**C**OME, Lord Jesus, even now"—
 Thus Thy waiting people say:
 Centre of their hopes art Thou;
 To behold Thy face they pray.
 Thy gracious promise now fulfil,
 And stand again on Zion's hill.

"Even so, Lord Jesus," thus
 All Thy faithful watchers cry:
 In Thy love appear to us,
 In Thy glory now draw nigh:
 Regard this one sincere request
 And make Thy presence manifest.

"Come, Lord Jesus,"—even so:
 Let Thy servants hear Thy call,
 For their spirits weary grow
 As the shades around them fall:
 "Lord Jesus, come" Thy servants say—
 Let night give place to cloudless day.

"Come, Lord Jesus:" Nature needs
 That which only Thou canst give:
 With the Bride the Spirit pleads
 For the One in whom we live:
 Display at length the promised sign
 And usher in the day divine.

"Come, Lord Jesus"—now appear:
 End the reign of Israel's sin,
 Cause their hearts Thy voice to hear,
 Let their day of peace begin;
 While we unto Thy promise cling
 The House of Israel needs its King.

"Come, Lord Jesus"—take at length
 Thine almighty power, and reign
 In Thy majesty and strength.
 Unto earth return again—
 Yea, come! we pray with one accord,
 And be by earth and heaven adored.

Keady Ont. 1905.

T. WATSON

A VERY precious thought is contained in Heb. xii. 1. The thought is "*looking away from all else* unto Jesus." What a remedy for discouragement. What a balm to the wretched. What a source of strength to the weak. What a relief to the soul oppressed by the miserable state of affairs all around us. When burdens bear heavy; when things languish; when the arid atmosphere of indifference distresses; when we long to leave this scene of strife and conflict, how soothing and reviving it is to look away from all this unto Jesus, and there feast our souls and feel the refreshing waters of life revive our lagging steps. What a change occurs from beholding Him to the exclusion of all else!

"Soon I will see our Lord's dear face,
 As trophy of His love and grace:
 And when before Him I shall stand,
 In brightness in yon glory land,
 Eternal will my praises be
 To Him who died at Calvary."

CAN WE GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING?

THE remark is often made by those who desire a wider path, "We must go back to the beginning; to the original ground that brethren took; they received all godly souls that came; we have become too narrow and exclusive, etc., etc." Now the question really is, *Can* we go back to the beginning? If we think or speak of the person of Christ, we can, and indeed *must* go back to "that which is from the beginning," and refuse all "development," as we are taught in John's epistles. The blessed person of the Lord Jesus stands "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever" (Heb. xiii. 8), and knows no change or development. We cannot be too clear, or insist too strongly on that.

Then there can be no question we are bound to go back to Scripture and "hold fast" all the truth as taught therein: *it* never alters. But the point is, can we go back to the beginning of the Church's history and act only on that to-day? Or can we even go back to the early days of "brethren" and act as they did, in the midst of the present changed circumstances, and with the fuller light of the written Word which God has so blessedly unfolded to us in His grace through those beloved brethren, and which they had to learn gradually themselves? Impossible! We cannot put the hands of the clock back; nor can we ignore the past, or undo what has been done. But let us look at this a little.

When the Church was formed by the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii.), we read of three thousand souls who gladly received the

Word through Peter's preaching, and were "added" to the already formed Assembly. Up to that time there were only the two classes in the world, Jews and Gentiles, out of which the Church was to be formed, and the door had not yet been opened for the Gentiles to come in; neither was there any corrupt Christianity as in later days, from which souls might come, calling for care and discrimination in their reception. At the start they evidently received all who came; and it is certain that none came who were not prepared, professedly at least, to renounce Judaism and be henceforth known as *disciples* of the rejected and crucified Jesus.

Of these it is said, "They continued stedfastly in the apostles' *doctrine*, and *fellowship*, and in *breaking of bread*, and in *prayers*" (Acts ii. 42). Now what did that doctrine or teaching embrace at that time? It could set forth the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus, and also the descent of the Holy Ghost; but it certainly could not take in the Church as the body of Christ, or the House of God, with all the distinctive teaching set forth in the Pauline epistles, for of these there had been no revelation as yet. Could we then, in this day, limit ourselves to the apostles' doctrine as known in those days, and ignore the further, fuller, and final light and teaching revealed to the apostle of the Gentiles by the Holy Ghost to "complete the word of God"? (Col. i. 25) Surely not!

Acts ii. was the dawning of the light of Christianity. An advance certainly upon what they knew or experienced during the Lord's life on earth: but not yet the clear shining of the full light and teaching about the Church as the body of Christ, or the

House, or dwelling-place of God by His Spirit (Eph. i. 22, 23; and ii. 22).

It was blessedly true, of course, that those at Pentecost *formed the Church*; it existed then; but they knew it not. That it was not Judaism, they were well aware; but *what* it was they could not then have said. All they could know was, there was a new thing in existence, formed by the presence of the Holy Ghost, and into which all who severed themselves from Judaism by baptism were received. And we read "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' *doctrine*." They had received it and it formed them as a distinct company. Their *fellowship* was based on it. The *breaking of bread* was the *outward* expression of that fellowship, while *prayer* was the expression of their dependence on God to sustain them in it; three very important things surely.

With the conversion and commission of Paul however, the sun rises higher in the heavens and the light of divine truth waxes brighter. That which existed in Acts ii. becomes definitely known as the Church, the body of Christ, united to Him by the Holy Ghost: as also the house of God, the dwelling-place of God by His Spirit; while His "within" and "without" are clearly defined, and saints exhorted to keep the Spirit's unity in the bond of peace. Discipline, too, is insisted on in accordance with the holiness which becomes God's house forever, and the presence of the Lord in the midst. In fact the full revelation of the mind of God as to the mystery which had been hidden in Himself was now made known and the word of God completed (Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 25). In the light of this, then, we cannot act on a *partial* revelation of truth, but must take in the

complete revelation, and the just proportions and relations of one truth to another. It is one perfect and complete whole, and must be treated as such.

To-day we are living in the midst of the ruin of the Church. We cannot restore it. We cannot even aim at being an expression of it. We are only witnesses to its ruin. God's Word however is not ruined. The principles of the Church therein revealed are the same to-day, and imperatively binding on all saints as much as when they were first revealed. Do the Lord's people grasp this great fact? and are we to believe it and act upon it? Or must we believe that those principles were only meant for the bright and palmy apostolic days before the ruin had set in?

The excuses and the excusers of to-day practically say this latter is so, and that those principles cannot be carried out any longer, and therefore we must give up our exclusive practice, and receive all true Christians irrespective of *where* they come from, provided they are personally godly; and thus by so doing get back to the beginning again. That the *where they come from* has been unduly pressed, and the *state* of the person ought to be considered more than their *associations* etc., etc. Alas, what a manifestation of the blinding influence and delusions of the last days, and what utter indifference all this displays to the claims of Christ and the teachings of Scripture in order to escape difficulties and obtain an easier path.

We are being constantly reminded that brethren did this at the start when God recovered the truth to them, and they received all the godly who came irrespective of the places from which they came, and

without requiring their disassociation from them, and that we have got away from their simplicity, and become too *exclusive*, and we ought to get back to the principles and practice which obtained amongst them at the first. This certainly *sounds* very plausible; but the question again arises, Can we do this any more than we can go back to the state of things in Acts ii.? Certainly not ! We cannot put the hands of the clock back, as I have before remarked. A state of things has come in since then and exists, and cannot be ignored in that easy fashion.

We must remember that when God began again to gather saints together unto the Name of the Lord Jesus by once more unfolding truths that had been buried for centuries, the truth did not burst forth in all its fulness and clearness at once. It shone gradually, as it had been revealed gradually at the first. Brethren learned it little by little, and in some cases by painful experience.

It would appear that at the start, when godly souls got exercised in the different denominations here and there, they simply saw that it was their privilege to meet together as Christians to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread; and this was done without any thought, on the part of many at least, of separation from those systems as denying the truth of the one body and one Spirit. Moreover, the bulk of those systems, if not all of them, were, at that time at least, what might be termed orthodox. The ritualism, rationalism, and open infidelity which honeycombs them to-day was certainly not so advanced then, if it really existed at all. God, however, did not leave His saints with the mere glimmerings of light. He increased it and led them on

step by step, (mainly through the instrumentality of one man, the late J. N. Darby) until Paul's doctrine became fully known, and the principles of the Church of God were apprehended and acted on, though, like all truth, it had to be *bought*, and, alas, bought dearly too!

The proper relation of saint to saint, and assemblies to assemblies, amid the general ruin of the Church as a whole, became more clearly apprehended and acted on; while the Lord's presence in the midst of His gathered saints as the "Holy and the True," with the personality, presence, and power of the Holy Ghost in the assembly as guiding and controlling, whether in worship, service, or discipline, became an acknowledged fact and power in their lives, and separated them from all that would not bear the searchlight of God's holy Word.

The truth of the "one body and one Spirit" (Eph. iv.), became to them something more than a mere expression—it was a fact—a *truth to be acted on*. They knew that the body of Christ was composed of all true Christians, but that it was through man's failure invisible. That the Church as a visible testimony on the earth was a wreck. They had learned that. But they knew likewise that the truth was not a wreck, *it* still remains, and holds good for faith to act on at all times till the Lord comes to take the saints to be with Himself, and therefore they acted on the truth. They made no attempt to restore the Church. They did not even profess to be a testimony to the truth of it. They simply acknowledged the ruin, but acted on the divinely given principles of Scripture, in the power of a divinely given faith, and found the Lord's presence and blessing in the path

of obedience and separation to Himself according to His Word (Matt. xviii. 20).

To-day, the reception of saints from the systems around, owing to the prevalance of so much evil doctrine in them, calls for far greater care than would have been necessary in earlier days, and for greater exercise of soul and dependence on God for guidance; so that the question of "association" becomes a very prominent and important one, yea, more important than ever.

The danger, however, to which we are most exposed to-day, and which the enemy is most active in using, is not the reception of saints from the systems; few, if any, are likely to come, or want to come; but it is the effort of some within to break down the barriers which a scriptural discipline has erected, and which bars numbers of saints from our fellowship through this very question of association. They would compel us to receive from places, without any acknowledgement, on the part of these, of wrong done to the Lord and His people (even though in ignorance), so that communion might be restored in a righteous and godly way. In fact, an effort, and that of a very determined character, has been made to force on us intercommunion with companies from which we were compelled to separate; and that spite of our conscience, our protests, and our repudiation of such principles and practices; and under the plea of getting back to the beginning. This is Satan's present effort, and must be resisted. It is *unrighteous* and therefore unscriptural.

We cannot ignore this serious question of *association*, and treat those desirous of coming from assemblies from which we were compelled to separate because

of unfaithfulness to Christ, in the same way as we might treat other Christians who occupy an altogether different position. "Of some making a difference" (Jude 22) is a seasonable word in this connection.

We live in the midst of the light of the full revelation of God; and, alas, in the midst of the ruin of the Church, and must act accordingly. We cannot ignore what exists, nor can we go back. If the path has been left, there must be confession and return; and if there is wilful association with such companies it must be owned and given up. No success in service will compensate for lack of obedience in this. God is sovereign and can act and bless where and when He pleases. Our path is the path of obedience; and "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams" may well sound in our ears and hearts to-day in the midst of the increasing apostasy. The Lord keep all our hearts and minds and make us true to Himself till the end. Wm. EASTON.

New Zealand.

"THE Lord is at hand!" Just as when you look at a light on a perfectly dark night; though it may be two miles off, it appears quite close. So, the more we prove the darkness of the world, whilst enjoying the love of Christ, the nearer the hope will appear.

A LETTER TO A BROTHER

On the idea that Christ on the cross was forsaken of God, but not of the Father.

DEAR BROTHER;

It is said that a judge passing sentence on a boy—his own son, gave him the severest sentence that was possible under the law—a heavy fine. Having passed the sentence, he left the bench and paid the fine. On the bench he could not *act* as father, though the boy was as much his son then as when he was *not* on the bench.

During the forsaking on the cross, when bearing the awful wrath of God, God was not *acting* as the Father. Though He was the Father of the Son at that crucial moment, He was dealing with sin according to the claims of His nature, and so forsook His Son, acting in a capacity which demanded treating as sin the One who took the place of sin, though it was His own Son. While withdrawing from Him as having taken the place of sin, the Father found delight in Him, though for the moment that delight could not be expressed to Him. Hence the Son could not say, "Father," during the forsaking, but He *could* say, "My God." The interruption of the communion did not destroy the relationship. What must it have been to the Son during that awful time to be denied the privilege of saying, Father! To say the Father did not forsake His Son is really to deny the true character of the atoning work—though, of course, this is not intended.

To separate the personality of the Father from the personality of God is very serious error. While we need to be preserved from a caviling spirit that leads

us to make people offenders for a word, it is also important to guard the truth of the blessed work of the Cross from what destroys its real nature and character. The Lord keep us in the truth.

Yours in Him,

C. CRAIN.

SEVEN DISTINCT TITLES OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

6. I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

(Continued from page 331—Dec., 1906.)

“**I** AM the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth on Me, though he have died, shall live, and every one who liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.” In this we have expressed the blessed condition of believers in the eternal abiding of resurrection-life.

The words of the Lord in reference to His Shepherd character and the life He laid down are a preparation for this blessed title. He lays it down to take it again. He becomes the glorious Firstborn from the dead. He *alone* can of Himself pass through death and take up life in resurrection. In Him only has been manifested the power of resurrection: and that because what He was and what He had done required this glorious answer from the Father.

The verse before us is evidently formed of three distinct parts. First it is the title the Lord gives Himself; and then in two brief but comprehensive sentences He comments on the two parts of this title, —“the Resurrection”—“the Life.” From this we may gather the beautiful and blessed meaning of this double expression.

In the first place Christ declares, “I am the Re-

surrection." That which connects itself with this is, "he that *believeth* on Me, though he have died, *shall live*." Christ passed under judgment and through death as the Sin-bearer. In infinite love He had become the Representative of, and bore in this position the full penalty the sinner deserved. But then, to deliver the sheep from the position they were in, it was necessary that they be taken entirely out of it. The meeting of the penalty which hung over them did not do this, though it implied the purpose to do it. The fulfilment of what was implied found accomplishment in resurrection—in Christ raised from the dead. He becomes, therefore, "the Resurrection" to us. The power active and which finds manifestation in Him is resurrection. In this power He has taken up the life He laid down. This gives Him title to communicate life to others—life which is truly that—being beyond the reach of death or judgment. He thus stands forth, amid the ruins of the old, the glorious Beginning of the new. Here we see the Second Man, peerless in His unique glory, standing alone.

But now listen to His gracious words, "He that believeth on Me, though he have died, shall live." He stands among the dead—for all have died, are "dead in trespasses and sins"—and speaks His quickening words. "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." He who believes on Him lives. For having been planted in the likeness of His death, we are also raised in the likeness of His resurrection. The life Christ speaks of here is the result of being quickened and raised up together *with Him*. Thus He is "the Resurrection" with whom we are raised up into life,

apart from whom there is no life. Here we see Him portrayed in these precious words as the "Last Adam" gathering around Himself the new race of which He is Head—the creation of God of which He is the glorious beginning. In Him there can be no shadow of turning, but the new creation has been made perfect for eternity by its Establisher and Builder.

In the second place Christ declares, "I am . . . the Life." The corollary of this is, "and every one who liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." Notice that now He speaks of the "one who liveth," instead of one who if he believes, though dead, shall live. He speaks of one who has believed in this way and who, therefore, "liveth and believeth." He is no longer the dead one called to believe and thus obtain life. This has been done and now He lives. This is connected with Christ as "the Life," while the other finds its place with Him as "the Resurrection." How precious in this way to see the divine accuracy of the words of Scripture. Its minutiae constitute one of the strongest evidences of inspiration.

Christ being "the Life" is of course a step beyond, being "the Resurrection" though it be inseparably connected with it. By right, resurrection comes first and the kind and manner of life to which it introduces fills the second place. The first is positional, it is the beginning, cause, source of life; the second is relational, indicating the kind and manner of life connected with the first. In this is shown the *difference* of the life to the old, and also its *relation* to God now entirely changed. Thus even here numeric symbolism governs the meaning. Christ as

the Life makes plain that we possess nothing less than the same that He possesses through whom we have resurrection. This resurrection which He is to us has not introduced to a life lower in order than that which He has, but to the same. The life we obtain is the life which He is,—the eternal,—communicated to us. Apart from Him, therefore, life cannot be: "I am the Life."

The one spiritually dead, but believing on Him, finds life. The blessed truth added to this in the second part of the title before us is that the life is eternal, unchangeable. The one thus living and believing shall *never* die, because to him Christ is "the Life." We "shall in no wise be injured of the second death" (Rev. ii. 11, J. N. D.). Death is swallowed up in victory, our blessed Representative has triumphed gloriously, and now (precious grace) God gives to *us* this victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Are we enjoying the spoils of this blood-bought victory as we ought? Surely we should press forward till the whole land be in our possession—Christ our life. It pleased the fulness of the Godhead to dwell in Him. Then it is to nothing less than this we have been introduced. "'For in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; and ye are filled full in Him.' The fulness or completeness of the Godhead is in Christ, as toward us; and we, as toward God are complete in Him" (Col. ii. 9, 10, J. N. D., *foot note*). This is the fulness which characterizes the life which Christ is to us. Resurrection brings forth from death a Lazarus bound in the habiliments of death; brought forth to life, it is true, but still fettered with the bands of death. But the life thus obtained is not to be

under the power of these bands; it cannot be so with God's work. It is not resurrection to the old life or its position for a new beginning or trial, but it is to new life, new creation, for which old things have passed away; all is new, no more under trial, no more possibility of failure and consequent judgment, but there is to be perfect freedom from all that is of our previous dead condition. Our life is eternal, we "shall never die," in contrast to the old in which all *must* die. Now there can be no longer any bondage, but the blessed delivering word of power which resurrection brings us to is, "Loose him and let him go." No checks and bounds any more to this life—it is eternal life in all its free and gracious activity in fellowship and communion with the Eternal. This is the essence of the life we have in Christ.

We may add a thought from the practical side which naturally flows from all this. If Christ is our life, our *lives* should manifest our Life, in other words, show forth Christ. How much this means in relation to the scene around us. "If therefore ye have been raised with the Christ, seek the things which are above where the Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: have your mind on the things which are above, not on things which are on the earth; for ye have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 1-3, J. N. D.) This is plainly and simply what should govern. Christ is our Fore-runner, and where He is our life is. Heaven then is the place in which it is to be lived, but while here on earth it cannot be hid, spite the opposition it meets in the world. From this will flow the manifestation of heavenly character as a witness before men. Heaven, likewise, will be our home

in reality at the appointed time; and this bright and blessed prospect, so sure on the authority of God's word, should only the more draw out our hearts while here to faithfulness and devotion to our blessed Lord. Through His grace may it be so with us.

J. B., JR.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ques. 4.—What is “the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?”—Eph. i. 18.

Ans.—It is what God is going to have and to enjoy when the work of His grace is accomplished for and in His saints and He sees them established in the bliss and the glories of His eternal purpose toward them. He is Light and He is Love; and, according to what He is, He is preparing a poor, fallen, degraded people to be His eternal enjoyment “to the praise of the glory of His grace.” And what shall we say in that day, we who will be thus His inheritance and who will enjoy it with Him in all its fulness? At the thought of such praise as will then break out from the unnumbered hosts, what can we do but begin our praise now?

Ques. 5.—What does the expression “Gog and Magog” in Rev. xx. 8, mean? Is it a special people? If so, how could it be addressed as being “in the four quarters of the earth”?

Ans.—In Ezek. xxxviii. 2, “Gog” is given as the “prince of Meshech and Tubal” his people. “The land of Magog” is the country over which he rules and where his people dwell. There can be no reasonable doubt that it is the prince, the people, and the land of Russia, the great enemy of the Jews, and the last one, with his allies, to try his hand at their destruction just before the Lord appears to establish His millennial reign. Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. gives us his complete overthrow in the land of Israel, by the hand of Israel's Protector and Deliverer.

The use of the names “Gog and Magog” in Rev. xx. is, we believe, not necessarily to be applied to the special ruler and people so named in Ezekiel, but *symbolically* to those who, from the far ends of the earth, bear still the same enmity toward Israel and her King, even though under His righteous rule they have for one thousand years enjoyed the rich blessings that flow from it. They are still proud enemies *at heart*, and need but the presence of the arch-leader in evil to manifest themselves. This ends all temporal judgments and ushers in the eternal.

WHO IS A WITNESS?

EVERY conscientious Christian desires to be a witness for his Lord; but no one can be a true witness, unless he understand the nature of the Divine interests in which he is placed;—what they are intrinsically in the mind of God;—and how they are compromised and misrepresented among men. I must know, so to speak, not only the Divine idea of the Church, and the constitution of it, but I must also mark how and where it has fallen, or I cannot be an intelligent witness, apprehending the instruction given in Scripture to guide and sustain me at such a time. How can I appreciate instruction offered to me when the Church is in a low state, if I understand not its low state? and how can I discern its low state, unless I know what it should be if it had continued faithful to the mind of God? I must, therefore, first understand what the Church was when in order; and then, observing the present contrast, study and acquire the principles and conduct which becomes me as Christ's witness in such circumstances.

The Church in order was composed:—First, of members gathered out of the world unto the rejected Lord, on whom they believed unto salvation. "The Lord added unto the Church such as should be saved" (Acts ii. 47).

Secondly, they neither had nor sought any rule of government but the Spirit's, owning Christ their Lord (see Acts xiii. 2).

Thirdly, they excommunicated from among themselves everyone "called a brother" whose evil was open and *wilful* (1 Cor. v.).

Fourthly, they sought and received edification through the gifts of the Spirit, conferred individually (1 Cor. xii. and xiv.).

Fifthly, they assembled around the Lord's table expressing their link in spirit with Him through His death, and presenting their true place and character in the world (Acts ii. 42; 1 Cor. xi. 26).

Sixthly, they were awaiting the return of their Lord from heaven (1 Thess. i.); they by faith sitting there together in Him (Eph. ii.).

Now the Church's decline, on the other hand, is marked by several traits. First of all, it has lost the true idea of being the habitation of God *through the Spirit*. The presence and direct rule of the Lord is unthought of, and there is no apprehension that a saint's *place* now is in Christ in heaven. Our true position *with* the Lord and *for* God is either unknown or ignored. Then the want of care for one another which crept in—the purity of the assembly, began to be disregarded, and each to consider only for himself; and from this the responsibility of one to another as members of the same body, became practically forgotten (1 Cor. xi. 19–22).

Another trait of decline is their turning aside from grace unto law (Gal. iii.).

Another, losing sight of the Lord's return, leaving their first love (Rev. ii. 4).

Another, the admittance of many to communion without any careful scrutiny as to the ground of their adhesion, and thus the assembly ere long became "a great house," because wood, hay, and stubble were introduced into the building (Matt. xiii. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 20).

And lastly, they abandoned spiritual ground and

assumed natural ground in principle, as Core. They assumed to order themselves without the intervention of the Spirit of God (Jude; 3 John). Can any honest soul survey the present state of the Church, and not admit how these germs of evil, noticeable in the apostles' days, have sprung up and borne *full grown fruit*; and, that the Church now, instead of being the pillar and the ground of truth, is a "great house" wherein there are vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor. The more I contrast the present state of the house of God on earth with its original and normal state, and the designs of God therein, the more must I seek and endeavor to be as His mind instructs me, emerging out of confusion and walking according to His mind. The first question is, Is it according to the mind of God, that in the present ruin of the Church there should be any testimony of His mind and purpose in the Church? and, secondly, If He enjoins that there should be, what is the character and what the duties of the witness? Now, it is plain to any student of the Scripture that, so long as any circle or dispensation of God is not set aside by Him, so long is it the first duty of His people to own and support it; nay, the truer the heart of the disciple is to Him the more will he cling to and maintain the name of God in connection with that circle of interest with which He is engaged. How else could it be? If God have any distinct circle of interest into which He has called me, shall not I, according to my devotion to Him, own and support that circle of interest as He may enable me? Does it not both test, and distinguish the faithfulness of a servant, the extent and ability by which he supports and vindicates the purpose of God, when hope is al-

most gone? At the last extremity, Daniel, though the lions' den loomed before his own soul, yet as he prayed, his windows were opened toward Jerusalem—the spot of God's interest on the earth. Now it is plain, and natural, that the true servant of God could never be the less faithful amid abounding unfaithfulness, but, on the contrary, more devoted to do what few others might care to do; pressed in his spirit to maintain the mind and intention of God in the circle in which he is called, because he sees it to be little or no where done: not that he is better than others, but in conscience and heart he feels called on to spend and be spent, and the more so because of the wide-spreading failure.

The Lord tells His disciples "ye are My witnesses," and we mark this in them, that, where the truth of God is misunderstood or compromised, they present an unflinching front to vindicate it and justify God. While the Church as a vessel of testimony, or any dispensation, was in freshness and power, there was a more defined and palpable line for the witness; the opposition was more open and discernible; but as the Church became corrupted and disorganized from within, the duty and service of the witness was not only more onerous, but his ability and competency to be a witness was the more severely tested. Unless he could grapple with the insidious and covert workings of Satan—now no longer an open enemy but transformed into an angel of light, *through the members of the assembly*—he was plainly unequal to the task of a witness in that state of things: and this is the cause of the unfitness and inadequacy which we mark in this day in so many earnest souls who desire to be witnesses. They do not see where

the most deadly evil is working; for the deadliest evil is the one which feeds on the soul without detection, and so emasculates the truth of God that, in the end, it is left with a *pretence* of truth, which is worse than open evil.

It is plain, then, that the more fallen and disorganized the Church is, the more peculiar and trying must be the course of the witness. His one simple duty is to resist every inroad against the truth and counsel of God, and the more insidious and covered the attempt is, the more distinctly and openly to denounce and expose it. To be a witness of this order, the apostle Paul instructs Timothy in his second epistle to him. In that epistle, we find that the great point pressed on Timothy is clear and positive separation from profane and vain babblings. Previously, he had been exhorted to hold fast the form of sound words; and again, "rightly to divide the word of truth," thus intimating that his great and constant work would be to separate the precious from the vile *in doctrine*. What a state of things for a servant of God! His chief and most difficult enemies from within, corrupting and misrepresenting the truth of God which they professed to maintain. What a place of trial and proof! In such a state of things, the witness must purge himself from the vessels to dishonor; he must preserve as distinct a separation between himself and them, as a man washed has between that washed off and himself. The word of these babblers spreads as a gangrene; it is not merely leaven; it destroys vitality; it "overthrows the faith of some." The witness is required to separate in the most marked way from them. His separation marks his faithfulness. It is the distinctness of his

separation that proves him a witness. When things had come to this, he has no other way to show himself as true to his mission but by separation, and the more unequivocal it is, the better witness he will be. A witness thinks not of trials and difficulties; he braves all, for he is on God's side; and he thinks not of them, however timid his nature, because he knows he is on God's side; he only thinks what is his appointed course, *and on that, according to his faithfulness, he proceeds.*

By the apostle's injunction we see that when profane and vain babbling is suffered in the assembly, the witness has no option but to clear himself as clear as washing could do of any connection or association with any such. The word "purge" implies the most stringent and practical separation. Leaven we find dealt with in another way (1 Cor. v.), but here, where the truth is compromised by teachers in the assembly, the witness is called not merely to denounce and repel such profanities, but in the most marked manner, and in his own person, to draw the line of separation between himself and them; and having done so, to seek association with them who call on the Lord in a like spirit, as I understand "*pure heart*;" and he was not, so to speak, qualified for this "pure" company unless he had in this absolute manner purged himself. One little comprehends how essential and imperative it is on the witness to be valiant for the truth; and even when some in heart desire it, how often do we find that they are entirely unable to bear against the evil, and simply because they have not rigidly adhered to God's counsel in this epistle. They controvert and disallow, but they do not "*purge*;" and, consequently, they are not wit-

nesses in such times. In general, we are more distressed by immorality of conduct than by false teaching; but this only proves our lack of spiritual sense.

It is very evident that the Church at first had no list of those who should be excluded from the Lord's table; but when the spiritual sense was enfeebled the apostle gave them a list, though not including in it murderers, heretics, or the more heinous crimes, on the presumption that their spiritual sense was not yet so low as that; but now, when profane and vain babblings are suffered in the assembly, the apostle enjoins Timothy to purge himself from them: he cannot be a witness if he does not; nor is any one a witness who does not. Has God revealed His word and mind, and in such a way and at such a cost, even by His own Son, and can I, as a witness, suffer any compromise or misrepresentation of it? True, I ought to be gentle, and to "instruct those that oppose themselves," but these must be persons who will listen. The devil was a liar from the beginning, and he used every artifice to mar and spoil the truth, and therefore the witness, at such a time as is here described, has a double work, subserving to the one end: one, rightly to divide the word of truth; and the other, to distance himself as positively and as openly as possible from every vain and profane babbler.

And not only this, but a witness for these days must "turn away" from them who are described as walking after their own lust, while having the form of godliness but denying the power of it. Now, of these, a worse class arise, who, like Jannes and Jambres, withstand the truth. They are still worse than the babblers; the witness knows them, but abides in

the apostles' doctrine, and holds to the Scriptures as his authority. Nothing must discourage him in these disastrous times; the appearing of the Lord and His kingdom must stimulate and sustain him in proclaiming the Word; ever urgent, convicting, rebuking, encouraging with all patience and doctrine. And when the time comes when they who now hear him will no longer harken to sound doctrine, the witness is only to go on. And be sober, "exempted from false influences" in all things, bearing evils, doing the work of an evangelist; that is to say, as it appears to me, do everything from the very beginning, as it were, commencing anew, reverting to the foundation, and working from it. We are also instructed how a witness, even a woman, should act with reference to an unsound teacher (2 John), not only not to receive him, but not to greet him. Surely, when one considers the place of exclusiveness which this word demands, we must feel how few real godly witnesses there are in this day. As a rule, is there any of this decided animadversion of unsound teaching in this day? Whoever does not practice it, is not a witness, for he does not meet the exigency.

In Jude, also, we are instructed that the witness's singular and distinct work is to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Now, the very fact of such an injunction as this being needed, discloses the state of the Church. It is not, mark! the faith *as it is held*, but, as it was *once delivered*; and it is not in an easy compromising way, but in an energetic decided way that he is "earnestly" to contend for it.

The "beloved" are called on here to maintain

spiritual ground, and thus, as a matter of course, to be outside *natural ground*. Now spiritual ground in such a day as is here described, involves the necessity of scrutiny and patience with godly fear. Some are to be treated more leniently than others. "Of some have compassion, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." That is, they are to be rescued if possible, but with marked recognition and denunciation of their present place and standing. A true witness not only accords with and heartily accepts all this, stringent and trying as it must be to his natural mind, but, he hails the instructions as to what should be his course of action for meeting the interests of his Lord in an evil day; and never feels himself true to Him unless vindicating His name and truth on earth. How, in the face of these Scriptures, anyone can defend anything bordering on indifferentism or neutrality is unaccountable! Anyone who does so is plainly not a witness; and, therefore, I can only say, the Lord teach us and stir up our hearts to be for Him as His witnesses, while He leaves us here.

One word more. From Rev. ii. and iii., it is evident that to be a witness, in the state of things described there, you must be an overcomer (*νικῶντι*). And, this is self-evident; for, how could I be a witness for God against surrounding evil, unless I had overcome it? The blessings are for the overcomers; and the witness at such a time is one who testifies against the prevailing corruption, and is, therefore, characterized by the angel or messenger. This the whole assembly ought to be; but whoever is so, is one who, knowing the mind of the Lord, proclaims it and

presses it on the conscience of his hearers. Calling on the saints to be overcomers, he presents the truth from which they have swerved, and which, if owned, would deliver them from the surrounding evil. He acts as the Lord's messenger, and, therefore, in keeping with His mind. And this puts him in the position of a pioneer, as well as a teacher, for the message which he delivers is to rally the overcomers, and to show them the way to take. And in order to deliver the message he must be on the vantage ground himself: a victor himself and one able to remove difficulties for those who would be victors, to shed the light of the truth on the scene in which they are, and thus practically to show them their way out of it.

Thus the witness must not compromise in anything which could obstruct the full free deliverance of the saints. He must repel all indifferentism to the truth or concession to error; because the whole value of his service lies in the power and distinctness with which he maintains the truth, which alone can emancipate. He has one simple thought and work, and that is, to deliver simply and unflatteringly his Lord's message. If it be not his Lord's message, it is not fit for the time, and, therefore, not worth anything, for it is only his own; but, if it be, the care of the witness is to guard it, and to press it on souls. The truth—the Lord's mind—His message for the moment, is to be his chief thought and care. To win adherents is not his aim; far less to compromise in order that he may; his business is with *the truth*. This is ever the duty and calling of a witness.

The Lord give us to understand how high and blessed it is to be His witness here in the evil day; and to estimate how great is the privilege to be en-

trusted with His mind and truth. May we show daily that *this* is our great care—and nothing short of it; not to gain adherents. Happy and encouraged we are by every true one with whom we can consort. He who walks in truth helps the other; but not *seeking* anything but *the truth*, of which we testify, and which will, in proportion as it acts on souls, unite them on the Lord's side, for He is Himself the only perfect expression of the truth—to whom be glory forever. Amen.

From "The Present Testimony."

"SPEAKING the truth in love" (Eph. iv. 15). It is no mean victory over oneself to have learned to open our lips only for the good of others. It costs much to withhold that which, while it may be pleasing to ourselves, is unprofitable, or worse, to others. Oh for more in us of that love which does no harm to the neighbor, but only good!

Nor does this mean that our words must be of that sort which pleases everybody. Far be it from us to seek to be men-pleasers. This is not love. But it is love, whatever the words may have to be, when the burden of the heart is the blessing of our fellows. Scripture uses strong words sometimes, but its mind is ever the good of the hearers.

"LET us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John iii. 18).

There is a vast difference between *preaching* love and *living* it. It is easy to preach it, for it is claiming it from others for our own ease. But living it is quite another thing, for in a scene such as we are going through, in which every expression of the God of love finds opposition, there can be no practice of what is really love save in self-denial and suffering.

WHAT EACH TRUE BELIEVER HAS TITLE TO SING OR SAY.

PRAISES unto Jesus be!
From my sins He set me free,—
Paid in blood the dreadful score;
God remembers them no more.

Jesus is gone up on high,
Far above the azure sky:
"To the face of God" is He; *
Yes, my soul, and there for thee.

He will come, and take me there—
What a meeting in the air!
He will take me to His home;
Come, Lord Jesus, come, O come!

Glory unto Jesus be!
He's forever all to me.
Glory unto Jesus be!
Now and to eternity.

R. H.

*In the New Translation by J. N. D., Heb. ix. 24 reads: "The Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us." He adds this note. "Literally, to the face." And anyone consulting the original will see that *to the face of God* is the exact rendering. Doubtless the word "before" gives the sense of the word "to." Moses, mediator of the covenant of *works* could not be "to" or "before the face of God." The Lord said to him, "Thou canst not see My face; for there shall no man see Me, and live" (Ex. xxxiii. 20). Thus the old covenant served to prove that man can not be saved or stand before God on the ground of what he is or his works. But the covenant of *grace* fully meets the deep need. Through Jesus the Mediator, and by His blood—the blood of that covenant—all who truly believe are saved. Because He lives before the face of God they live also. Precious truth to the eye of faith.

R. H.

LEPROSY.

(Concluded, from page 40.)

THE subject of healing and cleansing in connection with leprosy must now command our consideration. It should be noticed that there is a distinction between these two things. Healing is not by cleansing, nor is cleansing by healing. It is the healed one who has to be cleansed.

Healing is that work of God in the soul that results in confession and self-judgment. The place of judgment is frankly accepted as duly required by the holiness of God. When the leper is thus healed, the fact of his healing must be clearly ascertained, and this is something for priestly discernment. His own profession is not the evidence. The priest must "look." His state of soul must be ascertained. The evidence of the healing will be that the spiritual life has asserted itself and opposition to God has ceased. The acceptance of the place "outside the camp"—the place of judgment, not by profession merely, but as unreservedly submitting to God and His word will be proof of healing.

But now that the leper is healed he *yet* needs cleansing, and this is by priestly exercise. The priest sprinkled the healed leper with the blood of a sacrifice seven times. Typically, this sprinkling of blood upon the leper speaks of the ministry of the truth of the believer's association in heaven with the One who died for him, rose again, and has gone into heaven to appear there for him, and that as thus linked with Christ in heaven he is not alone delivered from the due of his sins, but also himself dead with the Christ who died for him to the world in all its

extent. This had been forgotten, but by priestly activity it is now afresh ministered to the purification of the conscience. Thus restored to the enjoyment of the truth of association with Christ in heaven, the priest declares he is clean. A moral and spiritual purification by priestly service has been effected in the heart and conscience, and he is clean. The priest's declaration that he is clean is that priestly service by which under the government of God pardon is administered. This is a remission of sins which is committed to us to grant.

This will result in a purification of another kind. The work of recovery thus far effected will enable the one being cleansed to solemnly review his life in the light of the word of God and accept that word as applying both to his walk and to himself. This is what washing "his clothes" and "himself" and "shaving off all his hair" speaks of. It is his cleansing himself according to the word of God.

Now he finds liberty to take his place among the people of God, to "come into the camp." He is restored to the place of privilege and fellowship. But though clean for this, there is yet further recovery to be effected. After coming into the camp, we read, he "shall tarry abroad out of his tent seven days." This suggests the need of practical intercourse with the people of God, the enjoyment *with them* of the portion and privileges that are theirs. This is progress in practical recovery, which results in his cleansing himself *still more fully* according to the truth of the word of God. This "seventh day" cleansing of himself is the effect, the fruit, of holy occupation with divine things in the practical enjoyment of them *with* the people of God.

Then on the "eighth day" he is by priestly ministry presented "before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." Sacrifices, all of which speak of Christ, are offered; and the blood applied to the "right ear" the "thumb of the right hand" and the "great toe of the right foot." Then after sprinkling the "oil seven times before the Lord," the oil is put where the blood has been put as also upon "the head." As thus sprinkled with blood and anointed with oil he stands at the door of the tabernacle, while priestly service goes on at the altar. All this clearly speaks of priestly ministry by which there is recovery to communion with God in His thoughts about Christ and His atoning work, and this too as realizing, what again had clearly been forgotten, the divine claims, on the ground of the blood of Christ, to ear, hand, and foot, and dependence on the Spirit of God to meet those claims, and preserve the mind in holy occupation with God's interest and joy in Christ and His sacrifice. It is this that completes not only the recovery, but also the cleansing. While priestly service goes on at the altar and an odor of a sweet smell (the acceptability of the sacrifice of Christ) is delighting the heart of God, the recovered and cleansed leper stands before God with heart and conscience fully purged, to realize the blessedness of his portion as in communion with God. How much is thus implied in the words, "And he shall be clean"! He has got back to God to find with Him a happy dwelling-place. Into "his tent" he now goes in the realization that he is dwelling with God.

What a change this, from insubjection to God and perverse opposition to His will, to participation with

God in His joy in Christ! But what grace in God to thus recover and cleanse one who has allowed his sinful, corrupt nature to have sway.

But few words are needed to bring before us the cleansing of the *garment* in which the plague of leprosy has been healed. We have seen already that the garment has been washed. The specified waiting time has passed, and priestly discernment finds no evidence of leprosy being present in the garment. The simple instructions are, "then it shall be washed the second time and shall be clean." A second submission of our ways and habits to examination by the light of the word of God will confirm us in ways that are suited to God, and thus are clean ways. May we welcome the scrutiny of our ways by the eye of God as we find how that holy eye looks upon them in the Scriptures which tell so perfectly what His will concerning us is.

The cleansing of the *house* in which there has been leprosy now demands our attention. We find that the same priestly ministry that was carried on to cleanse the individual leper, immediately after the priest looked on him and found him healed, is employed to cleanse the house. This teaches us that there is need of the ministry of the truth of association with Christ in heaven—the Christ who has died out of this world. Whether we apply the house to the home of a believer or to the local assembly, the need is the same. The ministry of such truth is clearly priestly work. The result of such priestly service is the recovery to, and enjoyment of, the truth of identification with Christ in the possession of heavenly things. The effect of such recovery will be seen in a firm maintenance of the claims of God

on the ground of this identification. It is a moral change—a cleansing.

We have seen thus something of the teaching of the Spirit of God in connection with leprosy. Shall we take it to heart? Shall we seek to conform ourselves to His mind and ways? It most surely is deepest blessing to do so. The admonition, the instruction, the solemn warnings are for our good. Shall we miss the good that is thus intended for us?

May God in His blessed grace grant us both to hear His voice and be subject to it. Let us seek to realize, as He surely desires that we should, that whether it be ourselves personally, our habits and ways, our homes or the assembly, He has claims upon us, by the death of Christ for us, that we should hold the sin that is still in us under the condemnation He has put upon it. May we remember He has "condemned sin in the flesh;" and this we shall always need to do if we seek to escape becoming leprous.

C. CRAIN.

"TRUTH and power are related to each other, both as to order and importance, as cause is to effect. Truth the cause, power the effect. But to-day Christians want power without truth; and while resorting to all sorts of contrivances to obtain the former, they neglect and despise the latter. The religious press is daily pouring forth articles and books on Paths to Power, Secret of Power, Talks on Power, etc., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing more than a mere relation of anecdotes from the writer's experience, and exhibit but little knowledge of God's revealed purposes."

Selected.

SEVEN DISTINCT TITLES OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

7. I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

(*Concluded.*)

THE threefold character of this title suggests fulness of manifestation. Christ as "the Way" is the One through whom the Father is reached; as "the Truth," that which reveals and makes manifest—the perfect revelation of the Father. As "the Life," communicative and divine, He is the power and energy in which all is made real, and all is enjoyed by those who accept Him as the way of approach to God.

If we take Col. i. 14-20, in connection with this threefold title, we shall find a divine commentary upon each of these characters of Christ. These verses in the epistle divide into two distinct parts. The first (14-19) falls into three sections, each applying to the respective parts of the title before us. The second (ver. 20) is the uniting of these three sections in a brief but comprehensive summary which gives the full breadth of meaning found in them.

In the first section (ver. 14) "in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins," we have Christ as "the Way." It is the avenue of approach to God so that those who take this way can say, We have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus" (Heb. x. 19). We know that every child of Adam is shut out of God's presence, for *all* have sinned and come short of His glory, and the result of this is death and consequent judgment. The wages of sin is death: and as death is banishment from this life, so is it the doorway to

that judgment which banishes the rebel sinner for eternity from God and His blessing. This is the universal condition, and no way of escape can be found among men. But though God as Light must fully manifest this condition, yet He is also Love, and love ever acts on behalf of the needy, whoever they may be. Thus we hear the voice of Him, who came forth from the Father, sounding in the midst of the awful spiritual darkness in which He found men, declaring that He is "the Way" through which alone any one could come to the Father. But *how* He is this, is the question which naturally ensues. It is answered in the verse before us. He is the way of approach to God because He has obtained eternal redemption for us through His blood, even sins forgiven. All that which alienated us from God and brought the curse of His wrath upon our guilty heads has been met and fully answered by Christ suffering, the just One for the unjust, upon the cross.

Thus He has redeemed us from our lost condition, and on the ground of His perfect work we have all sins forgiven. Yea we are justified freely from all things by believing in Christ as our Saviour. Thus God has been fully satisfied, every divine claim of righteousness and holiness fully met.

In all this the light of the glory of God's love and grace bursts upon the anxious soul; and "the Way" by which access to the Father is obtained, is at once made perfectly plain—Christ is the Way.

He is also "the Truth," and thus is the manifest, the revealer, of the Father. This surely is just what truth is—that which makes known. This we have in the second section of our passage in Colossians (vers. 15-17), "Who is the Image of the

invisible God, firstborn of all creation, because by Him were created all things, the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships, or principalities, or authorities: all things have been created by Him and for Him." Christ, the Creator, having taken up creaturehood and been manifested before men, is the Image, the full expression of what God is. And, of course, by virtue of what He is, He becomes in this place the "firstborn of all creation." As come into the world in this way He is the revealer of God; the "effulgence of His glory;" He fully presents God's glory; He is "the expression of His substance," or His essential being. Here the light of the glory of the knowledge of God bursts in upon the soul. How tender and blessed are the ways in which God has revealed Himself in Christ. May our hearts turn afresh to meditate upon that glorious Life manifested among men in which the truth is written in the indelible characters of mighty power, love, and grace. "The truth shall make you free" and "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John viii. 32-36).

Christ as "the Life" brings in now the next part of our passage in Colossians. "And He is the Head of the body, the assembly; who is the beginning, firstborn from among the dead, that He might have the first place in all things" (ver. 18). In His place of headship over the assembly, He is the beginning, firstborn from among the dead. He had gone into death and all the consequences of sin, out of which no creature could ever of itself come forth to life. But He, the worthy One, was raised up by the glory of the Father, thus becoming the glorious Firstborn.

In Him, then, is life indeed; life beyond the touch of death. But we are told that in this character He is "the beginning"—therefore there must be others who are to follow in His glorious wake and become firstborn ones after the pattern of this blessed, mighty Beginner. And so it is. He is "Head of the body, the assembly." As the Firstborn among many brethren, with Him are linked an innumerable company to whom He has communicated the life which is in Himself. Thus, too, is the new creation formed and established.

This is the creation God owns; the old has been disowned. Christ is "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. iii. 14). We find then here that perfect and divine order of life, in which we are to enjoy as our portion the place and position into which Christ as "the Way and the Truth" has brought us. The life of God is now our life; and that which we could not enjoy, or even approach unto, as natural men possessing only the natural life under condemnation, we can now take in to the full, because we have a life in accord with God. The natural man does not desire God or His knowledge. How then shall I enter into all this blessing? I need a new life in accord with it all. I turn to Him and find in Him "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," and He gives it to me. Now I have that which enables me to enter fully in all and have its fullest blessing. Thrice blessed Saviour! In Him, truly, "all the fulness of the Godhead was pleased to dwell," that it might thus be made good to our souls. Well may we say with the apostle, "O depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding

out. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him and through Him and for Him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

J. B. Jr.

A FEW OF GOD'S "ALLS."

1. "ALL things were made by Him" (John i. 3).
2. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23).
3. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. i. 15).
4. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John i. 9).
5. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Pet. v. 7).
6. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. viii. 28).
7. "But my God shall supply all your need" (Phil. iv. 19).
8. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psa. xxxiv. 19).

What a range is covered by these few "alls"! Not only in course of time, but in experience. The word "some" is not used in any of these passages, but the comprehensive term "all."

Did we but live in the power of these truths what rest of soul, peace of mind, and zeal for Him we might have.

E. E. D.

PRESENT REST.

Matt. iii. 16, 17; John viii. 28, 29; Matt. xi. 28-30.

THE root of sin in 'us is self-will, independence. But in Jesus my heart has rest. A dependent Man in the midst of sorrow, but perfectly with God in all; in humiliation, or in glory, it makes no difference as to this: the perfect One is ever the dependent One. And when that blessed heart thus expressed its dependence, did He get no answer? "The heaven was opened." Does heaven open thus on me? It is open to me indeed, no doubt, but I pray because it is open; it opened because He prayed. I come and look up because the heavens were opened on Him.

It is indeed a lovely picture of grace, and we may be bold to say that the Father loved to look down, in the midst of all sin, on His beloved Son (John viii. 29). Nothing but what was divine could thus awaken God's heart; and yet it was the lowly, perfect Man. He takes not the place of His eternal Glory as the Creator, the Son of God—He stoops and is baptized. He says, "In Thee do I put My trust, Thou art My Lord" (Psa. xvi.), . . . and the Holy Ghost descends like a dove on Him—fit emblem of that spotless Man!—fit resting-place for the Spirit in the deluge of this world. And how sweet, too, that Jesus is pointed out to us as God's object.

I know the way the Father feels about Him. I am made His intimate, and admitted to hear Him expressing His affection for His Son, to see the links reformed between God and man.

Thus I get rest, and my heart finds communion with God in His beloved Son. It is only the believer who enjoys it, but the link is there. And if I find that which, in and about me, distresses the soul, I have that in Him which is unfailing joy and comfort . . . With Him let heaven and earth be turned upside down, and still I have a rest. What blessedness for the heart to have the Object God Himself is occupied with!

"Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke iii. 22). J. N. D.

COUNSEL.

PSA. xxxvii. 5.

"COMMIT thy way unto the Lord;"
"Trust also" in His faithful word;
"In Him" alone rely;
"And He shall bring it" from above
"To pass" in token of that love
Which shall all needs supply.

T. WATSON.

THE "OCCUPATION" of the Church ought to be in constant reference to its Head. If its Head is not its first thought (and that is shown in thinking of its Head, and filling itself into all the thoughts and mind and affections of its Head), it cannot act for Him. This is its grand occupation. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word." We must get through the crowd of Satan's power, and beyond the crowd to our Head who is the only source of power. We should seek that kind of communion with the saints which living in spirit with the Head gives. We should get all who hear to join in the cry of Rev. xxii. So should the Church have its own light, that all that is outside would be shut out. The apostle was living in a world of his own—he was filled with ideas of his own; but they were God's ideas, and he had power. It is not knowing the scene I have to act in that gives me power; we get no strength from the contemplation of that; but intercourse and living communion with the Head. We should get near enough to Christ to enjoy Him, and to know Him truly, and to gather up all that is like Him. If not separated by affection from the world, we shall be separated by discipline in the world. He will vex our souls to get us separate, if in spirit and in heart we are not separate. "Because thou servedst not Jehovah thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart . . . therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies which Jehovah thy God shall send against thee."

J. N. D.

GRACE, MERCY, AND PEACE, ETC.

(Jottings.)

Grace is favor extended, and where it was never deserved, nor by any act merited; and even where there may have been great hostility and bitter enmity. The grace of a Saviour-God thus flows out to the whole world.

God's people also have grace, present grace extended to them through life. "Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you." Grace—undeserved favor—because their greatest acts done for Him, they judge in His light, are but the workings of the Holy Spirit in them—nothing of themselves:—"when ye shall have done all, say, We are unprofitable servants" (Luke xvii. 10).

"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory" (Psa. cxv. 1).

Mercy suggests another thought, and that is God's pity. He saw the condition and the need of man, and also his helplessness, and this touched His heart, and moved His compassions, and here He extends mercy. He is the "Father of mercies" (2 Cor. i. 3). and "God, who is rich in mercy" (Eph. ii. 4). *First*, He shows His mercy to sinners; *second*, God extends His mercy also to His people, for, in a world that affords no help, He sees their infirmities and extends help and aid.

"Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy" (Heb. iv. 16).

Peace is the issue—the result of the two former, and is also for those to whom the two former are

extended. It is made good to the soul by the Holy Spirit, and when God's testimony in the gospel is received by faith. And the greater the need, the more it brings out the greatness of God's resources to meet it. Peace also is twofold. First, for believers when justified. This is for the conscience in regard to our sins and guilt—peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Second, "Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you," this is peace to God's people, individually and collectively—the Spirit's desire for a redeemed people, that day by day, and hour by hour, we should enjoy peace of heart. Peace about all circumstances, amid all difficulties. It is for the heart of God's people (Phil. iv. 6, 7; 2 Thess. iii. 16).

Righteousness is God's consistency maintained,—God acting in perfect consonance with all His attributes—He who is love as well as light, who is holy as well as gracious. There is perfect consistency in every thought, plan, word and act on the part of God.

Atonement is the great thought of both the Old Testament and the New. Atonement by blood is the foundation of all God's actions toward men. God who is holy, who is righteous, can stretch out the hand in sovereign mercy and grace to men, whatever their sins may be, if men do but from the heart say, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right"—confess their wrong. "Then He is gracious to him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom"—an atonement (Job xxxiii. 24-28).

Atonement is also the basis upon which God continues His blessings and favors to His own

people, amid all their shortcomings and failures day by day. Thus their eternal blessings and relationships with God are both established and maintained by the blood of atonement (1 John ii. 1, 2; iv. 4, 10). God is a just God and yet a Saviour. The cross of Christ—the blood of Atonement,—furnishes a key that unlocks all these treasures of divine truth, solves these great mysteries, and unravels every difficulty; and God righteously extends grace, mercy and peace to all.

A. E. B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

Ques. 6. What difference is there between "peace with God" and "the peace of God"?

Ans. "Peace with God," as mentioned in Rom. v. 1, is the result of believing what has been declared before in the first four chapters of the Epistle—the fallen state of man, his guilt, and the salvation provided by the grace of God through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. This brings peace—divine rest forever to the conscience.

"The peace of God," as it is called in Phil. iv. 7, is in relation to our *circumstances*. God is almighty. No matter what is going on, He is superior to all, able to make anything and everything serve His own ends and purposes of good. He ever dwells in peace therefore, for nothing can overcome Him. It is in that peace—His peace—we shall dwell too, if we live near enough to Him to be able "in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known unto God" (ver. 6). Thus shall we be kept by His peace, even when human reasonings would overwhelm us. May we all know more what this is.

THE LORD'S PROMISE TO HIS OWN, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER FOR HIS OWN.

John xiv. 1-3; John xvii. 24.

JUST for a moment or two I would draw your attention, beloved brethren, to these two precious scriptures. The hearts of the disciples were filled with sorrow, for the Master had just been telling them He was going away. And the Lord knew this. He said, "Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart" (John xvi. 6). They were so occupied with the thought of losing Him that they never even thought of saying, "Whither goest Thou?"

And wouldn't we, beloved, have felt the same had we known Christ on earth as they did? Think of what He was to them!—of what He had done, and was still doing, for them! Think, too, of what they were expecting Him to do (Luke xxiv. 21)! And then suddenly to find He was going away! No wonder sorrow filled their hearts.

Then just think of the beautiful, blessed way the Lord took to comfort them. One can almost fancy one hears Him saying the words; and remember, "never man spake like this Man"! Not merely was it *what* He said, but *the way* He said it was worth while hearing—"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in Me." They were not going to lose Him altogether, but they were to know Him in a *new way*. Hitherto they had known Him as a Messiah on earth, now they were to know Him as a glorified Saviour in heaven, as One whom they could not see any longer as they had seen Him, but

who would be as real to their faith as He had been to their sight. He was going away, and He was seeking to take their hearts up to the new place He was going to; and then by and by He would come and take their bodies where their hearts were.

Now is not that wonderful and blessed, beloved brethren? Is it not marvelous love on His part? It was *them* He was caring for. It was *them* He was seeking to comfort. His whole heart was going out to them. His own sorrow was deep and great. The cross was looming up dark before Him with all its unutterable woe; yet He had leisure to think of them at such a moment, even as He could do it for a penitent thief by His side when He was suffering on the cross. Blessed, precious, loving Lord!

"In My Father's house *are* many mansions (abodes); if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you," He said. Had there been no room for them in the Father's house He would have told them. His heart would not have allowed Him to keep it from them. But there were *many* abodes. There were abodes for all the different families of heaven (Eph. iii. 15)—angelic hosts and families of whatever grade. And now He was going to prepare a place for them. What place was it to be? Ah, what place *could* it be? It could only be the place that was worthy of Himself. "That *where I am*, there ye may be also." It was to be the best place in heaven. The love that had brought Him down to seek us and fit us could not be satisfied with anything less than having us with Himself, in suitability to Himself, and in His Father's house forever. Wondrous love!

And what, then, is there for their hearts till that

takes place? Oh, just think! There is the knowledge of the very best place in heaven, and the enjoyment of the very best company on the way to it. Notice ver. 16; then ver. 23—the presence of the Holy Ghost, and the presence of the Father and the Son. Could better company than that be found?

Not only so, there is His own promise to cheer them while they wait. "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Was not that something for their hearts—for yours and mine to-day? "I will come again," He says. O beloved brethren, do our hearts miss Him? Do we feel His absence? Do we look *up* and *on* to the time when He will fulfil His promise? Is it a reality in our souls? Do we really feel He is a long time in coming? and say, as it were, "Why is His chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of His chariots?"

Let us keep before our souls it is Himself who is coming. It is His own promise, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself." It is not "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof;" it is "this same Jesus"—the One our hearts know and love, who died for us, who lives for us, who is coming Himself for us. Oh, it is true affection of heart for Himself alone that can make us sing,

Come, Lord, come! We wait for Thee;
We listen still for Thy returning;
Thy loveliness we long to see,
For Thee the lamp of hope is burning.
Come, Lord, come!

But I must not dwell on this any longer, precious as it is. One can only hope and pray that the Lord will make it more real in all our hearts, and give us

more and more to enjoy the *company* while we wait to be taken into the *place*.

Then there is that other beautiful passage, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be *with Me where I am*, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world."

What can there be more wonderful than this, dear brethren? We need to have our shoes off; it is holy ground. What grace, to allow us to hear the prayer of the Lord for His own. He had just been pouring out His heart to His Father for His own which are in the world; for their preservation and blessing while left in it: but He did not intend that they should always remain in it; His *promise* to them is not forgotten, and becomes a *prayer* to His Father that it may be accomplished; and accomplished it will be—yea, it *must* be. The prayer of the Beloved Son must be answered.

Then there is another reason why it should be answered.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James v. 16). And, beloved brethren, is not the Lord Jesus *the* righteous Man, as well as *the* dependent Man, as set before us so beautifully in psalms xvi. and xvii.? Is not *His* prayer the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man? Surely! surely! And the Holy Spirit says "it availeth *much*." A man of like passions with ourselves could pray earnestly and stay the bottles of heaven from emptying themselves on the earth. But Jesus, God's beloved Son, has prayed as the righteous Man, and that prayer will be fulfilled—it *must* be fulfilled.

He has asked that we should be with Him where He is. But why? Is it merely that we should be in the Father's house instead of here on earth? Oh no. It is "that we might *behold His glory—a given glory—and a glory given to Him who was the object of the Father's love before the foundation of the world, but who came into this world and by His obedience unto death furnished the Father with a fresh motive to love Him (Jno. x. 17), and to glorify Him with Himself. And we are going to see that! To behold His glory! A glory we can never share; but a glory we can behold, and find our joy in beholding it, while our hearts delight themselves in the thought that it is His and that He is worthy of it.*

He has *promised* and *prayed*. His promise cheers much, and His prayer avails much. Do our hearts say, "Lord, what wait I for?" Himself! Himself! Nothing more, and nothing less. "Jesus, Thou art enough." We draw our comfort from His promise, and bow and worship as we listen to His prayer. There is the double reason why it should be fulfilled. It is the prayer of the beloved Son; and it is "the effectual fervent prayer of *the* righteous man, and avails much." Blessed be *His* holy name forever and for evermore!

The Lord, beloved brethren, make it all real in our souls and create a deeper affection in our hearts, and give us a deep and profound enjoyment of it here and now, for His name's sake.

New Zealand.

WM. EASTON.

THE DIVINE SIMPLICITY OF NEW BIRTH.

THE necessity of being born again or from above, or, as it is commonly expressed, of regeneration, is well understood and most surely allowed among the saints. But is there not a more simple and distinct character in the new birth than is generally apprehended? I judge there is. For *the doctrine commonly raises in the mind a sense of something strange and indefinite.* But this need not be.

Nicodemus had come as a pupil to Jesus. "We know that Thou art a teacher come from God," he says; upon which the Lord tells him at once that he must be born again. But He does not end His words with him till He directs him to the brazen serpent, teaching him that it is *there* he must go in order, as it were, to gather up the seed of this needed new life.

In what character, then, must he take his place there, and look at the Son of Man lifted up on the cross? Simply *as a sinner*, a conscious sinner, carrying, like the bitten Israelite, the sentence of death in himself. Such an one Nicodemus had still to know himself to be, for as such an one he had not now come to Jesus; and therefore he must begin his journey afresh, he "must be born again," he must reach Jesus by a new path, and in a new character. He judged himself to be a pupil, and Jesus a teacher come from God; but himself as a dead sinner, or as a man bitten by the old Serpent, and the Son of God as a quickening Spirit, a justifying Redeemer, he did not yet understand; and so the ground of his heart had never yet received the seed of life.

The *character* of this life, this eternal life, this

divine nature in us, is thus as simply defined as its *necessity*. The secret of it lies in learning Jesus the Son of God *as a Saviour*, in coming to Him as a poor convicted sinner, looking at Him in that virtue which the brazen serpent carried for the bitten Israelite. And, as suggested by other parts of this Gospel, it is very sweet to trace the onward path of Nicodemus from this stage of it. He had, as we have seen, hitherto mistaken his road; but though that may give him a longer journey, it proves in the end, from the direction which Jesus here gives him, a right and a safe one. For in the next stage of it we see him standing for Jesus in the presence of the council, and meeting something of the reproach of the rejected Galilean (chap. vii.). And at the close he stands where the Lord at this outset directed him, at the place of this brazen serpent. He looks at the Son of Man lifted upon the cross. He goes to Jesus, not as a pupil to a teacher; but he goes to Him, and owns Him, and honors Him, no longer *by night*, nor in *the presence of the council* merely, but in *the broad daylight*, and in *the presence of the world*, as the wounded, smitten and bruised Lamb of God (chap. xix.). He was slow-hearted, perhaps. *But the serpent is still on the pole even for such*. It hangs there still, waiting to be gracious.

Thus we discern *the character* as simply as we learn *the need* of this new life. We find out the seed that produces it. The divine power, the Holy Ghost, who presides over all this in His own energy, works after a manner beyond our thoughts. Whether the wind or the Spirit, we know not the path thereof. But the nature of the seed He uses, and of the soil in which He casts it, are thus made known to us.

The one is the word of salvation; the other, the soul of a poor convicted sinner.

And this life which flows through the family of God is *spirit*—because Jesus, the Second Man, the head of it, is “a quickening Spirit;” and “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” as our Lord here teaches. This is our new life. It is eternal, infallible life; standing, whether in the head or members of the body where it moves, in victory over all the power of death. And our divine Teacher further says, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” There is no entrance there for any but new-born ones, *and such new-born ones, as we have seen, sinners quickened and justified by the word of salvation.* There are no righteous ones, no wise or rich ones, in that kingdom—none who stand in such-like confidence in the flesh. This truth is thus established. Blessedly, for our joy and stability of heart. For while this is very decisive, it is very comforting. It is very comforting to see that the Word, which says, “Except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom,” thereby clearly lets us know that if we be born again we shall see it—no fraud or force of men or devils shall prevail to keep us outside of it. If we will take (drawn, doubtless, by the drawing of the Father, in the secret power of the Holy Ghost) the place of poor convicted sinners, and receive the word of salvation from the Son of God,—if we but look as the bitten Israelites to the uplifted serpent,—then the kingdom is already entered, life is now enjoyed, and glory shall be. The song that we then sing is but echoed through the eternity of heaven. The sight that we then get of Jesus and His salvation is

but enlarged in the sphere of coming glory. We *have* eternal life, and the principles of heaven in us.

But to return for another moment to Nicodemus, I may say that, when the Lord had thus disclosed the seed of this new life to him, He seeks to sow it in him, to sow it (where it ever must be sowed, if unto fruit) in *the conscience*; for Nicodemus had come to the Lord by night, as though his deeds could not bear the light; and the Lord, aiming, as it would seem, to reach his conscience, just on their parting, says, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Thus our Lord teaches the need of the new birth, through the word of salvation. Without it, man cannot be trusted of God; and without it the kingdom of God could not, as our Lord here further teaches us, be either seen or entered. What association, for instance, had the elder brother with that which was the characteristic joy of the father's house? None! He never had so much as a kid to make merry with his friends: none but a returned prodigal could draw forth the ring, the best robe, and the fatted calf. And so the kingdom is such a kingdom as none but *redeemed sinners* can apprehend its joys, or have any place in it. All there are "new creatures," persons of an order not found in the first creation. Adam was made upright; but all in the kingdom are blood-bought sinners. Everything in it is reconciled by blood; as it is written—"And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether things on earth, or things in heaven."

J. G. BELLETT.

A SKETCH OF GOD'S DISPENSATIONAL DEALINGS.

MAN UPON HIS TRIAL TO SEE WHETHER HE HAS ANY
RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR GOD.

1ST TEST—MAN IN INNOCENCE IN EDEN.

2ND TEST—MAN UNDER CONSCIENCE.

3RD TEST—MAN UNDER LAW.

4TH TEST—MAN IN THE PRESENCE OF THE SON OF GOD.

Result.—Man is disobedient in Eden and loses innocence; every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually under the conscience he acquired at the Fall; he breaks the Law; and finally crucifies the Son of God. Henceforth he is not on his trial, but under judgment (Jno. xii. 31), and must take his place as **Lost**; hence a **Saviour** is provided, who comes to seek and save that which was lost.

5. MAN UNDER GRACE.

6. MAN IN THE KINGDOM.

7. THE ETERNAL STATE.

MAN IN INNOCENCE.

Man is first tested in innocence in the Garden of Eden, under one known command, "of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it" (Gen. ii. 17). He listens, however, to Satan's suggestion that God is not as good as He would appear to be, but is withholding some good thing from him, and takes Satan as his guide, and falls.

MAN UNDER CONSCIENCE.

We next find man, who had acquired conscience by his fall, tested under it simply, with no direct revelation from God. In result, God sees the wickedness of man great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually; and the earth is cleared of its pollutions by the Flood; Noah and his household, taking

refuge in the ark (type of God's salvation in Christ), alone being saved. Afterwards, idolatry is instituted (Josh. xxiv. 2), and God, now that all have departed from Him, brings in the great principle of election, by calling out Abraham from idolatry to Himself, and making him the father of a specimen people, if we may so say, upon whom God might confer every advantage which "man in the flesh" can enjoy, so as to test thoroughly what is in his heart, and see whether, under the most favorable circumstances, he has any righteousness for God.

MAN UNDER LAW.

Next, the law is given, being a direct revelation from God of what the measure of righteousness is which God demands from man. It tests man to find out whether he has any righteousness for God. It proves him to be a sinner, and, when rightly applied, convicts him of his inability to keep it, and at the same time condemns him, so proving that it is impossible for him to stand before God on the ground of works at all. "Cursed is *every one* that continueth not in *all things* which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). It was indeed a schoolmaster until Christ the Saviour came (ver. 24). But the specimen people broke the law, and slew the prophets whom God sent to recall them to it, effectually proving that man is ungodly and hopeless on the ground of responsibility.

MAN IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD'S SON.

The next and final test of man in responsibility (and hence this is called the "consummation of the ages," for so it should be translated—Heb. ix. 26), is the presence of God Himself come in flesh in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. But man hates both Him and His Father, and ends his mad wickedness by thrusting off the earth the One whom he cannot convict of sin (John viii. 46); Jew and Gentile, in the persons of the chief priests and Herod and Pilate, alike agreeing to effect His death (Luke xxii. 66; xxiii. 12). And now, man having failed when innocent, when under conscience, when under law, and when in the presence of God

manifest in flesh, he is no longer upon his trial to see whether he has any righteousness for God for he has conclusively proved that he has none, and must take his place as *lost*. "Now," says the Lord Jesus Christ in view of the cross, "is the *judgment* (not trial) of this world" (John xii. 31). Henceforth with man it is the *lost* sheep, the *lost* silver, and the *lost* son (Luke xv.).

MAN UNDER GRACE.

THE CHURCH.

(The present interval between the ages, or God's dispensational dealings with the earth.)

Christ having come in humiliation, and being rejected by man, God brings to light how utterly man and He were at variance, by raising from the tomb and setting at His right hand the One whom man had crucified; as Peter declares to the Jews, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). Now Peter had already by a revelation from the Father discerned that Jesus was the Christ, and the Lord had declared that "upon this rock" (*i. e.*, the confession of Himself as Christ, the Son of the living God) "I will build My Church;" (the Lord thus plainly showing by His use of the word "will build" that the existence of the Church was a future thing; see, too, Eph. iii. 3, 8; Col. i. 24, 27). "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;"—keys which Peter subsequently used to unlock the door of the kingdom to the Jews in Acts ii., and to the Gentiles in Acts x., the Holy Ghost on each occasion ratifying what he had loosed or unlocked on earth, for we read on each occasion that He was poured out (Acts ii. 18, 33; x. 45), God thus formally doing away with the natural distinctions between Jew and Gentile (distinctions formed by God Himself, and in the Millennium to be re-established)—a fact which Peter was quick to recognize (Acts xi. 17). Both Jew and Gentile are now baptized into one Body, the mystic Body of Christ, the Church; "For by one Spirit we

are all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles" (1 Cor. xii. 13); and this Body, consisting of all true believers in this interval, is united to Christ the Head in heaven by the Holy Ghost (Col. i. 18). "He is the Head of the Body, the Church;" and the expression of the Church in any place is, according to Christ's own definition, where two or three are gathered together unto His name.

Peter then, having performed his allotted task in opening the door of the kingdom to Jew and Gentile, retires as it were into the background, and henceforth Paul, the vessel chosen by God to be the minister of the Church, is brought to the front (Col. i. 24, 26; Eph. iii. 1, 11). To him was revealed, as he informs us in each passage, the mystery hitherto hidden in God Himself, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, and of the same Body, and that Christ should be in them. God thus contradicts the errors of the Romish Church, for it is Christ, not Peter, who builds His Church; nor do men build with keys, but unlock doors with them, while the ministry of the Church was entrusted not to Peter, but to Paul.

The Church, then, is characterized by the Holy Ghost being sent down to earth, consequent on Christ having gone up to heaven, to unite believers to one another and to Christ the Head where He is. "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send Him unto you" (John xvi. 7). She was formed at Pentecost at the coming of the Holy Ghost, and will remain till the Holy Ghost departs (2 Thess. ii. 7), when the dead and living saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, before the vials of God's wrath are poured out on a guilty world. She fears no judgment, for her judgment has been borne by Christ (John v. 24), but Enoch-like, before her rapture, speaks of it to a guilty world (Jude 14, 15). Chosen, as the individuals composing her were, in Christ before ever Adam sinned or a world was (Eph. i. 4), and blessed, not as the earthly people, Israel, will yet be with all *material* blessings in *earthly* places, but with all *spiritual* blessings in *heavenly* places in Christ (Eph. i. 3), and to be caught up at any moment out of this scene as the Bride to meet her Lord (1 Thess. i. 10; iv. 15-18; 1 Cor. xv. 51-

57; Rev. xxii. 17); the Church's privileges and portion are peculiar and heavenly; and God's dealings with the earth are therefore during this present period in suspense, though directly the Church is removed they are again resumed.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE DIVISIONS OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

A HELP FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE SCRIPTURES.

IT is exceedingly helpful to an understanding of the three epistles to the Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians, to apprehend their distinctive features, and progressive nature. Thus the epistle to the **Romans** deals with man as on the earth *alive in sins*, with all his members warring against God (iii. 13, 19), and God's solemn verdict of "Guilty before God" pronounced upon him; whereupon God sets forth Christ as a Mercy-seat through faith in His blood, so that His claims against sin having been met, He can act consistently with His own character in justifying him who believeth in Jesus (iii. 26). We shall find that this epistle views the believer throughout as a justified man indeed, but not viewed as risen, though Christ is so viewed (iv. 24, 25). **Colossians**, on the other hand, treats in general of the believer as formerly *dead in sins* (ii. 13), but quickened, out of that state of death, together with Christ, and risen with Him (iii. 1); Christ, indeed, ascended and sitting at God's right hand, while the believer, as risen (but not ascended), is bidden to seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth. **Ephesians** treats of the believer as formerly *dead in sins* (ii. 5, 6), and of Christ as raised, ascended, and seated in the heavens, and the believer as quickened

together with Christ, and raised up, and seated in the heavens in Him.

Thus, briefly, Romans gives us Christ raised, and the believer a justified man alive on earth. Colossians, Christ raised and ascended, and the believer, who was once dead in sins, risen. Ephesians, the believer who was once dead in sins, risen, and seated in the heavenlies in Christ, who is raised, ascended, and seated there.

But to turn to our subject. The epistle to the Romans is divided into four great sections, viz. :

Section I., from chapter i. to chapter v. 11; subject, the justification of the sinner.

Section II., from chapter v. 11 to the end of chapter viii.; subject, the deliverance of the saint.

Section III., from chapter ix. to the end of chapter xi.; subject, the reconciling of God's promises to Israel with His dealings with Israel and the Gentiles, and with His actings towards both in free grace.

Section IV., from chapter xii. to the end of the epistle; subject, exhortations and salutations.

In treating of God's salvation, it is with the first two sections that we have specially to do; and we find that they admit of several important sub-sections, the grasping of which will greatly help to elucidate the subject.

Section I., then, which treats of the *justification of the sinner*, is subdivided thus :

SUB-SECTION.

(a) Chap. i. 1-17, being introductory.

(b) Chap. i. 18-32, taking up the state of the Gentiles in general.

(c) Chap. ii. 1-16, taking up the state of the Gentile moralist.

(*d*) Chap. ii. 17-iii. 20, taking up the state of the Jew.

(The result of these sub-sections is to prove all the world, Jew and Gentile, guilty before God.)

(*e*) Chap. iii. 21-iv. 25, showing that, man having no righteousness for God, God provides righteousness for man, and the testimony of Abraham is adduced to prove that righteousness is imputed on the principle of faith, not works; and of David to prove that it is to the sinner, and not to the righteous, that it is imputed.

(*f*) Chap. v. 1-11 gives us the results of what has preceded.

Section II. treats of the *deliverance of the saint*, and is subdivided thus:

SUB-SECTION.

(*g*) Chap. v. 12-vi. 23, Sin is considered, and the saint's deliverance from it.

(*h*) Chap. vii. 1-viii. 10, Law is considered, and the saint's deliverance from it.

(*i*) Chap. viii. 11-27, the saint's full and final deliverance at death, or at the rapture, by the redemption of the body.

(*j*) Chap. viii. 28-39, being the conclusion of the subject.

JOHN FORT.

“Begin and end each day with God;
 And in the hours between
 Let love of self be crucified,
 And be just what you seem.”

SEVEN DISTINCT TITLES OF CHRIST IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

8. I AM THE WAY, AND THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE.

(Concluded—which was put by error to the previous article, p. 74.)

I AM the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman. . . . I am the Vine, ye are the branches." The Father purges the branches that they may bear more fruit; the Vine itself does not require this care and discipline. The vine is the plain type of fruitfulness; and while it *always* bears fruit,—for Christ would never be fruitless,—yet the branches, which we are, require the purging work that more fruit may be borne by *them*. He is the root-stem from which all springs forth. In Him the sap of life, which He presses into each branch, that it may bear fruit; as the vine-root, by what is called the "root-pressure," permeates the branches with the sap of life, which is in itself. The branch in Christ which is fruitless is without the life. Thus while *outwardly* in connection with the Vine, *inwardly* it has refused what would make it fruitful. Having no vital connection, it is in due time taken away; and finally all such are gathered and cast into the fire. To abide in Christ is the receptive condition of this life, and then, as a result, He abides in the branch. This is the only possible way to bring forth fruit. Apart from the Vine, the branch is dead; but if it abide in the Vine, it will bear much fruit.

The thought of Christ as "the true Vine" is that He alone—not Israel—has borne fruit for God. He

is the *true* Vine in contrast with Israel, who had so signally failed in a like character (Isa. v. 1-7). Man at his best had utterly failed as to the question of fruit-bearing. In the place of barrenness on which the curse abode, and from which no fruitful root had ever sprung, Christ grows up "as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground" (Isa. liii. 2). He struck down deep into man's ruined condition in all its barrenness, and where the curse rested on everything. Thus we have suggested the depth of humiliation into which the Son of God came to bring forth fruit for God. It is the root planted in this way that shoots up into the light of heaven, making its branches spread out and bear fruit. So Christ entered into the darkness of death and judgment, suggested by the vine-root buried in the earth; and out of this He comes forth, raised up into the glory and light of heaven itself, with His many branches—His saved people.

Thus we are identified with Him in resurrection, having first "become identified with Him in the likeness of His death." And here the word "identified" is literally "grown up with," even as the branches with the vine grow up together, and so are thoroughly one. He has linked Himself with us and endured the consequences in death and judgment; but having come out of this into the light, He has brought us, the branches, into the same light with Himself. We who were dead in sins God hath "quickened together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 5, 6). Thus, out of death, fruit for eternity has been produced to God's praise and glory.

It is the divine perfection of Christian attainment which is presented to us in Christ as the Vine. A fitting climax to these titles which show His relation to the eternal life communicated and dependent in His people. A true seven, because manifestly we have reached the full height of Christian relation to Christ. Here it is, in plain language, we in Him and He in us. Beyond this we cannot possibly go.

From what we have been considering, we see plainly that the two great thoughts connected with this figure of the vine is the depth of His humiliation, and the height of His glory in resurrection. The vine-root, first sunk into the earth, shoots up for fruit-bearing into the heavenly sunlight. Thus we have the complete setting aside of the natural man as worthless; and it is the Second Man, the Lord out of heaven, who is the Fruitbearer. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things." We see this Vine spreading forth with its glorious fruit, to the praise and satisfaction of God. It is this which makes glad the heart of God; it is His joy, as it will, in a day to come, make the whole creation a temple of praise.

The lesson in this for us is an intensely practical one. In it lies the secret of how we can bear fruit for God. The life in Him is divine, eternal; and this life is also in us, since it is His life which He has communicated to us. Life, of course, must manifest itself. That, therefore, which should be manifested in us, is nothing less than the life of Christ. Let the question be turned in upon our hearts as to how far this is true of us. To what extent do we show forth that we are living branches of "the True

Vine?" "He that *abideth* in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing." May God in His grace grant deep searching of heart in His presence, where the purging work of the Husbandman will bring forth more fruit. We cannot fail to see how far short we come in this respect. But the way of victory is in allowing Christ, the life-sap, to fill the branch with Himself. The result is the precious fruit—Christ manifest in us. In view of failure in this respect, how blessed to look forward to that coming eternity in which Christ, the True Vine, shall be displayed with all His branches displaying its precious fruit! Then will the Vine, we may say, be full grown, giving forth all the luxuriance of perfect fruit, to the praise and glory of God—to the joy and gladness of the whole creation. It is Christ and His members, the Vine and its branches, which will form the blessed centre of blessing in eternity. But while we are left down here, it is to bear this same relation to a perishing world that we will then bear to a redeemed world. Christ is the divine depository of all blessing; we, as the branches in Him, are to be the means of blessing to others. *All fulness is in Christ*, and we therefore, the branch-pipes which lead from this glorious Vessel, should certainly overflow in blessing to all around. May it be so with us, to the praise and glory of His precious name!

J. B., JR.

GLORY.

WHEN all my labors and trials are o'er,
 And I am safe on that beautiful shore,
 Just to be near the dear Lord I adore
 Will thro' the ages be glory for me.

Oh, that will be . . . glory for me . . .

Glory for me . . . glory for me . . .

When by His grace I shall look on His face,
 That will be glory, be glory for me.

C. H. GABRIEL.

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When the Redeemer triumphant shall show
 All His redeemed ones made whiter than snow,
 Then will the light of eternity glow

Through all those pages that once seemed so dim
 And that will be . . . glory for Him . . .

Glory for Him . . . glory for Him . . .

When from each land all His saved ones shall stand
 That will be glory, be glory for Him.

When the great kingdom made perfect shall be,
 And all mankind His salvation shall see,
 Then all the earth shall from bondage be free
 While through all regions shall echo His call.

And that will be . . . glory for all . . .

Glory for all . . . glory for all . . .

When without stain they with Jesus shall reign,
 That will be glory, be glory for all.

So, with rejoicing His banner we bear,
 Thankful that we in His service may share:

Gladly to all we His message declare

While for His coming our lamps we will trim.

Thus render we . . . glory to Him . . .

Glory to Him . . . glory to Him . . .

This be our aim all His truth to proclaim

While we give glory, all glory to Him.

Keady, Ontario, 1906.

T. WATSON.

"THE WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN."

"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (Rev. xii. 1).

A CORRESPONDENT inquires as to the significance of the sun and moon in this passage. Recognizing the woman as a symbol, not of the Church, as frequently suggested, but of Israel, "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came" (Rom. ix. 5; see also Isaiah xxvi. 17, 18, compared with chap. ix. 6, 7), one would naturally expect to find the other symbols used in Scripture in connection with the same people. The mind at once reverts to Joseph's second dream, as recorded in Gen. xxxvii. 9, and interpreted by his father in ver. 10. His own words are: "Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me." In amazement his father inquires: "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" Plainly the same figures are used in the passage under consideration, that there may be no mistake in the identification of the woman. Joseph himself, of course, would be the

twelfth star, thus giving the same number in the first book of the Bible as in the last.

By turning to Jer. xxxi. 35-37 we learn that sun, moon and stars are also signs of Jehovah's everlasting covenant with His earthly people. "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, . . . if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever."

The two covenants would also seem to be set forth in the sun and the moon. We know that the glory of the moon is a reflection of the light of the sun: in like manner the old covenant was not without glory, for it reflected in a measure the light of the new covenant, which is the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance,—which glory was to be done away,—how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? for if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." After the rapture of the Church the new covenant is to be made with Israel and Judah. Fittingly, therefore, the woman appears *clothed with the sun*, while the moon is *under her feet*.

“Faith which works by love.” Love never works for wages. It has a different motive. It seeks not its own interest, but that of its object. It does not count how much it has already done, but keeps watch for what it may yet do. The hireling works for so much money; the legalist for so much happiness hereafter; the Christian works because he believes that God in love gave His Son for him, that Christ in love suffered to obtain his eternal salvation, and thus, his heart responsive to that love, animated by it, urges him to service for Christ's sake to all who have need of Christ.

There is reward here and hereafter for such services, and God holds it up in His Word for encouragement, but the only *motive* with which the power of the Holy Spirit can be, is love.

CURRENT EVENTS.

IN the line of Current or Future events, it will be of interest to consider what may be the typical teaching of the battle of the four kings with five in Gen. xiv. To some it would seem almost incomprehensible that God should be speaking so early in Genesis of events to transpire in the seventieth week of Daniel—centuries before the prophecy concerning these weeks. But He has spoken in the opening chapter of the book of the whole course of time from the beginning to the end. We need not be surprised then if we find in subsequent chapters some hint of the events to occur by the way.

Every student of prophecy is familiar with what is called "the revived Roman empire," which will be composed of ten European kingdoms, bound together by mutual agreement to protect their common interests, and possessing a preponderance of power which will enable them to dictate to the rest of the world. The union will be of such magnitude that it will consider itself supreme over all powers of the earth and will assert world-wide dominion. It will be said, "Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" (Rev. xiii. 4.)

Toward the end of the seventh seal, at the sounding of the sixth trumpet, it is said, "Loose the four angels which are bound in (by) the great river Euphrates." (See Rev. ix. 14 and xvi. 12.) These evidently represent four great powers to the east of that river. It is also equally plain that they are powers opposed to the Roman empire, whose armies will be at that time in Palestine. These cross the Euphrates into the land to "slay the third part of men," *i. e.*, the armies of the Roman empire. Their number is 200,000,000 (Rev. ix. 15, 16).

The German emperor was the first to suggest what is styled "the yellow peril." He meant by it that Japan, being victorious over Russia, there was danger of the yellow race becoming more powerful in the world than the white race; and the fact that at the present time Japan is sending large numbers of her officers to China for the training of the Chinese troops is cause for apprehension to many. However this may be, or whether the vast and incomprehensible number (equal to half the population of China) is really literal or not, we cannot tell; but it is, we believe, representative of four allied powers of Asia who will sweep into Palestine, carrying all before them, and destroy the armies of the beast or Roman empire which will be thought to be invincible. It is, we believe,

the fulfilment of the picture in Gen. xiv.—the battle of the four kings with five, the coming one twice five, in which the four are victorious as in the days of Abram.

Arming his trained servants, born in his own house, Abram goes forth to rescue his brother Lot. Lot is dear to the heart of Abram by kindred relationship; and while the kings of the earth may destroy one another, when one of his own is involved he must assert himself and vindicate the rights of his own people. They had once walked together, but long since had been obliged to part company. Lot had found amongst the Gentiles a companionship congenial to him, while Abram had gone up from him to his own place of communion with the Father.

So Christ has gone on high. His own people Israel have turned their backs upon Him and are away amongst the nations. They have been diligently seeking their portion there, and will continue to do so until enemies on every hand bring them to the deepest and sorest time of misery and trial they have ever known. This was the case with Lot; when the enemies had triumphed over those in whom he trusted, Abram alone is able to deliver him. "As it was in the days of Lot, . . . even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke xvii. 30).

May we not see in Melchizedek and Abram here the offices of Priest and King met together as in the Millennial day? "He shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both" (Zech. vi. 13).

R. B. E.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 7.—In what way especially do you think that David was a man after God's own heart?

Ans.—In his steadfast trust in God, shown by his ready obedience. In that he always justified God and took sides with Him against himself. In that he submitted patiently, without murmuring, to His discipline.

His obedience and trust in God are so marked that, as in the case of Saul's life, which he could easily have taken and gotten the kingdom, he could patiently wait for God's time and way, though it involved much suffering and reproach for him. In result he became so acquainted with God that God's praises filled his heart, and, breaking out of his lips, refresh and strengthen God's people to this distant day.

We must not confound "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," spoken over the head of the blessed Son of God, with "a man after Mine own heart," spoken of one whose perfection was to know how to hide in that same "beloved Son" of whom David prophesied.

QUES. 8.—Will you kindly give your thought on Rom. xi. 12: "If the fall of them (the Jews) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles—" Why in one clause the riches of *the world*, and in the other the riches of *the Gentiles*? In our meeting for the study of the Epistle the above verse attracted our attention, and we failed to understand the difference between Gentiles and the world.

Ans.—The fall of Israel is the riches of the *world*: As long as Israel was acknowledged of God as His people on earth, the proclamation of God's glad tidings to *all*, indiscriminately, was hindered. Our Lord Himself said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." *Their* fall, then, became the riches of *the world*, according to Isa. xlix. 4-6, and Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 20. But Paul was the minister to the *Gentiles*, the minister of the Church—the mystery revealed through him (Rom. xi. 13; Col. i. 24, 25). This is the Gentile aspect of the testimony for God which the olive-tree represents. So, then, Israel's "diminishing" (there is yet a *little* remnant according to the election of grace) is the riches of the *Gentiles* now—that is, the plenitude of the heavenly blessing—the *Church's blessing*, in contrast with the earthly blessing of Israel.

"*The world*," then, stands in contrast with Israel as to the *extent* of the blessing; "*the Gentiles*," as to its *character*.

QUES. 9.—Is the supper in John xii. 2 identical with that in Matt. xxvi. 6, and in Mark xiv. 3? Is there anything more known of "Simon the leper"? Was he connected in any way with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus?

Ans.—Yes, we believe it is the same in each passage you refer to. Each passage, taken with its context, shows it to be at the very close of our Lord's ministry—near the time of His death.

We know of no other reference in Scripture about this Simon. One of the same name is referred to in Luke vii., but is evidently another person, and the occasion a different one.

Save that he lived in the same village (Bethany) with Martha, Mary and Lazarus, and that he seemed to share their affection for the Lord, nothing more is said of him that we know.

QUES. 10.—Is the ordinance of Baptism figurative of resurrection as well as of death? Do not such scriptures as Col. ii. 12; Rom. vi. 3, 4; 1 Peter iii. 21, teach this? The putting under the water is figurative of death; is the coming out of the water equally significant? or, is the figure completed in burial, and the power of resurrection attributed to the Spirit's operation?

Ans.—Col. ii. 12 is the only passage we know in the Scriptures which associates resurrection with baptism; but, as is well known, it is a question of translating the Greek words *ἐν ᾧ*—as correctly translated by "in whom," as "in which." We believe that the burden of the whole passage from the beginning of the chapter shows that the rendering "wherein" in the 12th verse should be "in whom," referring to Christ Himself, and not to baptism. In Rom. vi. 3, 4, it is Christ who is risen, not the baptized person. In 1 Peter iii. 21 Noah's ark passing through the judgment is the figure of the baptism through which Christ passed on the cross, by which we are saved, of which water baptism is also the figure. Christ rising out of this judgment proves our salvation completed, and gives us therefore "a good conscience."

We quite agree with your expressed thought that the purport of baptism is ended when the person is under water, though it is with resurrection in view.

Other questions remain, which will find place, D. V., in our next issue.

THE CORONATION DAY.

TO-DAY there live those who have a title to a throne and dominions on which the sun never sets. In course of time, if God permit, they will ascend that throne, be crowned, and reign, and then die. Their reign is a limited one, and ends by their submission to the king of terrors, whose power is greater than their own; and their kingdoms, like themselves, will finally crumble to dust. Humbling thought!

To-day there lives One who has indisputable title to all the kingdoms of this world. Marvelous thought! Unseen by the natural eye, yet seen and known to faith, He is hidden in the house of God meantime, to be brought out when God's *seventh* year dawns—crowned, owned and acclaimed as the "King of kings and Lord of lords." His reign will be "for ever and ever," and "of His kingdom there shall be no end." It shall "never be destroyed;" and Jesus, the rejected, despised and disowned Saviour, will yet be acknowledged as God's King in Zion (Psa. ii. 6) and "King over all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 9).

There is a very remarkable analogy to this in 2 Chron. xxiii. We there see Athaliah, "that wicked woman," who endeavored to destroy *all* the seed royal and then take the throne and kingdom herself. One of the king's sons, however, was stolen away, and thus saved from her murderous hand, and hidden away in the house of the Lord for six years. During that time there were two parties in the kingdom—Athaliah and her followers, her aiders and

abettors; and Jehoiada the priest, and the few who were let into his secret, and who rallied round the young king. While Athaliah was seemingly having it all her own way with the mass, Jehoiada was quietly, but steadily and surely, working on behalf of the rightful heir to the throne, and preparing the way for the coronation day that was coming.

The young king (Joash) was taken out of a scene of death when the rest of his brethren were slain. Jesus, however, went *into* and *came out* of death. He went into it for others, in order to clear them from that which would have taken them there. He bore their judgment, and cleansed and fitted them for reigning with Himself in the coming day of glory. Divine *love* brought Him down into that place—Divine *righteousness* has taken Him up into His present place, and will bring Him out by and by into His own rightful and publicly manifested place on earth, associated with those for whom He died, and with whom He intends to reign. Wonderful thought for poor creatures like us, saved by His grace!

Joash was hidden six years in the house of the Lord. The numeral six denotes the limit of man's efforts and work, and then comes rest. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work." Six days, or be it six years, centuries, or millenniums, the teaching is the same—the end of *man's day*; his labor, and toil, and sin, and sorrow, all ended, and the dawn of the seventh day, the day of rest—the keeping of a sabbath which remains for the people of God. Then Jehoiada surrounded the young king, with his faithful band of armed men, brought him out, presented him to the people, crowned him, anointed him and proclaimed him king: while the

usurper was dragged out to the place of execution, and slain.

Jesus is hidden in the heavens during man's day. It is God's blessed answer to the perfect sacrifice of His well-beloved Son on the cross. God has taken Him in, and said, "Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thy foes Thy footstool." Jesus is on high, "crowned with glory and honor." Worthy place for such a peerless Saviour! None the less is it true that, so far as earth is concerned,

"Our Lord is now rejected, and by the world disowned;
By the many still neglected, and by the few enthroned;
But soon He'll come in glory, the hour is drawing nigh;
For the crowning day is coming—by and by."

While Jesus is thus hidden, Satan holds high carnival, and is apparently having it all his own way as he leads the masses down the broad road which ends in death, judgment, and the lake of fire. Nevertheless, souls are being called out from the mass, saved and introduced to and let into the secret of the King Blessed and glorious truth! By and by they will hear the bugle-call, and be caught up to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. iv. 16-18); and then, when the seventh year dawns,

The heavens which now conceal Him
In counsels deep and wise,
In glory shall reveal Him
To glad, expectant eyes.

Yes, the Lord Jesus will then appear "in power and great glory" for the discomfiture of His enemies and the joy of His waiting earthly people. Not merely *one* crown on His blessed head, but "on His head *many* diadems"—"King of kings"—"the

Prince of the kings of the earth"—and "the armies which were in heaven following Him on white horses" (Rev. xix.). What a sight! How earth's greatest pageants will pale before that magnificent spectacle!

O beloved saint of God, what marvelous grace to give to poor sinners like ourselves a place in that company that is to come out as the followers of that glorified and manifested Saviour and King! What love and goodness to open our eyes and hearts and let us into state secrets and communion with the King while hidden! What a privilege too! Do we value it as such? How our hearts ought to throb with joy and delight at the thought of the coronation day, the day of *His* manifestation to a wondering and admiring world! (2 Thess. i.). And to think He has assured our hearts of it now, and that we shall be in that great procession as He comes out from the hidden place and publicly manifests his glory! Oh, it is wonderful indeed!

What will it be to hear the shouts of the multitudes as they acclaim Him as their King and cry "Hosannah to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!" How different from the cry that once was heard, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Yet it is the same Saviour. Happy they who know Him, and who will own Him. How awful for those who find themselves numbered among His enemies in the day of His power!

Blessed be God for the work of the cross, accomplished by His beloved Son. There we behold everything that was against us borne by Jesus, the Lamb of God, in that unparalleled hour of awful judgment

when He met the holy and righteous claims of God against us. Now in resurrection-glory, He has given us a place with Himself beyond death and judgment, in light and everlasting blessing, both now and forever, in time and in eternity.

If heaven was astonished when He entered as *man*, earth will surely be astonished when they see the same blessed One come forth as *King*, "in *power* and *great glory* ; and then will the gates lift up their heads to let the King of glory in, and that King of glory none other than "Jesus," our own blessed and adorable Saviour. Oh for hearts to praise, worship and serve Him more!

New Zealand.

WM. EASTON.

ONE of the follies of those who industriously attack the authenticity of the Bible is that they make conclusions when they are incapable of obtaining all the facts involved, or of considering at one time all that may be brought forth against their position. New facts are constantly being brought to light that should have been included in their investigations, and without which their position must be most insecure. Indeed, I am persuaded that all the arguments of any particular person against the Bible have not satisfied *their own* minds as being conclusive.

F. H. J.

DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS.

(Dan. i. 3-21.)

A LOVELY and instructive picture is presented to us in the opening chapter of Daniel, and one affording wonderful encouragement to faith in a scene of evil and a day of trial.

The faith of these young men was something marvelous at a time like theirs, when the whole current of things was against them; but it is at such times that faith shines out the brightest. They are in the hands of Ashpenaz, whose name is significant in this connection: "I will bring out the sprinkled," since it is clear that they are indeed the "sprinkled" in the sense of Heb. x. 22; they have set themselves apart as true Nazarites unto the Lord, and He will not fail to "bring out" all such in due time, although He may pass them through the fire meanwhile, to test their faith.

Their names appear to have been of considerable importance, since their governor sees fit to change them.

Daniel means, "My God is judge;"

Hananiah, "A gracious giver is Jah;"

Mishael, "Who is as God [is]?"

Azariah, "Helped of Jah."

Beautiful names they are, and, it would appear to us at first sight, a serious loss to abandon them; but submission seems to be a prominent trait in the characters of these worthy youths—submission, at least, where submission does not mean insubjection to God. We must obey, but "we must obey God rather than men." When one cannot be obeyed

without disobedience to the other, then these faithful youths have a ready answer: "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods."

How fitting is it that Daniel's name should have the first place on this brief catalogue of names, shining like a grand beacon-light upon the threshold, as upon all their path, with its encouragement and its admonition, "My God is judge." Are they torn from their homes and their possessions in the land of their fathers, the land assigned them by the God of Abraham according to promise, and carried captive to a heathen land? "My God is judge." Are they now to find themselves in conflict with the wishes of their masters, who would require from them what their consciences forbid? "My God is judge." They confidently "commit their cause unto Him that judgeth righteously." How important, then, that this name should have first place in this connection, their guiding star through all the difficulties they are to encounter!

Hananiah comes next, confirming faith with the assurance of what *kind* of judge they have to do with; "A gracious giver is Jah." A righteous judge, and yet a gracious giver, are attributes which the Cross alone can unite; and are they not united for us in the wondrous "throne of grace?" (Heb. iv. 16.)

Mishael comes next, the *third* name, "Who is as God is?" suggesting the complete sufficiency of God for them; a question which, if it were but the language of their hearts, as it assuredly seems to have

been, was most triumphant and impossible of answer.

Azariah is the fourth (how significant that there are *four!*). "Helped of Jah" is the meaning of this, and suggests *experience*; they have found Him true to the faith that counts upon Him, as faith ever must—"He cannot deny Himself."

But their names are changed. Daniel becomes "Belteshazzar," which is "master of the treasure of the straitened," reminding us of what the apostle says—"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (2 Tim. i. 12). This change of name involves no loss, as is evident. It is a distinct gain since there is *experience* in it. These dear witnesses are indeed "straitened," and they have a "treasure;" it may not have been what Babylon would count treasure, but it was treasure which Nebuchadnezzar's fire could not touch, and they had committed it to His keeping. He was "master" of it, and would keep it.

Hananiah gives place to "Shadrach," meaning "the breast is tender," which at first sight does not appear to be much of a change, save perhaps from the abstract to the concrete. It is one thing to know the doctrine of the givingness of the Lord, and a precious thing too, but it is quite another to prove the tenderness of that "breast" by leaning upon it, as the "beloved" disciple of old. The change is a gain, and in the same direction as Daniel's.

Mishael becomes "Meshach," meaning "waters of appeasal." This may remind us of the "waters of quietness" of Psa. xxiii. 2, and, as taking the place of the other name, it may speak to us of "the peace

of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil. iv. 7). "Waters of appeal" supposes conflict, but rest as to it—God for us, *realized* to be so; and this is indeed gain, and in the same direction as before.

Azariah is changed to "Abednego," which is "servant of brightness." This is precisely like Isaiah of old (chap. vi. 1-8). The prophet had seen the "brightness," and been stricken down by it; now, as "helped of Jah," he can be the servant of that brightness—"Here am I, send me." He has learned the lesson, now he can teach it. It is ever the Lord's way. For this purpose were these dear faithful ones left in Babylon; and for this cause, may we not say, *we* are left here? Our Lord's prayer was "not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John xvii. 15). He would have "servants of the brightness" here during His absence.

How beautifully, then, are these names changed from the mere abstract to the concrete—from the mere doctrine to the realization in the soul! And the *world* changes them! Be it so; its utmost endeavors to wipe out all that is of God in His people can only result in transforming the doctrine into practice, in making them (like the true ruminant animal) transform the food they have gathered into that which shall form the bone and sinew of their moral being.

What a definite and wondrous purpose attaches to their sojourn in Babylon! and what deep meaning in all they are to pass through! "And since all this was "written for our learning," may we not say that the same, or similar, importance attaches to our sojourn in a world which knows not God, and whose prince

is the enemy of Christ? "Servants of brightness" we shall be indeed if we have learned the lesson these worthies and their names are designed to teach, and our faith be in exercise.

Melzar appears to be the one who had the more immediate charge of these young men—their "schoolmaster," may we say? His name means "He straightened the circumcised," and well pictures the "schoolmaster" referred to in Gal. iii. 24, who has important lessons to teach, if men will but listen to him. Alas, so many are filled with a sense of their own righteousness, that it may be said of them as of some stoutly religious ones of old, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: . . . who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." But these four were of the "true circumcision," which is "that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. ii. 29, and see Phil. iii. 3). They had "heard" their "schoolmaster," and had learned the lesson he had to teach; and now they can, in the boldness of faith, challenge him to leave them to their "pulse" for "ten days" (a significant number in this connection), and they will show a condition of things which he could never produce. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 3, 4).

Their first test is strikingly like the Lord's temptation in the wilderness, in that it has to do with their

food, what they subsist on; and how much a man is characterized by what he feeds upon! Our blessed Lord's reply to Satan, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," was more like the reply of these worthies than is at first sight apparent. The word rendered "pulse" is from the same root as the regular word for "seed." Those who are born of the incorruptible seed must needs have it to "grow thereby" (see 1 Peter i. 23-25 and ii. 2). If the enemy can but succeed in producing indifference to our daily food, he has gained an immense victory; but these worthies had doubtless learned from Proverbs, "Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat" (Prov. xxiii. 3). How bright and bold the faith of these four! "Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us pulse to eat, and water to drink," is their confident appeal to their tutor: the word of God, represented in its twofold character, as sustaining life and as refreshing, is all-sufficient for them.

May these lessons abide with us, dear fellow-believer; and in the same living faith may we too step out boldly upon the all-sufficiency of the word of our God in a world which knows not God, and in a day of increasing evil; believing it to be "God-breathed" and "profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the *man of God* may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17). And let our faith, as theirs, take in all who are likewise standing for Him in an evil day: compare, as to this, Dan. i. 12, 13; ii. 17, 18, 23.

J- B. J.

A SKETCH OF GOD'S DISPENSATIONAL DEALINGS.

MAN UPON HIS TRIAL TO SEE WHETHER HE HAS ANY
RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR GOD.

(Concluded from page 98.)

God next resumes His dealings with the earth; and time, according to His computation of it, begins again to run, and the last week of Daniel's seventy prophetic weeks, (sixty-nine of which were fulfilled when Messiah was cut off and had nothing, *i. e.*, did not receive His kingdom—Dan. ix. 26—*margin*), will find its accomplishment. The Holy Ghost, who now indwells the Church as the temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 16), will have departed—the Church being caught up to meet the Lord; and “He that now letteth” (*i. e.*, the Holy Ghost, who hinders the manifestation of Antichrist) “will be taken out of the way: then shall that ‘wicked one’ be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth.” Christ-rejectors and Christ-neglectors will be given to strong delusion that they should believe in Antichrist; that they all might be judged that believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thess. ii. 7, 12).

This will be the time of unparalleled judgment when God's wrath is poured out on a guilty world (Rev. v.—xvi.). But even then God gives a testimony, sending forth the “*everlasting gospel*” (not as now, the *gospel of the grace of God*), saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him . . . and worship Him that made heaven and earth and the sea and fountains of waters” (Rev. xiv. 6, 7). Then, too, there will be a testimony from the Jewish remnant to the fact that the King is coming—the “*gospel of the kingdom*” according to Matt. xxiv. 14; and, (as the Lord expressly says in answer to the disciples' questions, “When shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the age?”) “then shall the end come.”

Then shall appear the King of kings and Lord of lords, while Satan instigates the kings of the earth to resist His

claims at the great battle of Armageddon, but only for their destruction (Rev. xix. 11, 21). Then, too, shall be the *national* judgment foretold in Matt. xxv. 32, when the King shall judge the quick—the *living nations* (the dead are judged after the millennial reign, at the great white throne, Rev. xx. 12), according as they have accepted or rejected the gospel of the coming King preached by the Jewish remnant, whom the Lord hence calls His “brethren.”

Then shall Satan be bound and cast into the bottomless pit, and Christ shall reign over the earth a thousand years, while we shall reign over it with Him (Rev. xx. 1-6).

MAN IN THE KINGDOM.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

This is spoken of as the “age to come” in Heb. vi., 5; Heb. ii. 5; and Matt. xii. 32, but in each case is in our English version wrongly translated “world.” It is marked by God’s renewal of His dealings with His *earthly people* Israel, after the removal of the *heavenly people*, the Church, and is characterized by the presence of Christ on earth, whereas, as we have seen, the present period is characterized by the *absence* of Christ and the *presence* of the Holy Ghost. It is in this age that all the promises made by God to Abraham and David (which Israel had forfeited on the ground of responsibility,) shall be fulfilled according, not to responsibility, but sovereign grace. The middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, which had been broken down by God, (both in this present age being baptized into one body, Eph. ii. 14), will also be restored; and all the Gentiles will flock to Jerusalem, which will again become God’s centre of worship, where Christ the Son of David, the true Solomon, will reign with undisputed sway, Satan being bound in the bottomless pit (Isa. lx., lxi., lxii.). The earth shall enjoy universal blessing then; “there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days . . . the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord” (Isa. lxv. 20, 25).

MAN'S LAST TEST.

But man is to be subjected to yet one final test. Will his heart be changed after one thousand years of Christ's personal rule, during which Satan has been bound, and powerless to tempt? Scripture answers No; for the moment that Christ's millennial reign is over and Satan loosed (Rev. xx. 7-10), he gathers together the nations from the four quarters of the earth to battle, and their animosity is directed against the earthly saints, those who have been truly regenerate during Christ's reign. But directly they have compassed the saints about, and these last have proved their saintship by standing this separating test, God intervenes, and Divine judgment overtakes Satan and his votaries. He is then cast into the lake of fire, to be tormented forever; the great white throne is set up, and the wicked dead (all that have had no part in the first resurrection, or have not been regenerated during Christ's reign, verse 6), stand before it to be judged according to their works, and all whose names are not written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire.

THE ETERNAL STATE.

"Then the end, when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; . . . and when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." This done, the eternal state commences; there are new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and John beholds the Church, the heavenly saints, the holy Jerusalem, the Bride of the Lamb, descending out of heaven from God, having His glory. Meanwhile the nations of those that are saved on earth walk in the light of it, and there enters not into it aught that defileth—for there God is all in all.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus."

JOHN FORT.

CONVERSATION.

“Swift to hear, slow to speak.”

CONVERSATION often illustrates how little we know of true culture—of carefully cultivated good habits, of love, of self-denial, of godly wisdom. Is it proper conversation where—to use the terms of the Legislature—one “gets the floor,” and another “gets the floor,” each evidently asserting himself?

We may easily, without knowing it, only weary one another, or waste our time, and so injure instead of edify one another, by our words. “People must take me as I am,” one says; but has any one a right to claim that? “As we are” may be everything that is injurious and painful to one another. We have a right to expect of one another the fruits of the Spirit, and we have a right to expect that Christians should aim to edify one another, and not to please themselves.

To be truly Christian in life and habits, one needs to be under training and cultivation constantly, according to the Word, “swift to hear, slow to speak.” If our habit of conversation is defective, regularly calling for forbearance and patience in others, how much are we really gaining of the knowledge of Christ? There is some serious lack of self-judgment and of prayer, of reality, of heart-work, of walking before God. “That which is good, . . . to the use of edifying,” will “minister grace to the hearer.”

A little silence, sometimes, in conversation, might lead to what would be manifestly for good, when an effort to sustain the conversation, or thoughtless remarks, may leave the heart vacant and defiled.

There is no such training, education, cultivation, wisdom, and true refinement, as that which true Christianity gives: but it must be true Christianity—the Word governing the heart and the conscience—not merely the head. “Death worketh in us,” Paul said, “but life in you” (2 Cor. iv.). As he faced that which demanded the denial of self, he ministered life and edification to others. But if a self-indulged mind is working in us, however little aware of it in our self-complacency, we work death in others. And in this way how much evil may we do, blindly and ignorantly!

According to Rom. viii., we know there are but the two sources of that which comes forth from us in our daily life—either the flesh, or the Spirit. There is no middle ground. May we lay it to heart, and seek grace to glorify God and edify one another; and the Lord will give help.

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Prov. xviii. 21).

“The words of a man’s mouth are as deep waters, and the well-spring of wisdom as a flowing brook” (xviii. 4).

“Understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools is folly.”

“The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.”

“Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones” (xvi. 22-24).

“The wise in heart shall be called prudent” (their reputation is good).

“And the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning” (xvi. 21).

E. S. L.

REFLECTIONS ON THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH.

ENTREATY AND WARNING.

(Jer. ii. to iii. 5.)

JEREMIAH'S first expostulation with his people—at least, the first recorded—is certainly a most remarkable address for one who said, “I cannot speak, I am but a child.” It would be difficult to find any portion of Scripture that would surpass it in genuine pathos and tenderness, not to speak of eloquence. The earnest pleading of the insulted and forgotten Lord, His grace and compassion-towards the guilty nation, blended with solemn warnings of dreadful days to come if the heart is not turned back to Him—all together make up a discourse that might have moved the very stones; but alas we read of no response on the part of hardened, wilful Judah.

The opening words are remarkably beautiful. “I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first-fruits of His increase. All that devour him shall offend: evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord” (vers. 1-3). How He delights to recall the first love of His people, when their hearts beat true to Himself and joy welled up in their souls at the thought of His dwelling among them (Ex. xvi.)!

Do we not well remember that it was so with us when first we knew Him to be really our Saviour-God and ourselves to be His forever, when the confidence of our hearts was established on His grace? How much He was to us then! What a poor thing this world seemed,

with all its glittering baubles! How gladly we turned from everything we had once delighted in to go out after Himself revealed in Jesus! He was outside this scene, the rejected One; we too, then, must be separated from it. That which had before been as the well-watered plains of Egypt to us now became as a desert-parched and dry, in which was nothing for our hearts. With deepest joy we exclaimed, "All my springs are in Thee," and sang exultingly of the "treasure found in His love," which had indeed "made us pilgrims below."

Those were truly bright and happy days when first Christ dwelt in our hearts by faith: days when He joyed in us and we in Him. But, may we not ask ourselves, is it so now? Must He look back and say, "I remember," or does He find us still occupied with Himself, still gladly and cheerfully counting all below as dross and dung for Him, still exclaiming, "One thing I do"? Alas that it should be ever otherwise! but the first complaint He had to make against the newly-founded Church, when all else was going on well and orderly, was this: "Thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. ii.).

"Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart" (Cant. iii. 11). If our joy was great, how deep was *His* when first our hearts were won for Himself! Beloved, do we give Him joy now as to our practical ways, and our heart's affections from which our ways spring? or is His Spirit grieved on account of our cold-hearted indifference—our heartlessness? for is it not worse than coldness? Let us turn, then, to His further gracious words in the portion before us.

(An extract from the now publishing No. of the "Treasury of Truth.")

THE SABBATH REST.

WE purpose to trace out a little the *Sabbath rest* spoken of in Gen. ii. 2, 3, and Heb. iv. 1-9; for, we believe, the thoughts of Scripture as to this are vague in the minds of many, and that any light and help from the Scriptures will be welcomed by many lovers of the truth. "All Scripture is profitable," and we believe the lessons of Gen. ii. 2, 3, and what they foreshadow, are reasonable and wholesome for our study and meditation.

The lessons we have in Heb. iv. open up the blessings God has in store for us, and are worthy of our careful inquiry; and the lessons, when read aright and compared with other lines of truth, are seen to *harmonize* and form a part of a complete, perfect whole.

The Word will bear searching: yea, we are blessed if we search it prayerfully and carefully with one thought before us—to acquire the knowledge of His will, to learn His truth. And as we open the precious volume, we feel there is much of this good land not yet possessed, though the whole land flows with milk and honey, and drinketh in the rain from heaven. Let us who have been privileged with much light, still approach the Book thus, and great and fuller blessing will be ours.

We will examine the subject before us under the following heads, which, we believe, give us the main lessons of the entire subject:

First—The *historic* Sabbath.

Second—The *prophetic* Sabbath.

Third—The *typical lessons* of the Sabbath—the full answer to the Sabbath type.

Fourth—The *eighth day*, and the place it occupies.

First.—In the opening of Genesis (chaps. i., ii.) we get the account of the *six days' work*, and at the close of all that vast work a *seventh day*, in which *God rested*. His work of creating and making was all finished, and He rested from all His work; then He *blessed* and *sanctified* that day.

This is the first *Sabbath rest*: but sin soon entered the world (Gen. iii.) and God's rest was broken; therefore the testimony of our Lord in healing on the Sabbath is, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17).

In Gen. ii. we have the first stage of the Sabbath history—"God *rested*;" that is a thing of the past; for since sin entered, God does *not* and *cannot rest*—He "worketh," and so does our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Ex. xvi. we have another stage of the historic Sabbath. In bringing His people Israel out of Egypt, and in the wilderness, God gave the Sabbath day to them for rest, and commanded them to observe and keep it sacred. It was a sign between Jehovah and Israel (Ex. xx. 8-10; xxxi. 12-17), and for them a day of rest—reminding them continually of *God's rest* (Gen. ii. 1-3). But Israel failed (as did Adam in Gen. iii.) in this respect as in all else: from Num. xv. 32-41 down through the prophecies we are reminded of this fact again and again. This Sabbath day (the seventh day) was never given to the *Gentiles*; and we never read in the pages of the New Testament that such was given to the Church or the

Christian: they observe another day—"the first day of the week"—the "*Lord's day*."

With these outlines of the historic seventh day, or Sabbath rest of the Old Testament, we may now further proceed:—

Second.—Israel failed, as we have said, to observe all that Jehovah had enjoined upon them; hence, the blessings promised them under law they lost by their disobedience. The golden calf shows how soon and how far they went astray, and other things follow.

But God abides faithful, notwithstanding all their failures and their sins. He sends His servants, the prophets, and they prophesy of a Deliverer, a *Saviour*, to deliver them from their sins; and this places in their hands "*the prophetic Scriptures*." In them the dawn of a new day appears, and those who loved those sacred prophecies ever looked for this "*day-dawn*," when the shadows would pass away; yea, "*the bright morning without clouds*" (2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4; Sol. Song ii. 17).

At the present time they are passing through the night of their sorrow; but the prophetic Scriptures are as a lamp that shineth in a dark place until the *day dawn*, and "*the Sun of Righteousness arise*" (Mal. iv. 2). *They* look for this. *The Church* looks for "*the Morning Star*;" and so heaven, not Palestine, is our hope (Rev. ii. 28; chap. xxii. 16).

This new day that prophecy opens up for *Israel* and the earth, is called "*the day of the Lord*." The siege of Jerusalem (A. D. 70) was the beginning of sorrows (Matt. xxiv. 8). The "*great tribulation*"

by and by will be, for "the remnant," their closing sorrows.

When "the Sun of Righteousness" arises, and His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. xiv. 4), the sorrows of the nation will pass away (Isa. xxxv. 10; lx. 18-22), and "the day of the Lord," the bright day of Millennial glory, will begin. Let us pause here a little, and examine those scriptures, lest we misapprehend what that "day" shall be.

The *Millennial age* is the great period kept in view for Israel and the earth in the prophecies; but this is not the eternal state. We get the Millennium in Rev. xx.; after that, the eternal state in Rev. xxi. 1-5—a very different thing. Israel and the earth look for "the day of the Lord," of which the prophets speak very fully: but the New Testament carries us further, and tells us of another day—"the day of God." *They* look for the first; we Christians really look on to the latter. See 2 Peter iii. 10-12. To distinguish them in 2 Peter iii. is a great help.

The Millennium is "the *age to come*," but the eternal state will be the "*age of the ages*." Eph. i. 21, and Heb. ii. 5, refer to "the age to come;" Eph. iii. 21, to the eternal state. (See J. N. D.'s translation.)

The Millennium will be the day when the Lord Jesus will rule and put down all His enemies—hence, "the day of the Lord." The eternal state will be the age that will have no end, when "God shall be all in all," and God shall rest—hence, "the day of God," "the day of eternity" (2 Pet. iii. 18, J. N. D.'s translation).

The 1000 years will begin by judgment and close with judgment: at the beginning, the Lord judges the quick, and at the close He judges the dead. The

remnant of Israel delivered will be blessed on the earth during the 1000 years.

The *nations* converted at that time will also be blessed under Christ's rule, and enjoy the days of heaven upon *the earth* (Deut. xi. 21).

Yet this Millennial Age does not give the full sum of blessing; there will not be *perfection* then, and therefore not perfect rest. This "day of the Lord" will be rather a *preparatory* age, preceding the eternal state, or "the age of the ages."

During the 1000 years there will be minor judgments also, whenever sin appears (see Psa. ci. 6-8; Isa. xxvi. 9; xxviii. 17-19; Zeph. iii. 5; Zech. xiv. 17-19). In view of this we could not rightly say God had His *rest*—the rest that Heb. iv. speaks of, and which Gen. ii. *foreshadows*.

In the Millennium righteousness will *reign*, and Christ will hold the rod of iron; yet some indeed will give but "*feigned obedience*" (Psa. xviii. 44; lxvi. 3, marg.). But in the *eternal state* ("the day of God," "the day of eternity," the "age of ages") we view a *new* heaven and a *new* earth, in which righteousness will *dwell*—not merely *reign*, as in the Millennium. In this new heaven and new earth sin shall never enter to break or disturb that rest of God.

In the Millennium Satan will be bound, shut up in the abyss; but in the eternal state he shall be cast into the *lake of fire*. In the Millennium sin will yet be in men's natures, on earth. In the eternal state there will be no more sin in either the new heavens or the new earth.

In that great and glorious scene, when all will be peace, joy, rest, righteousness, holiness, perfection, we will know better the value of two passages, John

i. 29, and Isa. ix. 6—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and "The Father of Eternity."

As "the Lamb of God," He shall cleanse away the sin of the world on the basis of His work of atonement.

As "the Father of Eternity," He shall bring in the new and blessed scene, and fill it with those who shall be to His own praise and glory. Here, and here only, could God rest, and rest forever.

A careful reading of the prophecies will be a great help here. Rev. xx. gives us the 1000 years of *Christ's reign*. Then follows "the little season" when "Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," and men again break out in open rebellion, closed up by fiery judgment from heaven: then the last enemy—death itself—will be destroyed.

Let us now pass on to the seventh day of Gen. ii.—the Sabbath rest.

Third.—The *typical* lessons of the seventh day are now before us, and Hebrews iv. will open the subject.

Whatever rest Israel enjoyed in Canaan in the days of Joshua, it was not what the seventh day of Gen. ii. *foreshadows*. Heb. iv., quoting from Psa. xcv., is proof of this: "There remaineth therefore a *rest* (Sabbath rest) for the people of God."

This verse carries us on to the end of all labor in a world where sin is, to that rest when creation shall rest with God forever.

And it is clear that Heb. iv. does not point to the Millennium (that was the theme of prophecies for Israel); but now we have, in this epistle, the *Christian's blessings*—and *they* are eternal. In Hebrews

we read of eternal *salvation*, eternal *redemption*, eternal *inheritance*, eternal *covenant*, eternal *judgment*, etc.; and if chap. iv. is read aright, it is the unbroken, undisturbed rest of God for all eternity which, in contrast with the present labor and toil, God's people are to enjoy with Him forever.

Now, to get the proper lay of these lessons, we will examine Gen. i. and ii. more carefully. If those days in Genesis are carefully noted, we will see a contrast between the *sixth* day and the *seventh*. It closes the previous five, and contrasts with the seventh: it is, we believe, the first Millennial type of the Bible.

In the sixth day Adam got *dominion* over the whole earth: Adam is a figure of Christ (Rom. v. 14), whose dominion over the earth in the Millennial day we have in Psa. viii. He is the true Adam, the Head. His bride is with him the sixth day, and they receive dominion, and together are the beings of note that day. The seventh day, when all work is finished, *God* rests. And here looms up before us the first type of *God's rest—eternity itself*. There is no need of pressing the seventh day in Gen. ii. as a Millennial type—it strains the lesson out of shape, and will not fit.

But if the sixth day is taken as it is given, then we see a beautiful type of Christ, the last Adam in dominion and rule, and His companion-bride with Him over the whole earth; this is "the day of the *Lord*."

In the seventh day it is "*God*" who is foremost: He is the one who appears, and He rests. It was *Adam in dominion* on the sixth day; but *God resting* on the seventh.

The sixth day was the day of *Adam*.

The seventh day was "the day of *God*."

One foreshadowed the Millennium; the other, the "day of God"—the eternal state. The Millennium will be partial blessing; the eternal state, complete and perfect. The seventh day points to *perfection* as well as *rest*; the sixth does not.

Then again it will be noted that the sixth day (as the other five) has an *evening* and a *morning* (a beginning and an end); but when we read of the *seventh*, the typical day of eternity, there is *no evening nor morning* mentioned. Can we say this omission has no meaning when we see inspiration at every step and upon every line—yea, with every jot and tittle? The *omissions* of the sacred Scriptures are for a purpose as well as what is given.

As we meditate on the seventh day, and look at the lessons there given, we think of the vastness of eternity! There never was a morning there—never a beginning; and the sun will never set there—never a nightfall; it is "*the perfect day*," and has NO END.

A. E. B.

(To be concluded in our next.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ques. 11. In what way did manna humble the people of Israel, as mentioned in Deut. viii, 16? and, applied to us, in what way does it humble us?

Ans. According to verse 3 of the same chapter God allowed Israel to hunger for want of anything to eat. This in detail is given in Ex. xvi. when, in their extremity, God gives them *manna*—bread from heaven. Nothing humbles man like being de-

pendent for food, and nothing makes him cling more to the one upon whom he is dependent for it. Thus God wrought with His earthly people, that He might make them cling to Him, and thus educate them for the position He had given them that He might pour upon them all that was in His heart for them.

It is the same principle with us. The first sign of the work of the Spirit of God in a man is that he hunger. Pleasure, wealth, honor, or all the world together, are no longer able to satisfy him. "All is vanity" he cries, in his hunger for something which can satisfy.

The manna, the bread of heaven, is *Jesus*. That is the food God offers to the man who is humbled by such hunger. And from beginning to end He has no other food to offer. Is it a question of the burden of the guilt of sin? "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin." Of power for a holy and fruitful life? "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

Is it a question of lost communion? "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Of ending all the groanings of our present imperfect condition and circumstances of sorrow? "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."

Thus, and in a multitude more of the needs of God's people on their way home, the one remedy God has for them is *Jesus*. He lets them try this and that till they hunger—till they are humbled—then He teaches them that in every instance they are shut up to the provision He has made for them in Christ *Jesus*. And the full blessing of this we shall know only at our "latter end." It seems now an endless discipline, but its issue will be eternal rest—the Sabbath of God for His toiling people.

? Ques. 12. Did the blood, carried into the holiest on the day of atonement, atone in type for the sins of the people for the year that *had passed* only, or was it an annual remembrance before God of *all* their sins? Is there a sense in which it would speak for the year then future? The question has come up in our Bible class and we

cannot find anything in written ministry that exactly touches the point.

Ans.—The redemption from transgressions in Israel under the law was not *once for all*—eternal, but *once for a year*. Hence they came into remembrance *every year*. A temporary removal of sins is good only for the *time* for which they are removed. When that passed, the question of their removal came up *again*. Thus the yearly recurrence of the question showed that *their* sacrifices did not put away sins actually. Only the sacrifice of Christ does that. It was not simply that Israel needed the removal of the sins of the year in which an atonement was made: they needed the removal of their sins—all their sins, but they never got anything but a temporary removal. Thus they were taught to expect the sacrifice of which theirs was a type—the sacrifice that procures eternal redemption.

QUES. 13. Is instrumental music out of place in the Christian home? I do not believe it should have any place in the Christian assembly, inasmuch as the Church is a heavenly body and its worship "in spirit and in truth," as the Lord indicated in John iv, 23. But is there not a difference between the Christian family circle and the Christian assembly?

Ans.—Most assuredly. The difference is very clear. The family circle is by creation; the Church is by redemption. What is of creation therefore suits the family circle. All that God has made can be used there, and will not be harmful, but good, if used in the fear of God. The Christian must need remember, however, that sin is everywhere; that Satan makes large use of the very best things of creation; that music, one of the sweetest things God has created, is largely in his hands for evil. This being remembered and avoided, instrumental music in the household may help much in the proper social enjoyment of the family, and in furnishing the minds with tunes which will serve well in the Christian assembly.

Then, after all, there is nothing like the human voice, nothing like a happy heart which breaks out in praise to God through the lips. May there be more of this everywhere among God's people.

BOLDNESS, PATIENCE, COURAGE.

A WORD ON HEB. X. 19-24; XII. 1, 2; XIII. 10-13.

THERE are just two or three things I would like to bring before our hearts, dear brethren, in connection with these three scriptures, and I shall be brief.

The first brings before us the blessed results of the perfect sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on the cross. The blessed Lord came, saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God," and that will was to have a people in nearness and in suitability to Himself; to gratify His own heart in the display of His grace to us, both here and "in the ages to come." Therefore we get the Lord Jesus giving Himself, and His blessed and perfect work meeting everything on and in us unsuited to God, clearing it away forever; and then we are invited to "draw near." The way into God's holy presence is opened up and "boldness" given to us to approach as happy worshipers.

The apostle brings before us the great contrast between the priests in the Old Testament, whose work was never done and who never "sat down," and the work of the Lord Jesus, who offered His one sacrifice for sins and "for ever sat down at the right hand of God." There was no seat in the tabernacle. The priests never sat down. The fact that the Lord has sat down is the proof of His work being done. "Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labor until the evening," as psalm civ. tells us, and when

evening comes he goes home to rest ; his day's work is done. He has a right to rest and comfort at home when he has finished his work, and no one would grudge it to him. How sweet then to know that the blessed Lord has finished His work of atonement and gone in and sat down. He has sat down in perpetuity. His work on the cross has "perfected forever them that are sanctified." God has nothing against us and there is nothing between God and our souls. Christ is there in the presence of God for us. We know the one who is there for us, and He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever;" and just as He never changes, neither does the value of His perfect sacrifice; it abides forever before God. I need not enlarge on that I think.

But there is the blessed result of that to look at.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near." Just think of that! *Boldness* to enter into the holiest. The very presence of God in heaven is open to us and we are invited to "draw near." It is no longer "set bounds about the mountain." No! no! It is a new place and a new people and a new position. Heaven itself is open. "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself" (Heb. ix. 24). We are "new creation" in Christ—a new people—a heavenly people. And we are privileged to draw near and occupy a new position as purged worshipers and "offer the sacrifice of praise, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name."

There is a rent veil and a seated Christ. God rent the veil when Christ died. As others have said before, "The same stroke that slew the Lamb rent the veil from the top to the bottom." There is nothing now to keep anyone out of (if they are willing to go and fit to go) the immediate presence of God. The veil was not let down from the top, nor rolled up from the bottom, nor removed altogether; it was *rent*; and we are told it typified "His flesh." It is by a Christ who has died we enter into God's presence, and we have *boldness* to enter. God cannot have us at a distance from Himself; He says, "*draw near.*"

Then it is a *new way*; it is "*through* the veil." It is a *living way*, for we can go in without the penalty of death being executed on us for daring to do so as we see was the case in the instructions given to Aaron in Lev. xvi. 1. Thus we draw near with hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and bodies washed with pure water,—fitted, both inside and outside as it were, morally fitted both in our *hearts* and in our *ways*. In perfect suitability to God we draw near and tell out before Him the thoughts and feelings of our hearts about His beloved Son, and that is what satisfies the heart of our God. He delights to hear us speaking well of His Son whether to Him or to others.

People sometimes ask, what is worship? Suppose I take a glass and fill it with water and keep pouring more water into it, what will be the result? Why, it will run over. Very well then; if God fills my heart with Christ, and keeps pouring in, as it were, more and more of Christ, the result is the same; it runs over, and it runs up, and that is worship. It

is the overflowing of a heart that is filled and satisfied with Christ. How few really worship God.

The next thing I want is *patience* to run the race (chap. xii. 1, 2). As in the world, and on our way to another scene, we are viewed as "running a race." But there are dangers and difficulties and discouragements, and we need patience and energy of soul and purpose of heart to continue the race. It is one thing to make a good start; it is another thing to make a good *finish* or continue without a breakdown. When a man runs a race he strips; he does not carry an ounce more than he can help. He lays aside every weight. He keeps his eye on the goal at the end. He runs; nor does he slack his speed till he has passed the winning post. Now this is what ought to characterize us, beloved brethren. There are heaps of things we get occupied with that are not *sins*, but they are *weights*. Young Christians specially are prone to carry weights. You will hear them saying sometimes, "Well, I see no harm in doing so and so, or going to such and such a place; it is not a sin." No, it is not a *sin* but it is a *weight*, and sometimes a very heavy one; and every one else can see the effect it has on you, but yourself; and it hinders you even running, much less running with patience.

Then again we are long-distance runners and need patience to continue at it; therefore anything that would hinder us must be laid aside and we must go on. The world, the flesh, and the devil all combine to hinder us and trip us up. Let us go on, brethren. Let us go on. We have a glorious example in the Lord Himself: "Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of

God." How many, alas, make a fair start but do not continue; let not that have to be said of any one of us. Don't give little holidays to the flesh. Don't say, We are not at the meeting now, or among the saints, and give liberty to the flesh; but plod on; keep up the pace; exercise patience—"Ye have need of it" for "yet a little while and He that shall come will come." Don't let Him find us off the course, or sleeping or sinning instead of running. We have *boldness* to enter *in*; we need *patience* to run while *out*.

Then we have the exhortation in chap. xiii. 12, 13. "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." And what is needed for that? *Courage*. Yes, courage is needed. The Jews thrust the blessed Lord out of their holy city and crucified Him outside the gate, and we are responsible to "go forth unto Him" as witnesses, seeing we are privileged to go inside as worshipers.

When David was persecuted by Saul and was in the cave of Adullam, you remember there went out a great number to him. They were a strange company indeed—"Discontented and in debt," etc. But they went out to David to share in the fortunes or failures of David. And by and by when he came to the throne and set forth the deeds of "his mighty men," in all probability some of them were the men who came to him in the cave and shared his reproach in the day of his reproach. David would not forget it, you may be sure.

The camp was Judaism, and Christians were exhorted to go outside of it to Christ. Now whatever

assumes such a place to-day, as Judaism occupied in that day, is the camp. We have not far to look or seek to find it, and our place is outside—"unto Him." They cast the blind man out of their synagogue because Jesus had opened his eyes, and he told them simply *who* did it and *how* He did it. But Jesus went after him and gave him increased blessing. He revealed Himself to him as the Son of God and the man became a worshiper. Surely it was better to be *outside* with Jesus than *inside* with the Pharisees. You will find that the moment you say, I am going to be for Christ and have Him as my object and seek to satisfy His heart, you will find the devil roaring about you, and you will find you have to bear "His reproach." But as Peter says, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, *happy are ye*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you." The Lord always makes it up to such an one, and gives them the sense of His presence and favor, and comfort.

Where is Christ in relation to the camp to-day? He is in the same place they put Him in in that day—outside. Where is our place? "Outside the camp—unto Him." But I will not dwell on it. Are we satisfied to have Himself and be outside? Or do we hanker after the sights and sounds and things inside to fill our hearts? An unsatisfied heart is a dreadful thing for a Christian. Yet what numbers there are—they would not own to it were you to challenge them as having it; but their ways and whole manner of conversation declare it to everybody else. If we sing, "Jesus Thou art enough" then let Him *be* enough. The Lord give us to understand better, dear brethren, what it is to have *boldness* to enter in

as worshipers; *patience* to run the race as witnesses in the path of faith; *courage* to go forth unto Him and bear His reproach till we reach the end.

"Nothing but Christ, as on we tread,
The Gift unpriced—God's living Bread;
With staff in hand, and feet well shod,
Nothing but Christ—the Christ of God."

A WORD ON DEUTERONOMY xxxiii. 1-3.

"Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand: and they sat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words."

THAT third verse came before me, dear brethren, and I thought what a precious word it is for our souls. The first thing is, "He loved the people;" and the second, He cared for them. That is God's side—the loving and the caring. "He loved the people; all His saints are in His hand." It is like that 10th of John; "I give unto My sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand," so that being in that hand, there is perfect safety—perfect security. There is all the love of His heart going out with all the strength of His hand, because He loves those whom He cares for. "All His saints are in His hand" shows His love and care; and He is their security and everything else.

Then there is our side: "they sat down at His feet." There is quietness in that, and there is rest and confidence. They sat down at His feet; that is the place where Mary sat; she sat at His feet and heard His word: that is the attitude. Then there is that passage in Matthew where the Lord said, "Make the people sit down." Then when He got them

seated He filled the baskets and the disciples carried them round. He got them at rest and in quiet before Him first, and then He met all their needs. It is a great thing when we can just sit down in quietness and in confidence with the opened ear to hear what He has to say to us. "Make the people sit down on the green grass," the Lord said, and they made them sit down; and then He multiplied the loaves and the fishes, and the disciples carried them round. They were gathered together, and He got them sitting down at rest as gathered together, and then His loving hand ministered to them. We have a little example of that here to-day; the Lord has gathered us together, and we are at rest before Him, and now He gives us the bread of life. He just gives it, as it were, to His servants that they may hand it round to us all and we each get our portion, "every man according to his eating." But if Christ had not been there at that time the disciples would not have had anything to carry round, so that His presence is the essential thing. Christ must be there or there is nothing to take round. So that if we sit at His feet, having the opened ear to receive of His words, we shall hear what He has to say, and if He has a word for any of us and we receive it, it carries blessing to our souls. It could not be otherwise. We receive His words, and is it not a blessed thing to receive of His words and get them into our hearts?

I do not want to enlarge upon the thing, because I know there are others who would like to say a word to us; I just wanted to draw attention to the passage. There are the two things on God's side and there are the two things on ours. He loved the people; that is an immense thing to begin with; we are the objects of

the Lord's love. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." There it is, and we know it and enjoy it. "All His saints are in His hand." There they are safe and secure and everything they want is wrapped up in Him. He loves them and He cares for them.

Then there are the other two things; they sat down at His feet, at rest—perfectly happy—and they just want to hear what He has to say. If *we* want to hear what the Lord has to say we will get blessing, it will come home to our hearts with power, but we must sit at His feet in quiet to hear it.

New Zealand.

WM. EASTON.

THE SABBATH REST.

(Continued from page 138.)

VIEWED thus, these seven days all drop into line from Genesis to Revelation, as the parts of a perfect whole, with no clash or discord.

By a careful reference to 2 Peter iii. 7, 10, 12, 18, with the aid of the R. V. (or J. N. D. trans.), the two points are strikingly put before us:—

First, "*The day of the Lord*," verse 10; this is "the day of judgment" of verse 8, and lasts for 1000 years. It is "the day of judgment" because it begins with the judgment of the *quick*, and closes with a judgment of the *dead*; and all through there will be cases of judgment or punishment, if evil rises—righteousness will *reign*.

The last part of that day, "the day of the Lord" (the nightfall of the dispensation) "the heavens shall pass away, and the earth shall be burned up"

(compare verse 10 and Rev. xx. 11). Everything will pass under the judgment, and all evil cleansed away to give place to eternity—to new heavens and a new earth. This shows us how that “the day of the Lord” will be one of preparation for a grander and more glorious one beyond.

The New Translation will help in verse 12: “Looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God,” *because*, or “by reason of which, the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements, burning with heat, shall melt.” This judgment, then, will take place at the close of the *day of the Lord* for a special reason—to clear the way for the *day of God*. In this day of God (eternity), all being then perfect, God's rest will also be reached: this is what the Christian looks for. In the New Translation, verse 18 closes with “to the *day of eternity*”—the last word of the epistle. To this the seventh day of Gen. ii. points, and is the subject of Heb. iv. 4-11.

Fourth.—Another point needs examination now. It has been urged that the “*eighth* day,” and not the *seventh*, gives us the thought of eternity. No part of Scripture need be kept in the background, or hidden, while giving another a place. As we have said, all forms part of a perfect whole, and all are but different touches on the same canvas and by the same Hand. The whole is perfect, and each part only brings out the whole more perfectly.

In examining the “*eighth* day,” it will be well to observe, at the outset, that there is no eighth day in Gen. i. and ii. None is needed there. The Millennial age and the eternal state are perfectly set before us in the sixth and seventh days, completing the

cycle of God's labor and final rest. But the "eighth day" appears further on in the Scriptures, and we will examine each place, and see what they point to.

Abraham circumcised Isaac on the eighth day, and the eighth day became the day of circumcision (Gen. xxi. 4).

The lesson here is *moral* rather than dispensational. Circumcision kept in view the work of the Cross (Col. ii. 11); and at the Cross circumcision has its fulfilment. *Seven days* passed over the history of every male child before circumcision; and we believe that seven days fairly set forth the whole period man's history, from the time sin entered by Adam until Christ came and was "*cut off* out of the land the living"—"the circumcision of Christ."

The trial of man for 4000 years (forty centuries) is full proof of his depravity and corruption; and so in the cross of Christ the first man passes under the judgment of God and is set aside. In Col. ii. 11 we have the effect of this judgment for the children of God—"the putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Here we learn the lesson of the "seven days." That Cross, which was the end in judgment of sinful man and his corrupt flesh, lays the basis for a new creation, a new race, a new family; and Christ rises the *eighth day*, the Head of the new creation, the beginning, the first-born from the dead. Here we get the lessons of Gen. xvii. and xxi.—the lessons of circumcision, the eighth day, and the seven days previous.

We now pass on to Lev. viii. and ix., and we read of another "eighth day;" but the lessons are far different to Gen. xxi.: a proof that the Scriptures are not like cast iron, which can bear no change.

Nay, Scripture is perfect; it is, in the master Hand, to serve His perfect will at every step; yet never a clash, never a flaw.

Here, in Lev. viii. and ix., Aaron and his sons were consecrated for the priest's office—a type of Christ and His Church. Their consecration lasted *seven* whole days, and during this time they were shut inside the sacred enclosure—the fine-twined linen court—and feasted in all this period upon “the things wherewith the atonement was made” (see also Exodus xxix.). What a lovely sight as we view them in that sacred enclosure; what a beautiful picture spreads before us on the canvas for seven whole days! What a contrast to the previous seven days before circumcision! The lesson there was man's trial and what it brings out; here, in Aaron and his sons, we believe the seven days are this whole present period, while Christ is “hidden.” And we, who belong to the same sphere, are shut in with Him; and our food, meat and drink are the things wherewith the atonement was made. But this period ended, as our present period shall also: Aaron and Moses *reappeared* that eighth day, and “the glory of the Lord appeared also” (Lev. ix. 1, 22, 23). This eighth day points to the time when our Lord shall return as the King-priest with uplifted hands to bless—the Millennial glory. Here we are on dispensational lines; the previous seven days answer more to the whole period of our dispensation, and our happy occupation. The eighth day, therefore, is the Millennium, as in this connection the eighth does not apply to the eternal state, but rather to the 1000 years, if we allow it, as all Scripture, to fill its proper place. In Gen. xxi. the eighth day answered well in

type to the beginning of the *new creation*; here, in Lev. ix. to the beginning of a new day, or era, for Israel and the earth—the “regeneration” of Matt. xix. 28.

Another application of the “eighth day” is quite parallel—in Mark ix. and Luke ix. 28, where the transfiguration is spoken of as “about an eight days after”—which none can doubt to be a Millennial picture. *Seven* days had preceded this, as in Gen. xxi. and Lev. ix. The Lord had announced to them His *sufferings*—the cross; then seven days run their course, and then we see His Millennial glory upon an *eighth*. In these last two cases the “eighth” is uniform, and fits well with the *subject*.

Next, we will see another “eighth day” in Lev. xxiii. 33-43, where we get the Jewish calendar for the whole year, describing the appointed feasts, or “seasons” of Jehovah in order.

The *seventh*, and last of all, in the Autumn, was the “Feast of Tabernacles;” in which they were to build booths (tents), and rejoice seven days before the Lord: the season was ending, and the harvest was past; and they rejoice in God’s goodness seven whole days. We believe this points to the whole period of Millennial joy, the last of the *dispensations*, which will eclipse all the previous ones; and the *seven* days represent the whole period.

The *first seven* (in Genesis), before circumcision, represents the trial of man—the whole trial (past). The *next seven* (in Lev. ix. and Luke ix.) foreshadow the *present* period, of Christ on high, and our association with Him, etc. But in Lev. xxiii. it is a *future* period that is before us—a Millennial picture of Israel in fulness of joy. Here, one might think, all

was complete; but Jehovah adds another day to the list, and says there was to be an *eighth* day, and this eighth was also to be a *Sabbath* (vers. 36, 39).

Now the question fairly rises, To what can the *eighth* day here refer? None could say that it was the same as Lev. ix. or Luke ix. In those places it suited well as a type of the Millennium; but here, in Lev. xxiii., the seven days, clearly, are a beautiful Millennial type; and the "eighth" points to the *new age*, "the age of the ages"—*eternity*. Here it suits *eternity* well, as a new scene—new heavens and a new earth. But it is a *Sabbath* also, and foreshadows the same period as the Sabbath itself in Gen. ii. Thus, instead of a *clash*, it gives added *lustre* to the truth that it is meant to teach and illustrate. Thus we see the largeness and freeness of the ways of God in using days as types to serve His pleasure and purpose. What a mine of wealth here lies open before us, and each added thought only enhances the beauty and perfection of the word of our God from beginning to end!

Oh that "critics" would only open their eyes to see these perfections and beauties! and that Christians also, who believe God's word, would be free from that narrow prejudice that hinders the soul enjoying the whole scope of Divine Truth!

In Gen. i. and ii. we see that the sixth day is a grand Millennial picture, and the Sabbath almost a perfect type of eternity.

In Lev. ix. and Luke ix. the eighth is a passing picture of the Millennium.

In Lev. xxiii. an *eighth* day is also a picture of *eternity*, as well as the seventh in Gen. ii.; and the

two are joined together in Leviticus by the eighth day, itself being there a *special Sabbath*.

These beautiful lessons concerning the days of Scripture touch a subject precious to every child of God: may the reader follow on further in this mine of wealth!

Lev. xxiii. begins with the Sabbath as a theme (ver. 3); and the Feast of Tabernacles, of seven days' duration, closes with an *eighth day*, which is also a *Sabbath* (ver. 39). The theme kept before the mind at the *beginning* and the *close* of the year, in their "set seasons," is the Sabbath. *Rest*—the rest of God—is *His* thought. The Israelite saw but little of those typical lessons; perhaps scarce a ray of light beyond the yearly feasts. But the Spirit has added further light and truth, enabling us to see in those Scriptures the shadows of *good things to come*. Hence Lev. xxiii., beginning with *rest* and closing with the same, gives us God's thought, and His appointed "seasons," from *eternity* to *eternity*.

A. E. B.

We append a few lines from two servants of Christ—both now "present with the Lord"—as a further testimony on these lines of study:

"It is also clear that the teaching looks forward through the whole vista of time, even to the eternal future of bright glory, the never-ending Sabbath of the blessed God.

"That glorious time is briefly spoken of in Rev. xxi. 1-8, where it is written, God will make all things new, and the tabernacle of God shall dwell with men; death, pain and sorrow shall be no more, and God Himself shall wipe away all tears. Then will He rest in His love, and His people share the rest of God through an unclouded

eternity. Bright indeed the present prospect to energize the Christian's daily labor, and to calm amid the conflict, as the Holy Ghost leads into the realities of the rest secured by Jesus for the people of God."—W. K., "Notes on Sabbath, Lev. xxiii.," *Bible Treasury, New Series*, Vol. 5, No. 1.

(1.) "There remaineth therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God" (Heb. iv. 9).

"We are entering into rest, we who have believed; but we have not entered. From the nature of it, as described presently, no one could enter into it in this life. We are going on to it, and God has been always speaking of it, as in the Sabbath type, keeping it before men from the beginning. God rested on the seventh day from all His works. That was at the beginning; but man violated that rest, and it remains for us only a shadow of what is yet to come. The apostle quotes also David's words, long after Joshua's day, as showing that Israel's coming into the land was still not rest. After they had come in, it was still said, 'To-day, if ye will hear His voice.' The rest remains, then, a true 'keeping of Sabbath' for the people of God—a rest which will be *God's* rest also—or what good could be in it? A rest, too, in which he who rests ceases from all the labor which sin has imposed. Such a rest has not come for us. This carries us, in fact, on to eternity, the eternal rest, of which we have seen long since that the Sabbath is the type, and not of any Millennial anticipation of it. The thousand years are a time in which the earth has indeed come to its regeneration. Sin does not *reign* any more. Righteousness reigns, but still sin exists; and it is after the thousand years that death, 'the last enemy,' is put under Christ's feet, and the judgment of the dead comes with that. As a consequence, what we speak of sometimes as Millennial *rest*, is not strictly correct. God cannot rest except with the perfect accomplishment of perfect blessing. He can-

not rest while there are enemies yet to be put under the feet—before sin and death are cast alike into the lake of fire.”—F. W. G., *Numerical Bible*, “Notes on Heb. iv. 9.”

ARE YOU SEEKING FOR TRUTH?

A GOOD many people say they are, and think they are, but they are looking in an entirely wrong direction to find the truth. They are searching in systems of human philosophy, reading what men have written, looking to man for guidance. Think how foolish that is. Mere human speculation cannot be the truth, for man cannot find out the truth of God by any manner of searching. Truth belongs to God; only One who trod the earth as man could say, “I am the truth.” If you are seeking truth with your face turned away from Him, you will never find it. For He is the Truth; He is that which man needs; He makes known to the heart of man all it needs to know of God and His ways with man.

Why is not the truth to be found in the great professing Church? Because it has largely lost sight of the real Christ. It has become a stranger to Him; and so far as it has lost the knowledge of Him, it has lost the truth. Remember that the truth as to man, the truth as to God and our relations to Him, the truth as to man's future, and in fact all the truths we need to know or can know here, are to be found in Christ, and nowhere else. To learn of Him, we have to take the place He makes known in those sweet words, “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. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

The truth we need, the truth that satisfies and gives rest to the soul, can be learned nowhere else, and from no other person. If any one has ever found the truth, has ever found real rest of soul, it has been learned from the Son of God. Men change, but He changes not. Men die and pass away, but He died and lives again, and He is alive forevermore. And there is one fact which He Himself most solemnly affirmed, and which is affirmed by His apostles, which is one of the greatest claims ever made by any one: it is, that He is now sitting on the throne of God in heaven! Now either that is most awful presumption, or else it is most wonderful truth. But it is the truth; and He who sits on the throne of God must be God, yet as really and truly Son of man. Thus He is the truth, He can teach you the truth, if you will but come to Him in the way of a learner, in the words quoted above from Matt. xi. 28-30.

Is it not a most wonderful thought that One who was once a Man on earth is now on the throne of God in heaven, and is just as ready to teach you and every one who will come to Him as He was to teach all who came to Him on earth? Learn of Him, if you want to know the truth. He speaks in His Word, in Scripture. To those who desire to hear, the words of Scripture come from Him with living power—"they are spirit and they are life." For all Scripture is His Word, it is "living and effectual, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Listening to that Word, you will learn the truth.

J. W. NEWTON,

UNIVERSALISM.

THE doctrine by which Universalists are specially distinguished is that of the *final* holiness and happiness of all men. While they hold many doctrines commonly believed by others, this doctrine of the eventual salvation of the whole human race is what particularly characterizes them.

There are two classes of them. One class believe that there will be no punishment at all beyond death and the grave. The other admit that there will be punishment after death, but deny that it will be eternal. Both classes agree in holding that ultimately all men will be saved. They both hold that all punishment is disciplinary in character, and denounce punishment of any other character as cruel and unjust. They contend that punishment is a means to an end, and that end the final separation of men from sin to holiness. They teach that punishment is remedial, not penal.

I make a very few quotations from Whittemore's "Plain Guide to Universalism."

"Universalists are those who believe in the eventual holiness and happiness of all the human race" (page 7). "The sentiment by which Universalists are distinguished is this: *that at last every individual of the human race shall become holy and happy*" (page 15). "It makes no difference what are the individual's views concerning punishment, if he holds the doctrine above described. There are some Universalists who hold to punishment after death; never-

theless we are glad to hail them as Universalists. They agree with us in our views of the great consummation: all punishment, in their view, is disciplinary; and they denounce punishment, either in this world or the next, having any other object, as cruel and unjust" (page 17).

These quotations show that I have fairly and truly characterized Universalism. I have given a statement of what Universalism is that Universalists themselves subscribe to. It is practically a description of their distinguishing doctrine in their own terms.

I shall now inquire: Is it the doctrine of the Scriptures? Does the word of God teach that *all* men will eventually be saved? Is it revealed that every member of the human race will ultimately be restored to eternal happiness?

Now, to answer these questions, it will not be necessary to inquire into the way in which Universalists use and explain the Scriptures. If the Scriptures show that there is a place of everlasting punishment, and that *at the end of time* a portion of the human race are sent there, that this is their final disposition, then the Scriptures establish the doctrine of everlasting punishment, and the Universalist use and explanation of the Scriptures must be incorrect.

In Philippians ii. 10 we read of three spheres, the inhabitants of each of which must ultimately, by means of, or in the power of (see the Greek) the name of Jesus, bow the knee. And the next verse tells us that without exception every one in each of these spheres will be compelled to confess the Lordship of the Man that in obedience to God submitted to the ignominious death of the cross. Some one

may perhaps say: Why, here is the very doctrine of Universalism! But is it so? Let us see.

The three spheres mentioned are: the heavenly places, the earthly places, and the subterranean places (see Greek). The latter might be called the under-world, or the infernal world. Now, bear in mind, the ultimate and complete *subjection* to the power of the name of Jesus of all who people these three spheres is not in question. Our Lord, in John xii. 32, said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will drag (Greek)* all [men] unto Me." He there proclaimed the same truth that is insisted on in Phil. ii. 10, 11, that if He gave Himself up to death for the glory of God, every being in the whole universe would be forced to own the power of His name. All would, either willingly or unwillingly, submit to Him.

Let us turn now to Col. i. 20. Here we read of the *reconciliation* of two of the spheres mentioned in Phil. ii. There is to be a time when the heavenly and earthly spheres will not only be in subjection to the Man of the cross, but in happy reconciliation to this subjection. Has this reconciliation been brought about? As yet, only in part. There can be no question that the holy and elect angels are happily reconciled to the power of the name of Jesus.

* I have changed the word "draw" of our common version here to "drag;" not that I particularly object to "draw," but a meaning has been attached to it which is not in the word in the Greek, *helkuso*, the force of which may be seen by its use elsewhere; e. g., John xxi. 6, 11, "not able to draw" the net; "and drew their net to land." Also, Acts xvi. 19, "they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place, unto the rulers." It is plain the thought of compulsion is in the word.

It is equally true that all from among men who have believed in Him, whether as departed spirits or as still living in this world, are joyfully reconciled to the eternal supremacy and glory of Jesus. The apostle says, in ver. 21, "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now *hath* He reconciled." Thus far the reconciliation spoken of in ver. 21 has been accomplished. But more than this is to be looked for. Ver. 20 assures us that the time is coming when every being both in the heavenlies and the earthlies will be reconciled, will be in willing and happy reconciliation to the power of the name of Jesus.

This is not true now of either the heavenlies or the earthlies. Scripture teaches us that the heavenlies are still defiled by the presence there of Satan and wicked spirits (these latter, of course, not the spirits of men). (See Job i. 6; ii. 1; Ephesians vi. 12, Greek.) But the time is coming when Satan and these wicked spirits will be cast out of the heavenlies. (See Rev. xii. 7-9.) This will be by the power of the name of Jesus, for it will be under the banner of the Man of the cross that Michael and his angels will fight. When this takes place, the heavenlies will be cleansed, and all beings remaining in them will be in happy reconciliation to the Lordship of Jesus. There will be there then the elect angels and the saints who will have been raised from among the dead, and have received their bodies like that of the Lord. There will not be one among either class but what will be in most hearty submission to Christ. The heavenlies will then be reconciled and will forever remain so.

But the earthlies will not yet be reconciled. Later

on, after three years and a half of great wrath upon the earth, Satan will be cast into a bottomless pit (chap. xx. 3); and, no doubt, his angels will go there with him. But even this will not be the reconciliation of the earthlies. It is true Christ will reign for a thousand years, but there will still be on the earth some who are not reconciled—some who will feign submission (see psalm xviii. 44, margin), though all openly insubject will have been cut off by the judgments of the Lord. When the thousand years of Christ's righteous reign have been fulfilled, then Satan will be let out of the pit, and he will gather the unreconciled in hostility against the earthly saints and the beloved city; but they will be all cut off by divine judgment. Satan will now, and only now, be cast into the lake of fire. When he is cast into the lake of fire, two men, the beast and the false prophet, will have been there one thousand years.

Now this casting of Satan into the lake of fire is his final disposition. He is sent there to remain there forever. We are told that the portion of Satan and these two men is to be tormented unceasingly and everlastingly.

But further, after Satan is sent to his final and eternal doom, the great white throne will be placed, and the physical heavens and earth will flee away from before Him who will sit upon it. The process of this is given in 2 Pet. iii. 10. It will be a dissolution of the elements by fire, the result of which will be a renewed physical heaven and earth—a new earthly sphere completely cleansed and fully reconciled to the power of the name of Jesus. Every inhabitant of this sphere, the new heaven and earth, will joyfully own Him as Lord of all. This will be

the realization of the reconciliation of the earthlies mentioned in Col. i. 20.

In this passage just referred to, there is no mention of the subterranean world. We never read of *its* reconciliation; for of this Phil. ii. 10 does not speak. If now we turn to Rev. xx. 12-15, we find ourselves at the end of time, and the beginning of eternity. A thousand years before this, the righteous dead have been raised, so that the dead now are all wicked dead. There is no question of anybody but the wicked here. They are raised and made to stand before the great white throne; and when judged according to what is written in the books, the records of their deeds, they are sent into the lake of fire—the place prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 41). Now it is plain that this is the final disposition of the wicked. They are here sent to Satan's final and eternal doom, and, like the two men cast into it a thousand years before Satan will be, are to share that doom with him. It is perpetual and everlasting torment.

Here, in unceasing and everlasting punishment, the Scriptures leave them. Never once do they declare their eventual recovery. Never once do they speak of their being finally saved out of the lake of fire. They tell us plainly that *at the end of time* they will be sent there. There is therefore punishment *after* death. This punishment is "day and night, forever and ever." Universalism, then, is unscriptural and untrue.

Beloved reader, if the word of God declares what the everlasting doom of those who are unreconciled to Christ is, it also asserts the right of Christ to give eternal life to all who put their trust in Him. This

right He exercises freely toward all who turn to Him in this the day of His grace. He that believes will not come into judgment; but the wrath of God will abide forever on those who refuse to bend the knee while His grace gives them the opportunity voluntarily to do so. But how awful the torment of the man who, with an unreconciled will and heart, will be obliged, by the power of the name of Jesus, perpetually and eternally to declare the glory of a death he has despised! May the reader of this paper be saved from such an eternal doom.

C. CRAIN.

CURRENT EVENTS.

EVERY ONE knows the awful calamity which has befallen San Francisco—a great city well-nigh swept out of existence. A mighty earthquake has shaken it into ruins; and fire instantly breaking out everywhere has reduced those ruins to ashes and made an untimely end of many who were entombed beneath the fallen walls.

It is appalling, and it has stirred the heart of the whole nation to the help of the sufferers. Many even from foreign nations have sent practical and substantial proofs of their sympathy. Thus even calamities have their profitable side in the development of the sympathies of the human heart.

But what do such terrible happenings mean? Can we tell? And why have they been so frequent of late, not

only in this land, which has had a large share of them, but in various parts of the world?

If we turn to the infallible, unerring Book, we have no difficulty as to their meaning: Why was the Deluge? Why was the burning of Sodom? Why was Nineveh threatened with destruction? Why did God command the utter extermination of the seven nations of Canaan? Why are the Jews without a country? Why was Babylon overthrown in one night? Let us quote Daniel's own words, for they give us God's unchangeable principle of action: "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor; and for the majesty that He gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him. . . . But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him; . . . *till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men*, and that He appointeth over it whomsoever He will. And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of His house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified. . . . In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom" (Dan. v).

One watches in vain for any expression of humiliation and acknowledgment of the hand of God in these fearful events which follow each other in quick succession, and

wonders what next must come to awaken a people who worship gold; who are going to master earthquakes by building in iron; who are giving free course to their licentious desires; and, worst of all, who are desecrating the holy things of God, despising His Word, and proudly asserting themselves and the thoughts of their foolish hearts. Will there be repentance and a turning to the Lord, that grace may continue its work; or will there be hardening of heart and increasing evil until the Lord Himself must come again to this earth, with power and glory, to sweep the wicked off its face and establish His rule in it?

One feature is comforting: Who knows how many, in the midst of the terrors which filled their hearts that morning in San Francisco, have cried like the jailer of Philippi in similar circumstances, "What must I do to be saved?" Oh that many, by this sudden overthrow, may be turned from the vanities of things that perish, to seek and find the imperishable and true riches of acceptance and peace with God.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ques. 14. *What is it to be filled with the Spirit?* There are people here around us who talk much about that, but most of them seem at the same time very deficient both in Christian character and ways, with all their thoughts apparently centered upon themselves. It looks like self-exaltation, and surely that cannot be the work of the Holy Spirit.

Ans.—The answer to your question is very plainly given in the Scriptures. Turning to a few of them will be sufficient: take first our Lord Himself. In Luke iv. 1 He is said to be "full of the Holy Ghost;" and the following verses tell how He manifests it:

He is met by the devil who seeks to turn Him from the path of obedience and dependence. Three times He defeats him *by the suited use of the word of God*. Fleshly men can argue, and be shrewd, but only a man full of the Holy Ghost can rightly use the Word of Truth, and shut the mouth of the enemy with it. Again in chap. i. 15 the birth of John the Baptist is announced, and that "he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb." Then the following verses tell how it will be shown. In the spirit of Elias of old he would bring home their sins to the people's consciences, and thus "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." To do such business *for the Lord* is great and glorious business, and there are great trials in it, requiring a man to be full of the Spirit.

Then in verse 41 "Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost," and how was this displayed? The babe she bears, who is, as we have seen, himself filled with the Holy Ghost, leaps within her at the approach of the babe that Mary bears, and Elizabeth declares herself greatly honored in being visited by "the mother of my Lord." This coming Babe is the Centre of all her words.

Again in verse 67 "Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost" and shows it by speaking of Christ, and, by Him, of the fulfilment of all the promises.

One more instance in Acts vii. In verse 55 Stephen is said to be "full of the Holy Ghost" and what is the result? He "looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Then he kneels down and dies praying for his murderers.

We might multiply instances, but are not these sufficient witness that the man who is filled with the Holy Ghost does not speak or think of himself at all; is not even self-conscious, but wholly engrossed with *Christ* and *His* glories, *His* virtues and *His* interests.

Self then is snuk into oblivion, good self and bad self, and Another, the worthy One, fills the vision.

THE EXPLOITS OF LOVE.

LOVE is the charm of God's holy book, as it will be our greatest wonder in eternal glory.

Its grand design, its matchless methods, its final triumphs, all unite to add charm upon charm to the story which fills the pages of Holy Scripture.

Not only is the story of God's *own* love recorded in the Book, but examples of the love of others, illustrating or typifying it, are found in abundant and engaging variety. Let us take a rapid glance at a few of these.

It was love to Joseph that made a pilgrim of aged crippled Jacob, as with joy he exclaimed, "I will go and see him before I die" (Gen. xlv. 28).

Love to Naomi made a devoted follower of Ruth the Moabitess. She said, in effect, "Her *company* is better than my *country*, with every prospect it could possibly hold out to me" (Ruth i. 11-16).

Love made Rizpah, and Miriam, and Mary Magdalene, patient, self-forgetting watchers; and this at a time when the interests of their loved ones seemed at their lowest ebb. Love made all three bold and fearless in a dark and lonely hour (2 Sam. xxi. 10; Ex. ii. 4; John xx. 11).

Love to David made a stranger of Mephibosheth. It was as though he had said, "If I cannot reach him in the place where he has gone, my separation from the order of things from which he has been unrighteously rejected shall be as distinctly marked as I can possibly make it."

Love led Jonathan to self-sacrifice. "He stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it

to David; and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle" (1 Sam. xviii. 3, 4).

Love made the Hebrew servant a slave forever. The company of those he loved was more to him than liberty without them. "I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free" (Ex. xxi. 5).

Then think of triumphs and rewards of love.

Jacob's eyes got a feast of satisfaction in seeing royal honors covering his beloved Joseph.

Ruth got into the royal line of God's chosen people.

Miriam saw her brother brought into royal circumstances.

Rizpah saw her sons get a royal burial.

Jonathan got royal love in return for loyal affections; and in love David exceeded.

Mephibosheth, when David returned in peace, was restored to royal associations.

Mary Magdalene got more than all earthly royalty could bestow; she got the first interview with the Lord of glory after He had risen from the dead; and she was, there and then, entrusted with one of the most wonderful communications that were ever listened to by human ears: "My Father—*your* Father; My God—*your* God." In seeking Him she got, like *Miriam*, a joyful message for those dear to Him.

Then *Paul* seemed, well-nigh, to compass them all.

Like *Miriam*, he watched with tenderest affection over those who belonged to the absent One, who loved both them and him (1 Thess. ii. 7, 8).

Like *Mary Magdalene*, he was entrusted with marvelous revelations for Christ's brethren (2 Cor. xii. 1), and by special revelation it was part of his service, under inspiration, to "complete the word of God" (Col. i. 25).

Like Jacob, his desire was to depart and be with the One he loved, whose desires were towards him (Phil. i. 23).

Like Mephibosheth, he regarded the world as crucified to him, and he to the world (Gal. vi. 14).

Like Jonathan, he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him to whom he owed everything—"Christ Jesus, my Lord" (Phil. iii. 8).

Like the Hebrew servant, he was glad for the sake of others to remain here the bond-slave of Jesus Christ. He loved his Master. His heart went out in earnest for all God's saints, many of them his children in the gospel.

"To abide in the flesh is more needful for you," he wrote to the Philippians. "And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith, that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 24-26).

This too had its present special reward. Paul's great comfort in the prison at Rome was the sense of having the Lord's company and support (2 Tim. iv. 17).

All this was the fruit of *responsive* love. Behind it all was "the love of Christ that passeth knowledge"—the love that "constraineth us."

The love of Christ is the power behind all that He has done for us, and behind all that we have ever done, or ever shall do, acceptably to Himself. Oh, to know that love better! Oh that it may make its own peculiar world-convincing mark upon every reader!

GEO. C.

ANNIHILATIONISM.

ANNIHILATIONISM is the doctrine of the final extinction of all the wicked. The believers in this doctrine are called Annihilationists. There are three grades of them. One is characterized by the belief that extinction takes place at death. Another class holds that it takes place at the judgment at the end of time. The third group maintain that after the judgment there will be a period of suffering, which will be terminated after a due amount of suffering has been borne, the suffering to be ended by extinction. The final extinction of the wicked thus characterizes all of them. Whatever the differences as to the time when it will take place, they agree in believing that extinction of being is the ultimate end of the wicked.

Is this doctrine, in any of the forms in which it is held, the doctrine of the word of God? Do the Scriptures teach that wicked men become extinct, either at death, the judgment at the end of time, or at the end of a period of suffering beyond the judgment?

We shall first consider the inquiry, Is it the doctrine of the word of God that when wicked men die, they become extinct? One class of Annihilationists answer this question with an affirmative. They say unhesitatingly they do. Mr. Constable, in his book on "Hades," says :

"If death reigns until the period of the resurrection, and if death during this period is exactly the same thing to the just and to the unjust, it follows,

beyond any question, that both just and unjust are then wholly and altogether dead " (page 79).

What he means by "wholly and altogether dead " he makes perfectly clear, for he goes on to say :

"For no one contends that during this period the just are in a condition of misery; neither does any one contend that the unjust are in a condition of bliss: but that condition which is neither one of bliss nor of misery must be a condition of death or of non-existence."

Here it is plain that Mr. Constable, and of course all who hold with him, considers death to be the extinction of being. That he applies it to the just as well as the unjust will not concern us here. Our subject just now is, The extinction of the wicked at death: is it scriptural? If the Scriptures do not teach that death means extinction for the wicked, it will be hard to convince people that it means that for the righteous.

Now we find the question of whether death means extinction was presented to our Lord. We must certainly accept what He taught about it. His teaching must be authoritative. He could tell Nicodemus with the most solemn affirmation, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen" (John iii. 11). Surely He knew whether death means extinction of being or not. What then does He say about it? We will turn to the answer He made the Sadducees when they asked Him about the woman who had been successively the wife of seven brethren, saying, "In the resurrection whose wife of them is she?" His answer, as recorded by Luke, is, "The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they which shall be accounted worthy to

obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection" (chap. xx. 34-36). Now if it is said the Lord is only speaking of the righteous, not of the wicked, I reply that is true thus far. As yet He has spoken only of those who are counted worthy to rise *out from among* the dead. But we have not quoted the whole of His answer. He goes on to say, "Now that the dead are raised even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (ver. 37)." It may be asked, when He says, "Now that the dead are raised," does He intend us to consider that He is embracing the wicked dead as well as the righteous dead? The only possible answer is, He does. In the next verse (38) He goes on to say, "For He is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for *all* live unto Him." Men die, both righteous and wicked. They are no more alive *to us*, but to God they are living. *All* the dead, both the good and the evil, are living to Him. They are not, then, extinct. Plainly our Lord does not teach that death is the extinction of being. It is impossible to appeal to Him as teaching the doctrine of the extinction of the wicked at death. His words clearly deny such a thought.

Another scripture may also be quoted: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). Now here we are taught to believe that the judgment will be *after* death. As long as men continue in the death condition they will not be judged. We must then believe there will

be the resurrection of the dead *before* the judgment. Men do not receive their judgment in *this* life, and in *this* world. They do not receive it in the death condition; yet, while they are in the death condition they are not extinct, they are in being still—living beings for God.

Some may say the death state is one of insensibility, or unconsciousness. The discussion of this must be reserved for a subsequent paper. We only refer to it now to reply that even if it can be shown that the dead are unconscious, that is not the same thing as extinction of being. It will not avail to appeal to sleep as an argument for the extinction of the wicked at death. A man asleep is not extinct. A man in insensibility or unconsciousness, from whatever cause, is not extinct. He is still a living man.

We must pass on to consider the view of those who hold that the judgment of the wicked at the end time is extinction of being. One quotation must suffice. Mr. Minton, in his "Way Everlasting," page 58, speaks of the casting into the lake of fire, the beast, the false prophet, the devil, death a hell (hades), and those whose names are not found in the book of life. He goes on to say: "If the things be intended to predict the final doom of wicked men and wicked spirits, then their doom set forth under images which point to nothing less than extinction of being."

All those who believe that *when* the wicked are judged at the great white throne and sent into the lake of fire, they become extinct, or cease to be, accept as the truth this statement of Mr. Minton. But is it the truth? Is it said that they become extinct? No such statement can be found. On the contrary,

we read of two men who are cast into the lake of fire and exist there for a thousand years (Rev. xx. 10). They are there all this time, before Satan even is cast there. There are, then, two men who will be cast into the lake of fire, and it will not be extinction of being for them. Does it not at least suggest that their doom is a sample, or pattern, of the doom of all who will be sent there? If it is shown, as Scripture does show, that in their case the lake of fire is not extinction, how then can it be shown in any case? The plain, indisputable fact of two men existing for a thousand years in the lake of fire is a strong and terrible witness against the doctrine that the lake of fire is extinction of being.

But the testimony of Scripture is even stronger than this. We read that after Satan is cast there, they will *continue* to exist. It has been attempted to substitute "were cast" in the place of the word "are" in italics in our own common version. But even so, it does not alter the fact that they are still in existence; and this is made certain by the further fact that *they*, as well as Satan, are going to continue to exist, and that, too, forever. We read, "And *they* shall be tormented day and night for the ages" (new version). At all events, then, Satan and these two men do not become extinct in the lake of fire. But if this is so, what proof is there that anybody who goes there becomes extinct? There is absolutely none.

And still it is claimed by some that while Scripture shows clearly that the wicked do not become extinct at the time of their being sent into the lake of fire, yet they will ultimately cease to be after a period of suffering. The advocates of this view are,

it is true, comparatively few. They would seem to belong to a school that teaches that punishment is corrective and remedial, and allow that there is punishment after the resurrection of the wicked, just as one class of the Universalists do, but, like them, denying that punishment is everlasting, have invented the theory of ultimate annihilation for the small number that may be supposed to remain obdurate to the last. The ungovernable and uncontrollable will be finally destroyed. They will become extinct.

But Scripture says nothing of any such class. And besides, it never speaks of the lake of fire as corrective or remedial. It is always a *final* doom. It is the final disposition of the wicked. It is the place where Satan is finally sent. It is the place where the wicked, after their resurrection and judgment at the white throne, are finally banished. It is a banishment from which there will be no recall. It will be *for ever*. It will be everlasting torture, too. Unceasing and perpetual torment will be the doom of the wicked, for they have *their* part in the doom of Satan—the lake of fire, the everlasting fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. xxv. 41 and Rev. xxi. 8).

An attempt has been made to escape the force of the terms “everlasting” and “for ever” by giving them the meaning of “age-lasting.” Now, while I am willing to admit that these terms may have this sense when they are used in connection with temporal or human ages, it is impossible to allow that *therefore*, when applied to the time, or age, of the duration of the doom of the wicked, they limit that duration. It is the last age, and it is an everlasting age—an age without an end.

No examination of the way Annihilationists use and explain various scriptures is necessary here. We have found three things clearly stated in the word of God: First, there is a *final* doom for the wicked; second, what that doom is—*torture in* the lake of fire; and third, the *duration* of it—*for ever*. No use of Scripture or explanation of it in conflict with this plain teaching, can be correct or of the Spirit of God.

Scripture, then, does not teach the doctrine of Annihilationism—that the wicked will ultimately become extinct. It is a doctrine diametrically opposed to the doctrine of the Bible. But if the wicked are to suffer torture for ever in the lake of fire, how blessed to know that God sent His Son into the world, and to the cross, that those deserving the eternal doom He has revealed as to be the portion of the wicked might be delivered from the need of suffering it!

Beloved reader, the same Judge who will by and by banish the wicked to the lake of fire has authority to forgive sins and give everlasting life now. He welcomes all men to come to Him. He will deny none that come. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13).

C. CRAIN.

"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum i. 7).

THE NEW BIRTH.

John iii. 1-16.

FIRST—the need of the new birth: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” The Lord gives the reason, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” The apostle states the mind of the flesh: “The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. viii. 7, 8, R. V.). If such were allowed to enter the heavenly kingdom, it would soon be as bad as the kingdoms of this world. No wonder, therefore, that the Lord should say, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

Secondly, The agents by which this new birth is accomplished: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of *water* and of the *Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Water and the Spirit. One can hardly think that “water,” literal water, can be an agent in the accomplishment of new birth. The term water is used emblematically in Scripture: “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep

My judgments, and do them " (Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27).

The term "water" is also used in like manner in the New Testament: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"—John vii. 37-39. Here water is used as an emblem of the Holy Spirit. But this cannot be the meaning of water in the Lord's words on the new birth, for He mentioned the Spirit as distinct from the water. However, the passage serves to show that the term "water" is used as an *emblem*. It is also used as an emblem of the word of God: "Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it: that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. v. 25, 26). Peter also ascribes new birth to the word of God, including the Spirit. See 1 Pet. i. 23-25. James writes, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James i. 18). Other passages might be given in proof, but the above will suffice.

But the new birth is not by "water" only, but by "the Spirit," according to our Lord's teachings. He makes the Spirit prominent, for while He mentions "water" once, He mentions "the Spirit" three times, "the Spirit" being mentioned twice alone. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh,

and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." So that a soul born again is indeed born of God—"born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13).

Thirdly, the judicial basis of the new birth: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John iii. 14, 15). "Lifting up" meant crucifixion. On a subsequent occasion Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man," etc. (John viii. 28). But while He was taken, and by wicked hands crucified and slain, yet God used their wicked act to carry out His purpose of grace. The Lord in the closing words of His public ministry said, "And I, if I be lifted from the earth," etc. (John xii. 32). John added, "But this He said signifying by what manner death He should die" (ver. 33, R. V.). "The people answered Him,"—showing that they knew what was meant by lifting up,—"we have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, the Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?" They had, it would seem, learned from the Old Testament that the Christ and the Son of man meant the same Person; and if so, they could not see how He could be lifted up, crucified, and also abide forever. But thank God, we have no such difficulty; for He who died on the cross was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and sat at His right hand in a new life, and is thus in the position where He will abide forever, as He said to John on the Isle of Patmos, "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore" (Rev.

i. 18). Thus the suffering Son of man is the Christ who is to abide forever.

It is clear then that being "lifted up" meant being crucified. As the Lord's words "ye *must* be born again" expressed man's need, the words "the Son of man *must* be lifted up" expressed the meeting of the need in death. The word of God plainly tells us that the Cross is the judicial basis of the salvation of sinners, and therefore as the new birth is an important part of the salvation, the Cross must be its judicial basis.

But were not believers born again in the ages prior to the Cross being an accomplished fact? Yes surely, for the Cross was in the purpose of God, so that He could act in blessing according to that which He purposed. The same was true as to forgiveness of sins; God passed by, not brought into judgment, the sins of Old Testament believers, and the accomplishment of full atonement through the Cross being seen in the risen and glorified Jesus, showed God's righteousness in thus dealing with those who trusted in Him, though their lot was cast in the ages before the atoning death of the cross. God counted the value of it to them. Hence they too were born again.

Lastly, how this blessing becomes ours. Along with justification and peace, it becomes ours on the principle of faith. The Lord, still addressing Nicodemus, said, "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" (John iii. 16). John takes the "whosoever" into his 1st Epistle: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John v. 1). In his Gospel he writes, "He came unto His own and they that

were His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 11-13, R. V.). And what was true then is true now,—those who truly receive Christ, that is, with the faith of the heart, are born again, yea, are pardoned, have a new life, are "partakers of the divine nature"—in short, are saved. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).
R. H.

THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM.*

"Is the ordinance of baptism figurative of resurrection as well as of death? Do such scriptures as Col. ii. 12; Rom. vi. 3, 1 Peter iii. 21, teach this? The putting under the water is figurative of death; is the coming out of the water equally significant?"

THESE questions were answered in the negative in *HELP AND FOOD* for April, 1906. As I believe the scriptures cited, with others, answer the questions in the affirmative, and as baptism thus acquires a deeper meaning, I submit my view.

The Greek words whence we derive our "baptize" and "baptism" have a root-meaning "to dip" or "immerse;" and burial under water certainly is a natural figure of death under judgment, as witness the flood in Noah's day. Yet Scripture also speaks of "baptism" where death and judgment are not symbolized. I refer to "baptism" by the Holy Spirit. We were "baptized" by the Spirit into the body of

* As to some details of this article, the Editor is not quite sure. Let the readers be exercised for themselves as to them.

Christ (1 Cor. xii. 13). Death and judgment have no place in this baptism, but rather their opposite—union with a risen and glorified Christ.

True, baptism by the Spirit doubtless is based on the realities symbolized in water baptism. The Spirit baptizes none who are not by faith identified with the once-crucified Saviour. But the Spirit's baptism goes beyond water baptism. It does not indeed express resurrection, but effects something beyond resurrection—union with Christ. Only souls already "risen with Him" are "joined" to Christ by the Spirit. May not water baptism figuratively carry us as far as resurrection, since the Spirit's baptism carries us still farther?

As we go on, this will become unmistakable. We shall find that water baptism figures the fundamentals of the "Kingdom," even as the Spirit's baptism into "one body" forms the "Church." Baptism by the Spirit unites us to Christ as Head of the Church, His body. In water baptism we are symbolically brought to Christ as Head of a new creation, in the only way possible—through judgment, death, quickening, and resurrection with Christ.

These things are put together in the typical baptism unto Moses: "Our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x. 1, 2). Without difficulty we recognize a type of the Spirit's baptism and presence in the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night that guided Israel.* Baptism in the sea no less clearly typifies

* No doubt the type directly points to the Spirit's baptism in a day still future, to which John the Baptist alluded (John i. 33), and which the prophet Joel describes as an outpouring of the Spirit "upon all flesh" (ii. 28, 29).

water baptism, the badge of discipleship in the kingdom of God.

Baptism "unto Moses," mediator and saviour, pictures baptism "unto Christ." At the Red Sea a people about to be overwhelmed were "saved" by a leader who typically made a way for them through death and judgment, bringing them out "quicken" and "risen" with himself. Was the going into the sea, figuring death and judgment, alone significant, and the coming out of it, typifying quickening and resurrection, not a part of the symbolism of this baptism unto Moses? Surely the baptized leader and the people baptized "unto" and "with" him were thenceforth typically "quicken" and "risen" men throughout their forty years' walk in the wilderness! Who can doubt it, or think that Christ baptism means less?

Mosaic baptism was "unto" a person. So is — "unto Christ" (Gal. iii. 27, *Gr.*); "unto Christ Jesus" (Rom. vi. 3, *Gr.*); and it is in resurrection that Jesus is "made . . . Christ" (Acts ii. 3). Hence Christian baptism is "unto" Christ risen. This explains Gal. iii. 27—"As many of you as have been baptized unto Christ have put on Christ." We symbolically "put on" a dead Jesus in this ordinance, or the risen and glorified Christ, the Head of a new creation? The latter, of course. The baptized soul in the ordinance figuratively is transferred from his old standing "in Adam" to a new standing "in Christ," as Israel was in the baptism unto Moses.

Again, baptism is "unto" Christ. It figures God's righteous way of bringing souls out of their trespasses and sins unto Christ in glory—through judg-

ment, death, quickening, resurrection. Only so can we reach a Christ on the throne of God, and baptism is unto Him where He is.

Does this interpretation seem questionable? Turn to the only passage in Scripture which directly commissions us to baptize: "Go ye therefore, and disciple all the nations, baptizing them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have enjoined you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). Here baptism is not merely unto "the Man Christ Jesus," but unto the Eternal Son, and equally unto the Father and the Holy Spirit. Have the Father and the Spirit ever tasted death? Yet baptism symbolically brings "unto" them as truly as "unto Christ." It brings "unto" these three Persons in glory, not unto them in death.

Baptism is no mere figure of death and burial therefore; nor even of death and burial "with Christ," but also figures quickening and resurrection with Him. It symbolizes identification with Christ in the entire mighty work whereby, out of our sins, sin, and condemnation, He fully brings "unto God"—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—a "new man" created in His own image.

Would anything else serve as a competent badge of the discipleship, not alone of this dispensation, but of those to follow? Or could symbolism less significant become the grand emblem of a kingdom which halts us at the gate with the solemn declaration from the lips of its King that what is born of flesh is flesh, and none may "see" nor "enter" His realm who are not "born anew" of His Word and Spirit? It would be more than strange if "new

birth," pressed on Nicodemus as the one thing needful, had no place in the object-lesson administered in discipling unto the kingdom.

All that we have so far found, a little care will not fail to discover in Rom. vi., although that text has been a favorite with holders of another view. The passage has been interpreted as if it declared that we are "baptized unto death," and "buried by baptism unto death." We are sometimes told that Christian baptism simply symbolizes "burial"—the putting of the dead in the place of death. If this be all, the rite is doleful—a Christian ordinance without a gospel! To put the dead in the place of death is to resign them to the grave and to the lake of fire—a thing unbelief may have to do with its unbelieving dead; but certainly not the Christian, in his emblem of life and hope.

Verses 3 and 4 of Rom. vi. really read. "baptized unto *His* death," "buried with *Him* by baptism unto death." So in Col. ii. 12, "buried with *Him* in baptism." The language of these passages corrects the view that baptism is a burial in which a dead man is let down into the grave of one who previously has died. On the contrary, Christ and the baptized soul are represented as buried together, at the same time and under the same circumstances. Our water baptism figures identification with Christ in *His* baptism at the cross (Col. ii. 11, 12).

Burial in the "grave" of Christ is not the thought. Something like this has been suggested from 2 Kings xiii. 20, 21, where a dead man cast into Elisha's sepulchre touched the prophet's bones and lived. But if baptism figures burial in Christ's grave, it is bootless. Even the angel said, "He is risen; He is not

here." In His tomb we shall not touch the bones of the true Elisha. They are not there, for He is risen and seated upon the Father's throne!

Sin is what separates from God, and to reach Him we must pass through sin's penalty—death and judgment. The soul attempting this for himself will never emerge from the lake of fire. But to pass through sin's penalty "by faith"—in repentance claiming the divine Substitute's judgment and death as our desert, endured for us—is to find forgiveness and justification. Hence, even if baptism symbolized burial in Christ's grave while His body still lay there, this would not avail. We should touch Him too late. We must pass through judgment and death "with Him," or we shall never be quickened and raised up together.

Elisha in the sepulchre typifies Christ on the cross, not Christ in the grave; and the "burial" pictured in water baptism is not burial in the ground, nor in the tomb of Christ, but "with Him" at the cross, beneath the waters of judgment—the waves and billows that passed over Him. Such is the grand and solemn symbolism placed at the threshold of our faith.

Another clause in Rom. vi. frequently is overlooked. It reads, not that we "were baptized unto His death," but that "so many of us as were baptized *unto Christ Jesus* were baptized unto His death" (ver. 3, *Gr.*). Here, as elsewhere, baptism is "unto" Christ risen and glorified—a thing Paul needed not to emphasize, for it was the cardinal doctrine of Christian faith. What he needed to emphasize was this: Know ye not that so many of us as have been baptized unto this glorified Christ, have been bap-

tized therefore unto His death on the cross, so that we have "died with Christ," our old man has been crucified with Him, the body of sin has been annulled, and we are justified from sin and set free from its dominion! Such is the argument of the chapter.

In Romans we do not find an explicit doctrine declaring us "quickened" and "risen" with Christ. Eternal life and resurrection are viewed in their future aspects—things fully to be known only when our mortal bodies are made alive. Yet present quickening, in the way this epistle touches it, assuredly is linked with baptism in Rom. vi. 4: "We have been buried therefore with Him by baptism unto death in order that, even as Christ has been raised up from among the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in newness of life or, "on a new life-principle." Is not the quickening of soul and spirit indispensable for such a walk?

Still more striking is Rom. vi. 5: "For if we have been germinated together" (made to "sprout," "spring up," "grow together") "in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be of resurrection." No one doubts that baptism is a similitude of Christ's death; yet in this similitude Christ and the baptized company are here pictured as likewise springing up together—a figure of quickening and raising up which reminds us of the "corn of wheat" of John xii. 24.

Galatians presents a doctrinal advance over Romans. The natural man, the law, the flesh, the world, are swept aside, and in their place looms up a glorious "new creation" "in Christ Jesus" (Gal. ii. 19, 20; iii.-v. 10; v. 24; vi. 14, 15). Already we

have seen emphasized in this epistle a corresponding aspect of the symbolism of baptism. The baptized "put on Christ." In other words, baptism figures our transformation into that "new creation" in Christ Jesus of which this epistle speaks.

Ephesians presents another doctrinal advance. We learn that we who believe have been quickened with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit down together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus (ii. 5, 6). Baptism is mentioned (iv. 5), but a symbolism of baptism corresponding to the theme of the book is not developed.

But in Colossians, the doctrinal complement of Ephesians, we find what we might expect: "Buried with Him in baptism, in which ye have been also raised together, *through faith of the working of God, who raised Him from among the dead*" (ii. 12). The clause I have put in italics shows how the identification with Christ in burial and resurrection, figured in baptism, becomes effectual as God's judicial reckoning for the soul. It is through the soul's "faith in God's operation, in raising Christ from the dead" (compare Rom. iv. 23-25).

But what of the Greek pronoun variously translated "which" and "whom?" The context must determine this point, and the argument for "which" seems overwhelming.

1. The doctrinal context calls for "which." Since resurrection is part of the symbolism of baptism in other texts, and since Romans and Galatians emphasize a significance of baptism especially suited to their respective themes, Ephesians and Colossians call for an emphasis upon resurrection.

2. A pronoun is referred to its nearest antecedent

if this gives good sense and a natural construction. "Baptism" is the nearest antecedent, and "which" gives the better sense and the more natural construction.

3. "Whom" is grotesque. Notice that the burial is "with" Christ, and the raising also "with" Him; that the burial is "in" baptism, and the raising also therefore naturally "in" baptism. But if we say "in whom" we are raised "together," we have this strange doctrine: "in" Him we are raised "with" Him! Each thing may be true, considered apart, though Scripture says "with" Him in this connection (Eph. ii. 5; Col. ii. 12, 13; iii. 1). But shall we put both things together, in mutual contradiction, in one breath?

Let us test the doctrine already found by turning to Peter: "The ark . . . wherein few, that is, eight, souls were saved through water, which also in the antitype doth now save you—baptism, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the appeal of a good conscience toward God,) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21). We will touch nothing which may seem obscure: the essential point is plain. The ark in Noah's day was a type of salvation "through water," the flood figuring judgment. Baptism is an antitype which "doth now save." Type and antitype both figure "salvation," and a salvation "through water," the symbol of judgment. Is not this precisely what we have found elsewhere?

Mark that the "salvation" pictured is "through" water, hence out of it:—as with those in the ark, so with those baptized. The question at the head of this article is answered here by a direct scripture.

If "the putting under the water is figurative of death," so "is the coming out of the water equally significant." Indeed, this last alone figures "salvation;" and baptism, like the ark, figuratively "doth now save."

Acts xxii. 16 teaches a like doctrine: "Arise, and get baptized, and have thy sins washed away." The washing away of sins in baptism undoubtedly is figurative, as are burial, judgment, death, quickening, and resurrection. But a figure of sins washed away implies new creation. How can one who is a sinner by nature and practice figuratively come up out of judgment, purged of sins, unless he comes up figuratively a "new creation in Christ?"

Indeed, regeneration is the point here. If the action of water pictures judicial purging (*e. i.*, judgment), it likewise typifies regenerative cleansing by the Word. The Church is sanctified and cleansed by "the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. v. 26). To His own the Lord said, "He that is bathed . . . is clean every whit" (John xiii. 10, *Gr.*); and again, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you" (John xv. 3). We are born anew of "the word of God," the "word of truth" (1 Peter i. 23, 25; James i. 18). Or, as the Lord figuratively puts it, one entering the kingdom must be "born of water and of the Spirit" (John iii. 5)—a fundamental truth which reappears in Titus iii. 5: "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In this light the doctrine of Acts xxii. 16 becomes luminous: baptism is a figure of sins washed away in regeneration.

Reviewing these texts in their order in the New

Testament, the symbolism of baptism unfolds a progressive symmetry corresponding to the Spirit's development of the truth.

(1) We begin with regeneration in Acts xxii. : baptism figures us as born anew of the Word and Spirit—our reception of that new life and new nature which alone may "enter" the kingdom.

(2) Romans vi. emphasizes death, judgment, and quickening : our baptismal burial "in the likeness of His death" pictures our "old man" crucified, and ourselves, thus "justified from sin," "springing up" anew with Christ to walk on a new life-principle.

(3) In Galatians our baptism figures complete transformation : with ourselves and the world alike crucified ; nought emerges from the waters of judgment save a new creation in Christ Jesus !

(4) In Colossians our burial with Christ in a baptism wherein we also rise together, symbolizes identification with Him both in judgment and resurrection : dead to the world, but risen with Christ, we set our minds on things above, where Christ sitteth at God's right hand.

(5) 1 Cor. x. warns us that Christian baptism is worthless for a mere profession that refuses the obedience of faith ; for God, displeased with baptized Israel, overthrew them in the wilderness !

(6) Contrariwise, in 1 Peter, where God's begotten children are viewed as strangers and pilgrims in : corrupt world, beset by fiery trials, but kept by God's power unto salvation yet to be revealed, our baptism prophecies to faith a corresponding doctrine of hope and assurance. As the souls in the ark were "saved through water," so antitypical baptism "doth now save" by resurrection of Jesus Christ, picturing the

present salvation of our souls, our present preservation through difficulties, and the full, glorious issue of our pilgrimage !

Is it not like God to place at the door of our discipleship an emblem so simple, yet capable of reflecting a new and splendid light from each new development of the doctrine of our salvation ? And is it not a fault to hide this glory by pressing a single aspect of the symbolism to the exclusion of other phases still more bright ?

There remains the baptism of John. His call to repentance preceded both the Cross and Christ's own public ministry. Hence John's baptism was unto repentance, in hope of remission of sins through the "Coming One." The baptized entered a Jordan into which as yet no substitute had gone. Had this been all, the spectacle would have been pitiable. How the sight must have moved the compassionate heart of Jesus ! Instantly He went down underneath the waters. Wondrous grace ! He was baptized unto sinners—unto their death. He pledged Himself to pass into their judgment for them ; and we know this meant that He must taste the bitterness, that they might come through unscathed.

Baptism by Christ's disciples, *prior* to the Cross, had a brighter significance. It was unto Immanuel, present amongst men, and unto Him as One who already had entered the waters of baptism with sinners—His life thus pledged for theirs !

Our baptism comes *after* the Cross. How gloriously different ! It is not like John's—burial in a Christless Jordan ; nor yet like the disciples' before the Cross—unto a pledged but unsacrificed Substi-

tute. It is unto One who has gone down into the depths, exhausting their power to bruise, and has come out with the thrilling cry, "It is finished!" It is unto Him raised up by the glory of the Father—once slain, but now alive for evermore! Yet it is no less unto His death, that we may claim association with Him in all that He passed through for us—judgment, death, quickening, and resurrection. This is life and salvation, for "*as He is*, so are we in this world" (1 John iv. 17).

It has been assumed that such views cannot be reconciled with household baptism; but I find the two things side by side in Scripture. Household baptism derives its brightest lustre, its fullest blessedness, and its real justification, from this deeper import of the rite.

F. A.

"Beware of Hypocrisy." WHY should we use hypocrisy? We are no more than what we are before God, and sooner or later God manifests us before men.

"Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of" (Luke ix. 55). SATAN tempts saints to unholy wrath, and they do not know until, as here, He tells them where they got the coal that so heated them.

It is great presumption to send our passions upon God's errands, as it is also to palliate them with God's name. Zeal, dropped in love, is good; without it, good for nothing; for it devours all it touches. We will not overshoot the mark about others if first we have been with God about ourselves.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUESTION 15.—What is the force of the passage in 1 Tim. iii. 15: "The house of God, which is the Church of the living God the pillar and ground of the truth?" What is the idea of *pillar* and *ground*?

ANSWER.—Such passages as Gen. xix. 26—Lot's wife "became a pillar of salt;" ditto, xxviii. 18—"Jacob . . . took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Beth-el;" Ex. xxxiii. 9—"As Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses;" these, and others like them, show plainly that a chief idea in the pillar is that *it is a witness to, or proclaims something of importance*. And the Church, by her very constitution, proclaims something of vast importance—the great "mystery of godliness," given in detail in the verse following that of your question. But as Paul was teaching all these things to Timothy to form his Christian character, that he might know *how to behave himself* in the house of God, so is the Church taught by the word of God in all the truth, that her character may be formed by it, that she may conduct herself according to the truth, and thus be the "ground" (support) "of the truth." It is the practical conduct of the people of God which supports the truth in the world. Inconsistency in them produces unbelief and discredit of the truth. Thus the Church is the *pillar* of the truth by what she proclaims, or rather by what God proclaims in her; and she is the *ground*, or *support*, of the truth by the character she bears and her practical holiness.

QUES. 16.—We firmly believe, and justly so, I believe, that the three Persons in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are co-equal and co-eternal. In what way, then, are we to understand John xiv. 28: "My Father is greater than I?"

ANS.—They are the same in *nature*, from and to all eternity, just as any man's son is absolutely the same as his father in nature. But in *position* the Father is greater than the Son, in the Godhead as also in creation.

AN OBJECT-LESSON.

A BROTHER writing very recently from a certain place where he is laboring in the Lord, after mentioning various cases of marked blessing and consequent additions to the Lord's people, closes his letter thus : "These tokens of blessing are solely in connection with the faithful labors and testimony of the saints here."

Is not that an illustration of the passage of Scripture which is inscribed on our front page as the motto of our little periodical ? The Lord Jesus, ascended on high in triumph, the Deliverer of His people, gives various special gifts to such as He chooses, that they may labor "for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the edifying of the body of Christ." That is, that those special gifts may be so used as to prepare and furnish the people of God for every kind of service needful in the body of Christ for its growth and welfare, that *it* may fulfil its mission as God's witness on earth.

How cheering to see thus assemblies of Christ profited by the labors of Christ's servants as to become instruments of divine blessing all around them. Such assemblies will not fail to thankfully receive the help of every one whom they recognize as sent by the Lord to serve them ; nor will they make clergy of them by giving up their own responsibilities to them. Moreover, if there is one kind of sin which weakens the assemblies of Christ more than another, it is that spirit of emulation which leads the special "gifts" to make their labors appear successful. This is a strong temptation, to which every one

in the Lord's work is exposed, which ruins those who yield to it, and against which the only effectual remedy is to sincerely and prayerfully seek, not the praise of men, but the praise which is from God. If the soul be honestly bent upon that alone, the blessing He may vouchsafe to give to our labor will not inflate us, for we know it is "not I, but the grace of God which was with me." Nor will drought dismay us, though it may humble us, for our work is in a land "not as the land of Egypt, . . . where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but . . . a land of hills and valleys, which drinketh water of the rain of heaven" (Deut. xi. 10, 11). The men of Egypt have the means in their own hands to produce revivals, but the men of Canaan are wholly dependent on Heaven. If God withholds, what can we do but humble ourselves and cry to Him! May He find us honestly and constantly in that holy attitude.

"Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers."

A LADY married an unbelieving husband—in the face of 2 Cor. vi. 14, which was pointed out to her at the time. The result was severe trials, as only she and her God know. At the same time, the Father's loving hand has been realized through it all, and it is comforting to know that she is able to thus view it, and reap, as a consequence, the peaceable fruits of righteousness (Heb. xii. 11). Here is an extract from one of her letters:

"No, I'm not out of trouble yet, but it has brought a lesson that I probably never would have learned under happier circumstances. So many things are clear to me

now, that I never had any conception of before. It has strengthened me just where I was weakest; so I do not feel like complaining. Oh, I have been wonderfully blest in numberless ways—far beyond anything I deserve!

"This little home was not begun according to God's plan, so how could I expect it to stand? You warned me once; but I thought he was so near the fold. What a foolish mistake! He wasn't *in* it, and I was only trying to deceive myself, because I was thinking of self instead of the Master—of what *I* wanted to do, instead of what He would have me do. Now I am willing to walk in His way, whatever it is, no matter what privations or struggle it may mean. I am His to use just where and how He will."

Oh, may our gracious God speak to some of His dear children when about to enter into a union of any kind whatsoever, and bring them to complete happy obedience to His holy Word. Truly "the way of the transgressor is hard," whether it be a unforgiven sinner or a child of God. And surely "the ways of the Lord are right."

Happy they who know the will of the Father, and do it.

F. H. J.

"MADE PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING."

A FEW LINES ON A PASSAGE FOUND IN HEBREWS II. 10.

"For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Heb. ii. 10.

HERE we have One who is *made perfect* through sufferings. Some may ask, Was He not, then, perfect before? The answer is, that *personally*

He was perfect; *officially* He was not, till He had finished His work. It refers to Christ as our great sacrifice and High Priest. The same expression is used in Heb. v. 9: "And being *made perfect*, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Again, in chapter vii. 28: "For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is *consecrated* for evermore." Here "consecrated" is, as the margin reads, *perfected*. It was the official perfecting, which could only be acquired by His sufferings. Thus He suffered in life, endured temptations, proved Himself the perfect One in a scene of evil which brought out His perfectness, yet also gave Him the practical acquaintance with the difficulties of the path, that He might sympathize with His people in the trials of the way, and administer timely help when called upon. But there is no divine sympathy for *sin*. The word of God everywhere *judges* it. Even *the thoughts and intents of the heart* are exposed for judgment by the Word.

The sympathy of Christ is for those who are striving against sin, and whose weakness claims from Him the well-timed succor He is competent and ready to afford. For this His life down here gave Him practical acquaintance—a precious truth for the believer who is seeking to walk with God.

R. T. G.

By making us know what we are, and loathe it, God in His ways of peace, teaches us to identify ourselves with Him against ourselves, as also against Satan and the world.

Trusting and Waiting

MY trust is in Jesus who died on the tree;
 He now is in glory and pleading for me;
 He is coming again, I know not how soon,
 To give me a place with Himself and His own.

My boast is in Him with whom none can compare,
 God sees me in Him, and He is all fair:
 In myself worse than nought,—in Him I'm complete,
 Through free grace alone for glory made meet.

In a sense of this grace, I'm pressing along,
 Being consciously weak I lean on the Strong:
 'Tis just for to day, till the conflict is o'er;
 Then I leave the dark vale, and reach the bright shore

No praise due to me, for all is of God—
 All is through Jesus, by His precious blood.
 Yes, He's coming again to take up His own
 To be with Himself, we know not how soon.

He may come to-day, or He may come to-night;
 It behoves us to have our lamps burning bright.
 We know He'll come soon, this we know by the *Word*:
 Oh, may we in *heart* truly wait for the Lord.

R. H.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

Given at the New York Thanksgiving day Meeting, by S. R.

 PSALM XCVII.

THIS psalm and others before and after it are a great Millennial group, which celebrate the kingdom of God set up in power on earth; set up in the second Man, in contrast with the first. In the 90th psalm is the declaration that nothing abiding comes from the failed first man; and in the 91st all is changed, and the titles of God speak of Millennial glory and blessing; it speaks also of the resurrection of our Lord. The 97th psalm celebrates the kingdom of the Lord; it is the Lord that reigneth.

The key to this psalm, as to all Scripture, is Christ; and we are not left in doubt as to who it is that reigneth. In Hebrews we have a direct quotation from this psalm, as applying to the Son set over all: "and let all the angels of God worship Him"—that is, those who are associated with God as servants and executors of His will recognize Him as no other than the Son of God who became man, and whose path here was lowly devotedness to God. God, who has highly exalted Him, now brings Him in as the rightful Ruler of the earth. So the key here is Christ, who unlocks the doors of blessing for a groaning earth, and makes the desert to blossom as the rose. This has been a groaning earth, by reason of the Fall made subject to vanity, and waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

To-day men's minds are largely turned to questions of rule and government, and we should un-

feignedly thank our God for casting our lot where we can go on in simplicity, without molestation. The powers that be are ordained of God—whoever takes it; the power is here for the glory of God and the blessing of His creatures. We probably fail in estimating how great these privileges are, in peace and safety to meet as we do now, in a world where the blessed Son of God found only rejection and a cross, and where thousands of His people have been put to death for holding less truth than we have to-day. As we see the confusion and disorder in other parts of the world, we need to remember that it is only mercy that spares us from being subjected to the same; and that, left without God, man's will must sooner or later develop into anarchy.

Man listening to Satan's lie—"ye shall be as God"—was where it came in at the beginning. Under the impulse of that awful suggestion, but incompetent, for he seeks his own glory. So we need not be surprised at hearing of disorder, anarchy and cruelty as we see the foundations of thrones being shaken.

What is the remedy? Not looking for something set up by man—his culture, his liberty. We look for no relief to a groaning earth in that way—no hope for things to get better. Our "thanksgiving" is for the coming of the true King—the Lord, who reigneth. Christ is the true King, and He is the key. We were reminded this morning how He saved the one hanging at His side; the appeal was made to Him as King—"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." His accusation was that He was "King of the Jews," but it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, suggesting His world-

wide kingdom. He alone could make the earth rejoice, for He alone could banish sin and rebellion against God. The cross was the only throne the Son of God got here, but such a throne—where He could dispense salvation to the one dying at His side—not that it was peculiar to that sinner alone, but that sinner a type of our own selves! We have abused more privileges than he who hung there ever had. That blessed King, in rejection, opened the gates of Paradise to him; and associated with Jesus, he went in there to the kingdom of eternal glory and blessing.

So we can glory in Him, and all the grace that brought Him down to the cross, when, at the moment that men were glorying over Him, saying "Aha," we can bow and say, Jesus, *Thou* art the King.

In the time of this psalm we have the Lord brought into the Millennial earth as the one who has already by His Cross laid the foundation of His throne, which is to abide forever.

Were God to deal with us apart from the cross of Christ, what would it be? Righteousness would demand righteousness on our part, and judgment would call for execution and our banishment forever from His presence. God dealt with Him as our Substitute, and the foundations of the throne of righteousness were eternally laid, and He now comes forth with all His power and glory to be the King—the Man after God's own heart, who is to rule in righteousness and extend God's kingdom to the ends of the earth. There are two ways of looking at it; 1st, as the rejected One; 2dly, from God's side, how He wrought salvation, and makes the solitary place

to rejoice and the desert to blossom as the rose.

Then this government and righteousness must be according to all that God is in His nature. He is a God of righteousness, and His throne must ever express all that God is.

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He had come, then, to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and all divine mercy was shown by Him up to the cross, and since then the gospel of grace goes out to guilty sinners.

But, for the world that has rejected and refused God and served graven images, etc., the coming of the true King must be the setting aside in judgment of all that is contrary to Him. He is setting up His kingdom, and so "clouds and darkness are round about Him, righteousness and judgment are the foundation of His throne." The world that refuses His grace must bow under His awful judgment.

What has the believer before him in connection with this earth? He knows that the Lord is coming for Him, and that judgment is waiting for the world that it is going on to judgment. What are the moral effects of that—what should it produce in our souls? We look to Calvary, and our hearts are bowed. As to the world, we are to separate from that which belongs to the world—"they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;" and this separation is from within outward; it is not the giving up of this or that, but the being separated in heart from the spirit and ways of the world, which is under judgment. Will not that solemnize the heart, and will it not produce an effort to win souls to Christ by His grace? So it is a personal separation to the cru-

cified Christ on one side, and a going out in love to souls on the other side.

Then we get, as to the personal side of things, not now the kingdom and glory, but the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. He has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. As subjects, we are to be constrained by His love, to be held fast in simple love to Him, producing subjection to the authority of the Son as really as if He were personally reigning in Millennial glory. That is what should be produced in the heart—the love of Christ in constraining power producing in us a spirit of subjection that delights to bow to and own His authority.

The time in which we live is characterized by the rejection of authority, and the people of God themselves may, alas, partake of the same spirit. Unless kept by His grace, there may be a spirit of independence of the Father's will. May we so enter into what the kingdom is now, "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," and be set at liberty to bow *now* to the King, to own His blessed authority *now*, and have no confidence in ourselves, but keep our eyes fixed on that blessed Saviour, to know whom is fulness of joy.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS AFTER DEATH.

THERE is a widely-spread belief that the dead are unconscious. Many who admit their existence deny their consciousness. Is it a belief founded on Scripture? Does the word of God teach that the state of the dead is one of unconsciousness?

Several persons are mentioned in the Bible who, having died, were brought back again to earthly life. Elijah, by the power of God, raised up the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings xvii. 17-23). Elisha raised the son of the great woman of Shunem (2 Kings iv. 18-37). The man who was being hastily buried in the sepulchre of Elisha came back to earthly life again on coming into contact with the bones of Elisha (2 Kings xiii. 20, 21). Our Lord brought back from the death state the daughter of Jairus (Mark v. 35-43), the widow's son of Nain (Luke vii. 11-15), and Lazarus (John xi.). There are thus six instances mentioned in the Scriptures of the return of dead persons to earthly life.

Now it might be thought that these six persons would be good witnesses of the condition of the dead. Having been themselves in the death state, on the return to earthly life they might well give their testimony to their experiences while in the death condition. Whether they did so or not, we do not know. There is no record of any testimony given by them about the condition of the dead. No utterance of theirs concerning their experience in the place of the departed has come down to us, either by tradition or inspiration.

Will it do to assume, because they have told us nothing about the dead, that they must be regarded as showing that the dead are unconscious? Must we take it for granted that, if the dead are conscious, they would certainly have been employed to tell us so? The argument founded on this supposition cannot be trusted unless it is confirmed. These cases cannot be cited on one side of the question more than on the other. If it be said, They do not tell us

that the dead are conscious, it may be answered, They do not deny their consciousness.

Plainly, then, we must look further to find the answer to the question, Are the dead unconscious? We will inquire, then, Is there not something in Scripture directly referring to the state of the dead? Does it speak of any one in the dead condition? Does it refer in any way to the experiences of dead people?

In searching the word of God to find the answers to these questions, we will find that it refers to Samuel as in the dead condition (1 Sam. xxviii. 3-20). On diligently examining what is recorded about dead Samuel, we will find the facts to be these: First, Samuel is dead. He is not, at the time when this record speaks of him, a living man on the earth—a living man among living men. Second, Saul, the king of Israel, is in great distress, and is exceedingly desirous of getting into communication with dead Samuel. Third, there was living at the time a woman who had a familiar spirit, a representative of a class of people who claimed to procure communications *from* the dead. Notice this carefully. Consultants with the dead do not engage to raise the dead, but only to get communications *from* them. Fourth, Saul, in inquiring of this woman who had a familiar spirit, only looked for a communication from dead Samuel. He said to her, "Divine unto me." It is plain he believed that Samuel was in conscious existence, even in the dead state. Fifth, the woman says, "I saw gods," *i. e.*, spirits. She did not pretend to bring Samuel out of the dead state. She only claims to have seen him as a spirit—a disembodied spirit. Furthermore, she saw more than one

spirit; but among the spirits she saw, she could distinguish the spirit of Samuel. Sixth, Samuel *as a spirit* actually communicates with Saul. He communicates with him *directly*, not through the woman. Seventh, in his communication to Saul, Samuel tells him, "To-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with me," *i. e.*, Saul and his sons were to die the next day, and be with Samuel in the spirit world.

Now it must be perfectly plain that the spirit of Samuel was conscious. Had he been unconscious, could he have carried on a conversation with Saul? In this case, it was a direct communication. It was not the woman who told Saul what Samuel had to say to him, but it was Samuel himself speaking directly to Saul.

Now here we have a clear case of a person in the dead condition, and he is spoken of as being conscious. It is only one case, you say; but is it not a sample case? If the Scriptures tell us plainly of one person in the death state who is conscious, does it not suggest at least that others are? May we not say, rather, that it implies consciousness for all others?

But as a matter of fact, it is not an isolated case. Scripture speaks of others besides Samuel as in the dead condition; and when we examine the other cases mentioned, we shall find that in every case the person is spoken of as conscious.

We will now look at Moses on the mount of transfiguration. Moses was a dead man. He had been dead over 1400 years. He was in the dead state. When the Lord was transfigured before three of His disciples, Moses, as well as Elias, appeared with Him (Matt. xvii., Mark ix., and Luke ix.). For the

purpose of manifestation, he assumed the human, bodily form. He was not raised from the dead. The body he had when he was in this earthly life was not raised up out of its grave. The body in which he appeared on this occasion was an assumed body. Angels, and the Lord Himself, in Old Testament times, assumed the human, bodily form for the purpose of manifestation. There is no reason for thinking it was not the same with Moses here.

Now it is evident that Moses was conscious. He and Elias talked with the Lord about the decease He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. Hence we have another case like that of Samuel, where a dead man is referred to, and where he is spoken of as undoubtedly being conscious.

If there were no more testimony in the Scriptures on this subject than these two cases of Samuel and Moses, it would be quite sufficient for us to reject the belief of the unconsciousness of those who are in the death state. Scripture nowhere affirms the unconsciousness of the dead, and these two cases are not in any way treated as being exceptions. They argue irresistibly for the consciousness of the departed.

But these two cases are not the limit of the witness of Scripture on the subject. Another case of men spoken of as conscious in the death state is found in Luke xvi., where our Lord mentions the names of Lazarus and Dives. They were both once living men on earth. Both of them have died, and both are in the world of the departed. When in this earthly life, one had his "good things," the other his "evil things." In the world of spirits the order is reversed. The one who in earthly life had his

good things is suffering "torments," while the one who had his evil things is "comforted." But without consciousness there can be neither suffering nor comfort. Thus it is plain our Lord speaks of these men as conscious in the death state. To say that the dead are unconscious is to call in question the authority of the teaching of Christ. It is to accuse Him of misrepresenting the actual condition of the dead. Notice, He represents Dives as being tormented, as longing for relief from his torment, and as in anxious solicitude for the welfare of his brethren who are still in the earthly life. How could this be without consciousness? To the mind that is subject to Scripture this is perfectly plain.

C. CRAIN.

(To be concluded, D. V., in our next.)

LETTERS ON SOME PRACTICAL POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

(First published about 1870 by F. W. G.)

MY DEAR BROTHER:—It is upon my heart to write to you freely and familiarly, about some things affecting the practical state of the gatherings, which the Lord (we may trust) is bringing into being in so many places now; often in great weakness and isolation, separated by long distances from one another, as on this immense Continent of North America especially. The weakness, if only realized, would be indeed matter for thanksgiving and an occasion of real strength; and the isolation from other help should cast them more immediately upon the Church's living Head. I cannot speak then of *felt* weakness as being really that, or lament that circumstances should

be favorable to that walk with God alone, which is what at all times the Lord has called His people to. Still, these circumstances have their peculiar difficulties, and call for some special consideration, as I think,—some special attempt to minister to the need by those who have in some measure felt it, and who, by their very mistakes and failures, have been taught what they would desire others to learn in a better way. That so much of what we have to speak of has been knowledge acquired in this painful manner, may serve to free the writer from even the appearance of self-conceit in communicating it.

Without further preface, then, let me commence with some thoughts as to the gathering itself, which is indeed the first consideration, and a matter of all importance. For this very reason its beginning in any place is so critical a thing. A bad constitution at the beginning, just as in the physical condition of an individual, may lead to an unhealthy state which may never be recovered from. Let me say, then, that the first of all requisites for a true gathering to the Lord's name, is that it be of the *Lord's making*. You will understand that I do not mean by that merely that those gathered together should be themselves the Lord's. That is a matter of course, which I need not dwell on, for I am not now seeking to establish what the Church of God is, or what the gathering to Christ's name : I assume that as known and acknowledged by those I speak of. But I mean that their actual drawing together should be by the Spirit, working by the truth upon the heart, and by *nothing else*.

I believe the very thought of the unity of the Church of God may be unintelligently used to hinder

this. That every Christian (the maintenance of a Scriptural discipline being understood of course) has a right to the Lord's Table, may become an argument for methods of gathering which are quite unsuited to the days in which we live, and tend only to produce confusion instead of what will glorify God.

For *real* gathering the Holy Ghost must gather, and Christ therefore it is who must be the attractive object, for thus alone the Holy Ghost works. It is only weakness, for instance, where a wife follows a husband into fellowship, or a husband his wife, or children their parents, without personal exercise and conviction. Or where pleasant companionship is the object even in divine things. Or where people come in just because converted under one in fellowship; or where one's own personal blessing is the object sought. All these are motives short of Christ Himself, and all acting upon them should be as far as possible discouraged. We cannot indeed refuse Christians their place upon this ground only, but we can and ought to put them solemnly upon their responsibility to act as to and under the Lord alone.*

Intelligence as to more than fundamental truth we must not require.† When the Church first began, and disciples came together to break bread, the truth of the one Body was not yet known; and "babes" have their place at the Father's board as well as full-grown sons. On the other hand, profession is absolutely worthless except justified by the life; and we

* Without "refusing" a person, an assembly may well postpone the "receiving" until it is quite clear to do so. Ed.

† Intelligence in the truth is not the first thing, but singleness of eye. Ed.

have to remember that our rule for a day of failure is to purge ourselves from the vessels to dishonor, and "follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." We do not pretend to judge who is who, as Christians; we do not pretend, in refusing fellowship, to say the person is not a Christian: "the Lord knoweth them that are His," not we. But we cannot associate with "vessels to dishonor," and be ourselves "vessels to honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use;" and we know the pure-hearted by the righteousness, as well as faith and love, that we follow with them. In days of common and easy profession, the test which is not imposed by the circumstances amid which we move, must be only the more rigidly imposed by those with whom "truth in the inward parts" is recognized as the Lord's requirement.

And here let me insist a little,—for there is need,—that a most scriptural test, and an important one, is that of one's *associations*. Even the world has its proverbs bearing upon this. "Tell me who are your companions, and I will tell you who you are," says one of them; and as an estimate of moral character we recognize the truth of this. A man's moral level cannot be much above that of his voluntary associations. Above all, where Christ is denied or dishonored, one who winks at this dishonor is plainly unfit for communion with Himself. Let me illustrate this by an example. A freemason, if a Christian, is not only yoked unequally with unbelievers, but still more with those who purposely omit the Lord's name out of their corporate prayers, to accommodate Jews and unbelievers generally; he is openly linked

thus with the Lord's dishonor. The same may be said of those who sit under the teaching of fundamental heresy, or who sit down in communion with it. The teaching of Scripture is that, "he that bid-deth him God-speed," or gives him salutation, "is partaker of his evil deeds;" and that "if any one purge himself from these (vessels to dishonor), *he* shall be a vessel unto honor." (2 John; ii Tim. ii). Have we then any right to count those vessels unto honor, who do *not* so purge themselves?

It is a question thus of practical walk, this association; and as truly a matter of discipline, or of exclusion, as any other. In these days in which "confederacy" is so leading a principle, it is one of very solemn importance.

Now a word or two as to reception. It is the act of the whole gathering in a place, just as much as is exclusion; whether there be "two or three" gathered, or two or three hundred. This leads to the practical necessity of submitting the name of any one to be received, to the whole gathering a sufficient time before reception, to allow of all to know and realize what they are doing. Practically it may be that there are a few who have the confidence of the assembly, upon whom the work of visiting and enquiry will usually devolve; but these ought never upon such ground to assume to act for the assembly, nor can the assembly rightly rest their responsibility upon these. Communion is a thing which concerns every individual; as to "receive one another" must of necessity be individual.

It has been objected that there is no scripture for making people wait a week or more, and it is quite true that *in that shape* there is none. But every

text which enforces our responsibility as to our associations with others, enforces also the necessity of giving opportunity to all to be of one mind in such a matter as this. And a really godly person, who understands the reason of his being asked to wait to proceed from care for the Lord's glory, and to have fellowship a real thing, will be content to wait, if it were a month, rather than hinder this, nay, will be only too glad to see this care practically exercised.

This touches another point—the matter of *introduction* to fellowship, on the part of a brother or more, for one occasion, as of a person accidentally present, and known by him to be a Christian. Ought such individual judgment to be imposed on an assembly, without giving them time or opportunity to express their own mind intelligently about it? It is my own clear and deliberate conviction, that this ought never to be done, and I think full and scriptural reason can be given for it.

The right of a Christian to communion is not in question: the question is who is to recognize the right? Is it the assembly, or is it the individual? The two or three gathered to the name of the Lord have His promise to be with them; but they cannot transfer this to one or more among them acting for the rest. If it be allowed to all to introduce, how many are there whose judgment could not at all be trusted in a matter of the kind? If on the other hand it be only the privilege of a few to do so, an official class is set up, very hard to define, impossible to be allowed to define *themselves*, and wholly unknown to Scripture.

If it be said, this only applies to occasional, not regular communion, I answer, if a person be recog-

zed as entitled to "break bread" for a single time, cannot be rightly refused at any other; except of course in a case where discipline has to be maintained, to which all are equally subject who are at the table of the Lord. The place is the same for all exactly, and reception is exactly the same also. If we admitted the idea of "occasional" communion, we should make provision for what is contrary to the Lord's mind; for *He* certainly gives no permission to wander from His table. And while we cannot prevent this, nor require intelligence as a pre-requisite where the heart is really right with God, we cannot and may not on the other hand *ourselves* limit the title to wander.

I have said all this, dear brother, in so brief a way, that I feel there is need to ask you not to mistake brevity for dogmatism. I have indeed myself the strongest belief that what I have said will stand the fullest test of the word of God; and I trust and believe you will not receive anything on my part that that blessed Word does not authenticate. Here, for the present then, I close, though with much more upon my mind, to which at a future time I may ask you to listen.

Three more letters relating to this subject will, D. V., be published in consecutive Nos. of HELP AND FOOD.

The way to make stony-ground hearers is to think rightly of conviction of sin. The fruit-bearer is the man that has had convictions, deep and many, and still has them, onward to the end.

THE AIM OF MINISTRY.

GOD's object and end ought to be ours. The means ought never to supersede the end with us. What a strength and power in the words, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth!" Paul says, he labours to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. What an aim was this!

A man's aim gives a character to all his acts. A low aim can never carry a man high, but a high one has power to attract from a very low position; and when it is divine, it will be like the path of the just, becoming more positive and clear, the more it is pursued. No minister of the gospel ought to be satisfied with a condition for any believer inferior to what would satisfy the heart of Christ, not only with regard to the infancy of such a soul, but to its fruitful maturity. "Feed My sheep," is the claim of true affection for Christ; but if His present organization for the Church, and His future glory in her, be now disregarded, or untaught, are not the most precious secrets of His love suppressed or overlooked? One, who, in ministering to God's people, proposes to himself God's end and object for them, and nothing short of it, while feeling increasingly the responsibility of the trust, knows also that he need only deal out honestly and faithfully what has been committed to him, and abundantly will the need be supplied.

Truth is so fallen in the streets in these days, that the call to each is to be valued for the truth, and not merely to be convinced of the rightness of a position. Truth, being fully revealed by our Lord Jesus

Christ, there will be no further revelation of it. If any part of it be misrepresented, there will be an imperfect evangelization; for the Gospel is, that "grace and truth are come by Jesus Christ." Are we sufficiently alive to the responsibility of seeing that the truth of God, so long undeclared, but now fully declared by our Lord Jesus Christ, should not suffer in our attempts to expound the fulness and greatness of it? What painful misrepresentations of our Lord's doings and intentions down here, do we find in the current religious publications of the day! Therefore, I am bold to say, that if a soul does not see how he is called to vindicate Christ in these days, I see little use in gaining his approval of my position. If we were called to vindicate God, we must at once retire from a work for which we are utterly incompetent; but the Lord Jesus has vindicated *Him by declaring the truth; and it is only a veritable adherence to what He has done that we are called to.* If the "Spirit of truth" be working in a soul, there will be exercise as to what is truth, and, in teaching souls, how necessary to be assured that they are learning the truth, *that the Spirit is thereby guiding them into it.*

Full truth alone can keep us from slipping off from our proper place; the more fully we know it the better we know our position; for truth is but the mind and judgment of Him, whom the better we know, the more are we bound to love, for we thus find how absolutely He is for our blessing. The more one line of truth becomes diffused, the more does every other line require to be pressed, or there will be departure from the moral symmetry belonging to the body of Christ on earth. The Lord keep

us loving His truth—the unfolding of Himself! He is but a poor friend who would not like to know more, and all about me, or I must be very unworthy. How blessed to be allowed of God to set the seeds of His truth in the souls of His people; and how we ought to rejoice at every apprehension a soul gets of the truth of our God!

“This God is our God for ever and ever: He shall be our Guide even unto death.”

From “The Present Testimony”

IS RIGHTEOUSNESS TO BE SACRIFICED FOR UNITY?

LET us suppose that an influential portion of an assembly have put away a brother as a “heretic,” without just grounds. Some seem to hold that under such circumstances they must submit to the “action;” apparently upon the following considerations:

The action was unscriptural and unrighteous, but those who have so erred are not wicked persons. It was the Lord’s table before: is it not so still? They were on scriptural ground before: are they not so now? Can one refuse their action, and become separated from them, without departing from scriptural ground, and from the Lord’s table?

The answer to this is, Is it not raising a question, or making a difficulty, where none exists in Scripture? Nowhere in Scripture am I called upon to decide the standing of those from whom I may become in this way separated. I am only bound for myself to “follow righteousness,” as surely in Church relationship as in private affairs. Those who adhere

to an unrighteous action are, so far, on wrong ground: they are no longer where they were, and I am by no means bound to follow them in their departure, whether it be ten feet or a hundred feet from the true path—to use a physical figure. I am not left to my own will or choice: it is not rebellion to refuse to follow them, but submission to the Word—a sure guide, but one calling for a sense of responsibility and true exercise of soul, each for himself, before the Lord.

We are to “follow righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” The one who does *that*, will be in the way of obedience and on right Church ground, no matter whom or what he is separated from. To conclude that my only safety is to cleave to an assembly that has been on right ground, though they commit unrighteousness, is, in measure, the spirit of a Romanist, and weakens our sense of responsibility to the Lord and our confidence in the Word as our guide. It opens the way for subjection to human tradition and creed and error. Error tends to become enthroned; and the truth, and liberty to inquire into it, is in measure shut out.

These issues are involved in such a crisis in the Church's history, and our eyes should be open to discern the enemy's devices, and how and when we are exposed to danger. If we are in bondage to the idea of following good men—and who is free from this danger?—where may we not drift? It is to the Lord and to His Word we are to cleave at all times, and at all cost; and in this path, with trials, we shall find the vigor of spiritual health. “I found myself,” said one who had been entrapped in the way I speak

of, and had revolted from it, "I found myself bound to identify the name of the Lord with unrighteousness."

We need to take to us the "whole armor of God against the wiles of the devil ;" and the first part of the armor is, "having the loins girt about with truth," not error. Is it not plainly enough error to plead for subjection to unrighteousness? No unrighteous judgment is bound in heaven.

"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. xi., let grace be what it may in sovereign goodness, it never sets aside righteousness. . . . I do not think that any Church theory, however true and blessed when walking in the Spirit, can go before practical righteousness."*

Huss, the martyr of Bohemia, "caused a writing to be fixed upon the church of Bethlehem, charging the clergy with six errors, among which was, 'that every excommunication, just or unjust, binds the excommunicated.' He declared that an excommunication which is groundless 'hath no effect.' " Thus, with our open Bible, we have to learn from a devout Roman Catholic of the year 1400 so plain a truth.

It is not for us to decide such questions as "Where is the Lord's Table?" It might lead to perplexity, or to arrogant assumption, in our conclusions. What we have to consider is, "What is right?" That leads to true exercise before God, in the light of the Word.

To be subject, for the sake of unity, to unrighteous-

* Letters, J. N. D., Vol. III., page 184.

ness in an act of excommunication, what can it be but wrong? Because done in the Lord's name, does wrong become right? We should have patience, and grace, but also have the "senses exercised to discern between good and evil." E. S. L.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 17.—In Num. xxi. the bitten Israelite was to look upon the brazen serpent lifted up among them; and in John iii. the Lord, making use of this as a figure, bids us believe on Him as lifted up on the cross. Was the look of the Israelite to be constant on the brazen serpent; that he might not only be healed, but remain healed? And is the look of faith on Jesus on the cross to be constant, to be saved, and to remain saved? Also, is not the word "believe" in John iii. similar in meaning to the word "look" in Num. xxi.?

ANS.—Beginning with the latter part of your question—Yes, surely, the word "look" in Numbers thoroughly illustrates the word "believe" in John. As to the rest, remember that in both Numbers and John it is a question of *life*—in Numbers, of *life temporal*; in John, of *life eternal*. By the bite of the fiery serpents, the Israelites *lost their life*; the serpent's venom once in them, it was death; and so it was a question of restoring to them that forfeited life. God's verdict was, "It shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it (the serpent on the pole), shall *live*." Accordingly, "it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he *lived*." One look gave him back his forfeited life, and he needed never to cast a second look. It was one definite act of the bitten man to look, and it was one definite act of God to give him back his forfeited life.

Just so, too, in John iii., only there it is a question of *life eternal*—a matter as much greater than natural life returned to the Israelite as the Lord Jesus Christ is greater than a brazen serpent. The poor sinner, realizing that he is "dead in trespasses and sins," casts one look of faith on Jesus dying for him there on that cross, and God answers that look of faith by giving him eternal life. It

is one definite look of faith on Jesus, and it is one definite act of God, neither of which is ever again repeated. It lasts as long as God lasts.

It is not that this life now received from God is independent of Jesus. No more is it so than the life of my hand or of my foot is independent of my head. With it, it stands or falls. So also does eternal life so truly identify the believer with Christ that with Him every believer stands or falls. But He stands for all eternity; and so we, *being wholly dependent on Him*, stand too, thank God, for all eternity.

QUES. 18.—Was Balaam a prophet of God, or only a diviner? Would he answer to a fortune-teller of nowadays? Of what people was he?

ANS.—Num. xxii. 5 states he lived in Pethor, a city near the river Euphrates, where his people dwelt. This would be near the parts where Abraham lived when God called him.

As to what he was, the New Testament amply interprets it for us: 1 Peter ii. describes the "false teachers" which were to rise up among Christians by the "false prophets" of the Old Testament; and, as prominent among these "false prophets," he names Balaam (vers. 15, 16). Again, Jude, in warning Christians about the awful condition of things, and the character of some in Christendom preceding the return of our Lord, mentions Balaam alongside with Cain and Core (ver. 11). Once more he is mentioned in Rev. ii. 14.

After such revelations concerning Balaam, it is not difficult to conclude that he is no mere diviner or fortune-teller, but a man who professes to be a prophet of God, though at heart but an ambitious hireling, who, for selfish ends, is ready to curse the people of God, or to ensnare them out of the path which belongs to them. How prominent the Cain and Balaam characters have become in Christendom, and how rapidly the Core character is developing, only shows how near we have come to the time of which Jude writes—"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (vers. 14, 15).

SEVEN STAGES OF THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

THE history of God's ancient people, from Egypt to Canaan, is fraught with richest instruction, especially when it is understood that their history was formed by a divine hand, moulded for a certain purpose. They were a typical people; and concerning this part of their history, it is written, "Now all these things happened unto them for types: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11).

In the land of Egypt we learn of their degradation and bondage. Eleven chapters describe their real condition—their burdens, their sorrows and their bitter tears (Ex. i.–xi.); but God, whose compassions are great and fail not, beheld their condition; His heart was moved, and He remembered His covenant with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, "and God had respect unto them" (Ex. ii. 24, 25).

In the person of Moses, God raised up a deliverer, a savior, and sent him to them on an errand, an errand of mercy and of love, with power. When we reach chapter twelve of that very remarkable book, we find a great change—the dawn of a new day for that favored people whom Jehovah claimed as His own.

FIRST: The Passover (Ex. xii.).

In this chapter God brings in a new beginning—openly connecting that people with His Name. His

purpose was to bring them out of Egypt, through the desert, and into the land of promise—the land that “flowed with milk and honey” (chap. iii. 8). The first lesson He would teach them was the need of a passover lamb. Our chapter describes that lamb fully, and enforces the need on the part of each to see that the blood of the lamb was sprinkled upon the door-posts of his house. For, it must be remembered, they were sinners as were the Egyptians, they were idolaters as were also the Egyptians, and in these things there was no difference; but when God spoke, they heard and obeyed His voice (chap. iv. 29-31); hence, God said, “I will put a division (literally, a redemption, *margin*) between My people and thy people” (chap. viii. 23). At this point we see the people turning to God from idols, as did the new converts at Thessalonica at an after date (1 Thess. i. 9). They also accepted God's appointed way as did Abel before them (Gen. iv. 4), and God provided a place of safety for His people upon that dark night, when He executed judgment upon the land of Egypt.

The lamb was God's appointed means of safety—of deliverance from judgment. The blood upon the door-posts outside was sufficient for God's eye to rest upon—“When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” And this people, taken up in God's sovereign grace, could, behind the blood-stained lintel, *rest satisfied*, in perfect safety, and feast upon the lamb roast with fire, with the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs.

In all this we see a clear, plain picture of Christ. “For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. v. 7). The blood gave Israel safety and peace; the blood of Christ secures salvation and

peace, through the forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life to every soul to-day who hears and believes the message, receiving the incorruptible word of God into the heart by faith.

Thus, Israel start on their journey a redeemed people, and that memorial month was for them "the beginning of months." So with us, when the soul accepts God's Lamb, there is a new beginning, a new birth, a new life, a new relationship—all based upon the blood of Christ, God's Lamb. Blessed start! Blessed journey, and blessed end!

SECOND: The Red Sea (Ex. xiv.).

We leave the place of Israel's birth, the scene of their slavery—"the house of bondage"—and under the guiding of the Shekinah cloud we journey to the Red Sea. For, be it remembered, the cloud guided them in all the journey from the place where the blood was sprinkled (Ex. xiv. 21)—type of the Holy Spirit indwelling and guiding God's people now, consequent upon new birth and redemption by the blood (Rom. v. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Gal. iii. 2; iv. 6; Eph. i. 13).

At the Red Sea they encamped "before Pi-hahiroth" ("door of liberty"). The Red Sea was that door of liberty—God's appointed way of deliverance for them from the bondage of Egypt and Pharaoh, as the passover-lamb had been from divine judgment. Thus we see in their history a double deliverance: one secured them from God's wrath against their sins; the other, from the terrible rule of Pharaoh.

That proud, haughty ruler had made them his slaves. They formed part of his dominion, and this

extended as far as the Red Sea; but when God opened up the Sea and passed Israel through, they were free. Before this they groaned and wept; now, delivered, they rejoiced and sang (Ex. xv.).

Here we can compare scripture with scripture again, and find the beautiful analogy between the Old Testament and the New. In the New Testament we learn of the reign, rule, or dominion, of *Sin* (Rom. v. 21; vi. 6; vii. 23), which has sway in the whole human race—in every human heart away from God. Pharaoh's dominion had a limit, and so has that of Sin; one ruled as far as the Red Sea; the other, as far as death; but in either case the rule extends no further. The Red Sea is thus another illustration of Christ's death; only, His people being now linked with Him by the Spirit, they pass through death in Him. This is God's appointed way of deliverance for them from the world (Egypt), and from the power, rule and dominion of Sin (Pharaoh). This lesson is fully given in Rom. vi.

Thus as Israel passed through the Red Sea and were free, so we pass through death in Christ and are crucified to the world—separated from it forever, and freed from the dominion of sin under which the world is. It can be easily seen that this is a further lesson for us to learn than that of forgiveness of sins and justification, as in Rom. iii., iv., and v., just as the Red Sea lesson differs from that of the passover. All believers have, as Israel, in God's sight passed through the Red Sea. All have been crucified with Christ, and no longer live as sinners before God. As sinners, they "are dead" (Col. iii. 3). Many believers may not have grasped this truth in their souls, and thus lose the blessing which surely follows

every ray of light which enters the human soul. Israel were free from the dominion of *Pharaoh*, and we are free from the dominion of *sin*; not yet free from the *presence* of sin, for it still exists within us, as all around us, but we are free from its rule. So we are enjoined "let not therefore sin reign in your mortal body" (Rom. vi. 12). This truth gives great rest to the soul, when apprehended. It gives rest in God's way—not in the way many think, *i. e.*, give battle to indwelling sin with the hope to exterminate it. The principle of evil we all inherit from natural birth abides as long as we abide here; but when the believer grasps the Red Sea lessons, with their application as set forth in the sixth chapter of Romans, its fruits are both deliverance and sanctification.

This is experimental progress from what we have in Rom. iii.—v., but progress of faith, as the Red Sea was a further lesson for Israel from the passover. Many are confused in their minds as to these different and important steps in the Christian course, and thus lose much blessing. It is of immense importance we should learn that the truth of the passover, and of Rom. iii.—v. which corresponds with it, is for the establishment of our *relationship* with God. The first moment the soul accepts Christ, there is forgiveness of sins (Acts xiii. 38); there is deliverance from wrath to come (1 Thess. i. 10); there is no future judgment (Jno. v. 24), for all these questions are settled, and the relationship, as born of God, is all established—the eternal issues are settled forever between the soul and God. But this is not all. There is the wilderness to go through—the sin that still dwells in us, the world full of sin all about us, and a holy walk with God through it all incum-

bent upon us. It is for this the truth of the Red Sea, with its corresponding lessons in Rom. vi. and vii., has been given to us. May there be earnestness to grasp, and profit by, these divine provisions.

After Israel passed the Sea, Pharaoh's rule passed away from them. That slavery, under his dominion, was a thing of the past, and now *Moses*, God's deliverer, was the appointed ruler and guide of that people across the desert to Canaan. Moses took the place of Pharaoh.

The same in Rom. vi.: the rule of *sin* is broken—annulled by the death of Christ. We are delivered from sin, as the old ruler, and free now to serve another—Him who is alive, risen—Jesus Christ our Lord.* We have, as Israel, changed masters, and are free to serve righteousness, to serve Christ the Lord. Glorious and blessed is this further deliverance, proclaimed to a people already under the shelter of the blood—who may be already rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins. The progress is progress experimentally, progress in the truth, progress in the faith; and this is also progress in sanctification, according to John xvii. 17—"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." A. E. B.

(To be continued, D. V.)

* The reader will do well to read with care this whole chapter in the epistle to the Romans. *Sins* are the great question of chaps. iii., iv., and up to chap. v. 11. Then, from chap. v. 12 to vi. 23, the subject is not guilt, not *sins*, but the evil principle within, that produced those sins. That evil principle within is called "*sin*."

LETTERS ON SOME PRACTICAL POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

(First published about 1870; by F. W. G.)

SECOND LETTER.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—In my last letter we were speaking of the gathering as such, and necessarily somewhat of communion, as what is involved, or implied, in gathering. I want now to say a few words as to *how far* this is implied in it, and as to its true nature.

Our fellowship is first of all “with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ,” and thus only, and in the measure in which this is attained, “with one another.” We are united together by the Centre, as the spokes of a wheel are with the nave. We are gathered *to* the name of the Lord Jesus, and find our place at His table as having individually heard Him say, “This do in remembrance of Me.” This alone puts fellowship with one another in the right place, and, while it tests, maintains it. It makes my presence at the Lord’s table a matter of loving obedience to Him whose voice alone I am to listen to, and *not* first of all a pledge of fellowship with all who may be there.

It is very needful to maintain this, as a point of duty to the Lord Himself; for, clearly, I must not make my remembrance of the Lord depend upon the right condition of those with whom I sit down at His table. I must be in my place with Him, whatever may be the state of others, so long as I can recognize that the place where I am is according to truth and righteousness. I can neither ensure nor assume a right state in all. *I must be right myself,*

of course: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat."

And at this point let me diverge a little (if it be that) to say that the less we *assume* as to anything where we are concerned, the better. It is a day in which universal failure is the most patent of all things; and the more we are with God, the more we shall realize it. God has not failed—will never: we can answer for Him, and for no one else; for ourselves, certainly, least of all. Confession, not assumption, as with Daniel in his day, alone suits the real character of remnant times.

Suppose you put (as some incline to do) into the gracious promise in Matt. xviii., "Where two or three are *gathered* together to My Name," the words "by the Holy Ghost"—could we always assure ourselves that without doubt our gathering was that, as to all in it? And if not, how far could we claim the promise, "there am I in the midst of them"?

These words, "by the Holy Ghost," are not there, as, if they were essential, they certainly would be; nor does the word "gathered" necessarily imply them. All sorts of assemblages—of the multitudes, of the Pharisees, for example—are described in the same language precisely; and it is a great blessing to us that it is so, for only thus can we, without assumption or pretension of any kind, grasp in faith the promise upon which so much depends. We can be honest and real, lowly and self-suspecting, and yet draw near in confidence to Him who vouchsafes His presence in the midst.

Ought it, then, to be "by the Holy Ghost" that we are gathered? Surely; and let us test and see how far it is so. Just as with communion, *ought* we

not to be, each one of us and all together, in the enjoyment of this among ourselves? Yes, undoubtedly; but let us test ourselves as to this, and seek earnestly after it, and not assume it. We may be happy with each other in a very different way, and yet mistake it for that which alone can please God; and thus we may force Him even to come in, and break up what we deemed so happy, because we are assuming the sham to be the true, and because He would give us the true and not the sham.

But there is a danger with us, if "communion" takes the form of what is manward rather than what is Godward, that the first unhappiness between us and our brethren—the first suspicion, or perception, of what is wrong in them—should make us act as if it were the Lord we had fallen out with, by withdrawing from that which is the remembrance of Him, and the expression (in the first place) of fellowship with Him.

There is the more danger because that which brought Christians constantly together in the first fresh days of Christianity has ceased to be with most what it was of old. The coming together "to break bread" has been largely displaced by meetings for prayer and preaching, apart from this; and the value of the Lord's Supper is the less realized often even by those who do come together to it. The great meeting of the Church in which we recognize what the Lord is to us all, and what we are to one another, and in which He Himself has the central place, has given way to meetings over which preside officially-appointed teachers, and in which Church and world alike have place. The Lord's Supper would, they think, lose its solemnity by frequent repetition;

whereas, in fact, it is thus it makes its mark upon us, bringing us back week by week face to face with those wondrous relationships which are established upon so dear a foundation as "the Lord's death," and to be realized in their fulness at that unknown but ever-looked-for time—His coming again.

To be with Him where He has especially promised His presence, looking back together to His death and forward to His coming—this is what preeminently characterizes the sweet and solemn meeting "to break bread;" in which surely He Himself has the central place, and fellowship with Him is the one great essential, which, if it be maintained, brings us into fellowship with all His people who are capable of, and enjoying, fellowship with Him.

This, of course, does not in the least set aside the obligation to promote the latter in every possible way; and it would be an immense thing if we realized each breach of fellowship, where such there is, as a breach with Him. How it would free us from the petty, personal feeling which so besets us, if we understood (as I have before said) our connection with one another to be *by the Centre*, and only so! With what a different spirit we should take up anything of this kind, when we looked at it as somewhat between the Lord and one of His own, and only thus affecting us at all! Are we not apt to take such up in the very reverse way, and feel that which touches us, first and weightiest? It is for this very reason that it is so safe to refuse ever to pursue what may be deemed *our* quarrel, and to leave it (if the first steps to "gain one's brother" are not effectual) in the hands of those who can give more dispassionate judgment than we may be capable of.

If we realized this connection by the Centre, would not the bonds that bind us together bind us each more closely to the Lord, and the least relaxation of them be felt as introducing and implying less practical nearness? And would not He be the One we turned to instinctively to settle things and get them right, instead of, first of all, the assembly? Would not He be thus between us and our brethren, instead of (as it so easily may be) *our brethren between us and Christ?*

You will understand that I am not making light of the necessity for holiness, or of scriptural discipline to maintain this. Here we cannot act singly: all must act together. To separate ourselves from the Lord's table, is to put ourselves where discipline is no longer practicable, and to leave the evil (if such there be) behind us *at* the table and to defile our brethren. Moreover, how large a class of things there is in which the assembly should never be called in at all! How many personal matters in which the apostle's question becomes pertinent, "Why do ye not rather take wrong?" Above all, how needful to remember that *grace* is that which gives dominion over sin; as *law*, on the other hand, is its strength. We must not *ever* deem it as allowing unholiness, to show grace; or imagine for a moment that there is no way of putting sin away except by judgment.

I feel I have spoken somewhat vaguely in all this; yet after all Scripture gives mainly principles, leaving us to apply them to each case according to what the case is. Simplicity and dependence upon God alone can guide us aright.

Two more letters relating to this subject will, D. V., be published in consecutive numbers of HELP AND FOOD.

UNCONSCIOUSNESS AFTER DEATH.

(Concluded from page 211.)

IF now we turn to Rev. vi. 9-11, we read of a company—not an individual or two—but a company of men who, in a day yet to come, are to be “slain for the word of God.” After they shall be slain, we are told, they will cry unto the Lord to judge and avenge their blood on their persecutors, and that they will be told that they must rest for a short season, until another company of their fellow-servants shall be slain in the same manner they have been. Here again consciousness is attributed to dead people. They are represented as realizing, in the dead condition, the great wrong that has been done to them in the taking of their lives. They are mentioned as intelligently entering into the great truth and fact that vengeance belongs to God. They are spoken of as making their appeal to Him, and they are comforted with the assurance that when another company of their fellow-servants shall have been slain as they have been, their great wrongs shall be redressed. All of this is absolutely inconsistent with the thought of their being in an unconscious state.

How this scripture confirms what the previous cases which we have considered have led us to! And here objections which might be made to the cases of Samuel, and Moses, and Lazarus, and Dives, cannot apply. If it be said Samuel and Moses were exceptional cases—for special reasons, which, however, cannot be shown—it would involve the regarding of this company of slain ones as an exceptional company. But the fact of the company being so numerous would rather argue that if they are con-

scious in the death state, then we must believe all the dead are conscious. To suppose them to be an exceptional company is a strain on logic. Sound reasoning will not permit the suggestion. But what is still stronger evidence is, there is no hint in the Scriptures that this company of slain ones is treated as being an exception to the general rule. To believe that any dead are unconscious, we would need such a hint.

Again, it is sometimes said that the story of Lazarus and Dives is a parable. It is not so stated; but even if it is, it must set forth the truth. There is no suggestion of unconsciousness in it, whether it is a parable or actual history. But this account in Rev. vi. 9-11 cannot be called a parable. It is a vision—a vision of something that is actually to take place. It is a vision of a company of dead people, and they are seen as a company who will be conscious when in the death state.

There is another scripture to which we will now turn—2 Cor. xii. 2-4. Here we find the apostle Paul speaking of a man who was caught up to the third heaven. He could not say whether he was carried there as in his body, or as disembodied; that is, as a spirit. The fact of being there he was conscious of, but he had no remembrance of having been conscious of his body while there. He had distinct remembrance of being conscious of things no human tongue could describe. He knew he heard "words" which can be spoken only in the spirit world.

Now it is clear that the apostle thought that it was possible that he might have died when he was caught up to Paradise. It is equally clear that he had no idea that a man in the disembodied condition, or

death state, is unconscious. Whether he was in the body or out of it while he was there, he did not know; but he did know that he was consciously there. He thought, then, that there could be consciousness in the death state. He felt no difficulty in so representing it. Had he believed in the doctrine of the unconsciousness of the dead, there would have been a difficulty. He would have felt that his experiences in Paradise were inconsistent with his belief about the unconsciousness of the dead.

It has been said the apostle derived his ideas of the spirit world from his Pharisaical training. We need not discuss the question whether the belief of the Pharisees about the consciousness of the departed spirits was correct or not. All we need to reply is that the apostle is here writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He is expressing himself in Spirit-taught words. (See 1 Cor. ii. 13.) Did, then, the Holy Spirit misstate the truth in inspiring the apostle to write 2 Cor. xii. 2-4? It would be blasphemy to believe this. It would be to charge Him with being a deceiver; to accuse Him of lying. There is, then, no escape from the conclusion that in this passage the Spirit of God testifies to the truth of the consciousness of the dead.

We will not carry our inquiry into the teaching of Scripture on the subject of the consciousness of the dead any further. It is not necessary to do so, for Scripture cannot be inconsistent with itself. We have already seen that it does speak of men who are in the death state, and that it mentions them as being conscious there. This is simple fact. There can be no evasion of it. The statements of the scriptures we have examined are all direct. There is no ambi-

guity about them. They assert *as the fact* the consciousness of the dead.

We need not, then, spend any time on discussing the meaning of certain words commonly relied on to establish the doctrine that the dead are unconscious, such as "gathered to his fathers," "slept with his fathers," "sleep." It would be erroneous to give these expressions a meaning that would make them to be inconsistent with what is by Scripture established to be a *fact*. A surely attested fact cannot be denied for the sake of maintaining a definition arbitrarily given to a term. Besides, those who have scientifically investigated the subject of dreams tell us that they rather witness to consciousness in sleep, that sleep is the symbol of unconsciousness only in a limited sense. Its use in Scripture is therefore consistent, not only with the scriptural doctrine of consciousness after death, but its natural use as expressing a limited unconsciousness. That is, the dead are not actively engaged in the affairs of this earthly life though they are awake to the realities of the life beyond, and in the midst of which they are.

The doctrine of the unconsciousness of the dead, then, is utterly unscriptural. There is no foundation in Scripture for believing it to be true. All who bow to Scripture must reject it as a false doctrine.

Furthermore, it is fundamentally erroneous, because it affects the character of the death of Christ, who died as a substitute for those who lay under the sentence of death as the penalty of sin. If death as the penalty of sin is the witness that the sinner is under the wrath of God, then the sinner in the death state must be in consciousness; he is conscious of the wrath of God, consciously waiting the final rati-

fication of the judgment under which he lies, which will be at the great white throne, when, finally judged, he will be sent into the final and eternal doom of the wicked. Now Christ died for sinners. He took their doom—their portion, both in death and the judgment that comes after death. He was not unconscious when in that doom. He was conscious of all its dreadful reality. Death to Him was the penalty of sin, the witness and pledge of an eternal judgment after death. If death is unconsciousness, then death would be a deliverance from the witness and pledge of eternal judgment. Thus it is clear that the doctrine of the unconsciousness of the dead destroys entirely the character of the death of Christ as the sinner's substitute.

The Lord give grace to hold fast the truth, to maintain the true character of the death of Christ, to contend earnestly for the true meaning of death itself as the penalty of sin. Let there be no weakness in refusing the now widely spread doctrine of the unconsciousness of the dead. Let us awake to what is in question. May the Lord deliver those who are ensnared in error. May His people be preserved in the profession of truth, and in the sense of its value.

C CRAIN.

“Let your conversation (behavior) be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Heb. xiii. 5, 6).

What sweet, lovely liberty is here! No lusting for more. Content with what I have. In my God.

appointed path, toiling faithfully as I go, making all my dependents as comfortable as lies in my power, and happy in the use of what I have. God, who cannot lie, who knows me, who loves me, who owns heaven and earth, who has all power, who notices even the fall of a sparrow, who never slumbers, who never forgets anything, promises never to leave me nor forsake me.

What then need I fear? If in the path of obedience, what matters it if even all men forsake me? What matters it if He send me among the poor or the rich, among Christians or among heathen? There He is, there He sees; He will make His word good, even if the ravens have to be His messengers. What holy liberty for thee my soul is here! What blessed elevation in a groveling, earth-craving world, whose covetous soul, like the grave, is never satisfied, never says, It is enough!

EEL GRASS.

Luke viii. 26-40.

THERE is a fresh-water plant called "eel grass," common in sluggish streams in all parts of the world. It looks much like grass; the ribbons starting close to the root, without a stem.

It has two distinct kinds of flowers—never found together on the same individual plant. One flower is green, about the size and shape of a clove, containing the seed pod, borne on a slender stem that grows until it reaches the surface, where it floats and opens. The others, containing the pollen, are borne in a tight cluster about the size of a lead-pencil and

close to the root. These pollen buds break loose, rise to the surface, open, and scatter their pollen over the other flowers in waiting.

As soon as the seeds are fertilized, the long stem begins to coil up in a tight spiral (hence the botanical name, *Valisneria spiralis*) thus drawing it back to the root from whence it came, and where, through the summer, it ripens, and scatters its seeds for new plants.

Is not this an illustration of God's method of spreading the gospel, as it is given in Luke viii. 26-40?

The waters, with all the mud and uncleanness at the bottom, answers to this present evil world; the seed answers to the individual, without any divine life, dead in trespasses and sins, and is parallel with the good ground of ver. 15; the cluster of staminate flowers, with their myriads of pollen dust, to the word of God, any of its myriad statements or verses able to give eternal life.

The pistils of the seed-bearing flowers, which transmit the life principle from the pollen to the seed, are like the individual faith that receives the life-giving Word. The fertilization takes place in the air of heaven, not in the water; just as souls are born from above; heaven is their "native land;" and from there they are *sent* into the world (Jno. xvii. 18). If but one minute particle of pollen touch one of the delicate pistils, in one moment life is communicated to the dead seed. It is not that the seed had life once, and, having lost it, now has it anew; but it never had anything in it which would ever have become life. The life is in the pollen, not in the seed. The mysterious communication of it by the touch of the

pollen is through the pistils' delicate threads, of which the silk of corn is a good example. The base of each hidden seed is attached to one of these threads, which is *exposed at the end of the ear*. If one is injured before being touched by the pollen, there will be a blank kernel in time of harvest; it will not fill out nor grow; the pollen from the tassel above may fall, but there is no reception of life. Just so, men may hear the life-giving Word, but without faith there is no effect, no growth, and no fruit. No goodness of ground can take the place of the good seed. Job, Nicodemus, and all others, must be born again—have the very life of God implanted in the soul; they must be “born of the word of God, that liveth and abideth forever.”

Here is a fundamental principle of the very first importance running through the vegetable world and the spiritual world:—all seeds must have life imparted to them; and every soul must be born again.

There are hundreds of individual scriptures able to give life; but one is needed. In Spurgeon's case, Isa. xlv. 22, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved;” in others, John iii. 16, or v. 24, is received by faith, and instantly the soul is born of God. Other scriptures may be enjoyed later, but that one verse has done the work, never to be undone, and never to be repeated. In many cases, where there was deep exercise of conscience, the effect has been so sudden and violent as never to allow of doubt afterwards as to the time and fact of new birth.

I do not think we have in eel grass an illustration of fruit exactly, for fruit is to be eaten—the vine and fruit-trees would give us that view: here we have reproduction; just what we have in vers. 39, 40: a

soul born again, taken out of the world, and then with a new life sent back into it to his old friends and neighbors to minister the same to them—the work of the evangelist.

For one born of God this world is a scene of evil and temptation, "where foes and snares abound"—this present evil world. Here the Lord found us, and back into it He sends us to multiply what we have received. In the world, but not of it; not taken out of it, but not to be defiled by it, even as a plant is not defiled by the earth in which it grows: on our part, using the very evil as a means and stimulus of growth (1 Peter i. 6, 7): and it is just such an evil world that needs the knowledge of Christ—not from the lips of angels, but of redeemed sinners (Acts x. 3-6).

In the case of the man possessed of demons, the first result was, that when the Lord returned, those who had prayed Him to depart were now waiting for Him. Just so the seed ripening in the water grows amid its old surroundings, and produces flowers which scatter their pollen abroad to fertilize other dead seeds. And so the early disciples went everywhere preaching the word (Acts viii. 4). T. M.

"I'D RATHER SUFFER LOSS."

"I T was that very spot, sir," said a working shoemaker, pointing to a place in his little workshop; "yes, in that very place, sir, six years ago, that the Lord spoke peace to my troubled soul; and how good and gracious He is!" Such was almost the beginning of our happy and profitable inter-

course, on paying a visit to this dear servant of the Lord Jesus. . . .

After talking generally together, and having had sweet fellowship in the things of our precious Saviour and Lord, and we were about to leave, he said, "I should like to let you know something about the exercises of soul I have been lately passing through." To this we readily assented.

He then said something like this: "When I was converted to God, and knew the Lord Jesus Christ His Son as my Saviour, I thought I shall now surely prosper in my little business. But in this I was sadly mistaken, for my earnings very soon fell off. The first year I earned seventy-five cents a week less; the second year, still seventy-five cents a week less; the third year, one dollar a week less; and of late my earnings have been so little that I thought I must give it up and seek some other employment, though I have so enjoyed the Lord's presence with me in this little place.

"Accordingly, knowing Mr. M. to be a kind, Christian man, and that he held a good situation in a large factory near this, I asked him if he thought he could procure me employment of any kind in his place of business; and he promised to let me know when there was a vacancy.

"But after this I became deeply exercised before the Lord as to what I was about. Is this that I am seeking according to my own will, or the Lord's will? Is He bidding me to give up my present calling and seek another? for I have had much of the Lord's presence and enjoyed His sweet company when working alone in this corner.

"And just then the Lord seemed to say to me,

Which will you have? Will you go into the factory, and mix with the ungodly multitude, with large wages, or remain in this corner and enjoy My presence with small earnings? Which will you have?

"I assure you, sir, it was a serious moment. I turned it well over in my mind. I considered how weak I am, and how easily turned aside, and began to think that if I went into that factory to work, I might soon be drawn away, and lose my blessed Lord's sweet company.

"So I said, 'Lord, let me have Thy company, even if it must be with small earnings; I'd rather suffer loss than not enjoy Thy presence with me.' From that time I became perfectly settled, and told Mr. M. not to think anything more about procuring a situation for me. Now, sir, it is remarkable that from that time work began to come in more than for a long time before."

We could not help thinking that the result was just what we should have expected. We believe that one of the greatest hindrances to souls is their being so taken up with desire for worldly prosperity. The consequence is that the Lord has not got His rightful place in their hearts; and, however many excuses they may make, the question really is, "Am I seeking earthly gain, or the enjoyment of the Lord's presence?—is communion with Him the uppermost desire of my heart?"

Perhaps no point is of more importance for us really to settle in the presence of God. If worldly advantage, to say nothing of the accumulation of wealth, has the *first* consideration, let it not surprise us if such go further and further away from the Lord; but if we are willing to suffer loss, and to lay

aside everything that hinders our enjoyment of His sweet company, then we may be sure that He will not forsake us as to food and raiment.

We believe the scripture is as true as ever, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." We do well to remember that to the believer it is said, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Matt. vi. 33; Phil. i. 29). H. H S.

CURRENT EVENTS.

DARK SHADOWS.

THERE are two words in common use which aptly describe two classes of people who are in and out of the world. On the one hand there are those who are full of hope for the future, who are looking for better and better times, who refuse to see the dark side of events and are called "Optimists." Then there are, on the other hand, those who see the dark side, who have nearly or quite lost hope, and who have the name of "Pessimists." These terms can belong only to those who are ignorant of what God has revealed in Scripture as to the future of the earth and of its inhabitants. To those who have learned what God has revealed, events which are taking place on the earth are parts of the great whole of that which is the purpose of God concerning this earth and its people—not the result of chance or blind force, or of man's wickedness alone.

And where there is real faith, even if it be not intelligent in prophetic truth, there will be the realization that all things are in the hands of an all wise and almighty God, who, while enduring patiently the full developement

of the evil in man, is shaping everything according to His wisdom and grace. So that faith alone can rest in the midst of all the darkness of the present day.

One of the facts of the present time, which is in perfect accord with prophecy, is the rapidly increasing power of the common people. We know that in the prophetic history of the Church in Revelation chaps. ii. and iii., the last church has that most instructive name Laodicea, which means, the people's right. We know, too, that what characterizes the present above all else in the political world is that the people are more and more getting their rights. The great surprise in the last election in England was the growth of the power of the people. Russia is seeing the people rising to possess themselves of their rights as never before. The nation is being transformed. Here, the voice of the people has never been more powerful in the government than at present. It is rapidly getting more so in a large part of the world, and is a cause for rejoicing on the part of the people. Men like to feel that they can *command* what they consider their rights; they love power, chiefly to this end.

But at once there arises the question, What does belong to the people? How far shall this movement go? And at once dangers begin to loom up. The doctrines of Socialism propound many untried theories based upon a strange ignorance of human nature. Any system that does not take the holiness of God and the sinfulness of man into account is doomed to utter failure. There is much in the present outlook to encourage those who are seeking to obtain the rights of the people, but there is one dark cloud which is casting its shadows over the nations of the earth.

There is growing a form of popular power which darkens men's hopes of stable government. *Anarchist* is a word that makes kings and rulers shrink with fear. Anarchist means "against rule"—against government. He

is not alone against that which is generally recognized as evil, but to him all rule and authority and government are evil, to be gotten rid of, and that by violence. Among the ignorant masses of continental Europe especially these awful doctrines are spreading. There, they are being sternly repressed, but among those who come to this country they are preached with unflagging earnestness. More dangerous are these by far in future possibilities for evil than the ignorant masses which come here under the power of Rome.

A hindrance to the progress of these doctrines is the general prosperity in this country. When "hard times" come, with discontent of the people, as they surely will, then will be the opportunity of these propagators of destruction; and how great their capacity for harm! Men of culture, of knowledge, of wealth, fear this propaganda of ruin: yet in great measure have themselves to blame for the rise of this class. No one could imagine that Anarchism could gain adherents among people who have faith in God, the fear of God, or His love in their hearts. But the work of that large class called "higher critics" has been to destroy these very things among all who have come under their influence. It is from Germany, the home of "higher criticism," that the worst forms of anarchistic teachings have sprung. The leaders of the modern attacks on Scripture have lived in Germany, and so also have the leaders of these destructionists. The awful horrors of the French Revolution were made possible by the destructive writings of Voltaire and his coadjutors. Those who destroy the faith of the masses in even the ordinary beliefs concerning God and eternal things, are doing work which will end in the ruin of society. The men who are busy destroying the faith of the masses in the Bible, are preparing the way for the spread of the doctrines of anarchy. If there is no divine revelation, then there is no means of telling right from wrong.

"Might makes right" is one of the foundation principles of anarchy.

But men soon tire of anarchy with its horrors, and desire a ruler. So it was in France after the Revolution; so it will be in the future. And "the Beast" arises out of this period of anarchy. Now many of the evils of sin—which is revolt against God—are hidden. But the time is coming when sin will show itself in its most hideous form; when there will be exhibited to the intelligence of the universe the fruits of sin and rebellion against God in their worst phase. Now, in mercy, God is restraining sin—holding it back, that the members of the body of Christ may be gathered out. When that has been completed and removed from the earth, the restraint upon evil will also be removed, and it will be permitted to show itself without hindrance.

The present turning of the masses from the old belief in God and the Bible and Christian truth, is paving the way for this last outburst of evil. On the one hand the professing Church has become so full of evil itself that it is no longer a witness for Christ. On the other the current teachings of the most pronounced forms of unbelief in every conceivable way, are fast destroying in civilized nations the knowledge of Christian truth. Every form of error is taking its place, but more especially such forms as will pave the way for the brief time of anarchy, and the power of the Antichrist following. Thus, "higher critic" and anarchist alike are working toward the same end. Both seek to destroy what restrains the power of evil on the earth—both are laboring to establish man's will in place of God's rule. Morality, culture and refinements of civilization, hide the awful nature of sin; but the anarchist tears off the mask and makes its character known.

But the lawless mob is not the worst form of evil; it is the despot guiding the mob. Thus we can see how both

the scholarly "critic," and the coarse, brutal, anarchist are really working together to the same end. Our comfort is that God is over all this, and that out of the coming "great tribulation" shall also come a "great multitude which no man could number, out of all nations and kindreds and tongues," which "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

J. W. NEWTON.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 19.—Will you kindly explain the 9th verse of 1 John iii.?

ANS.—Viewing the passage as the expression of what *constitutes* the child of God, it declares that, by virtue of his being born of God, he possesses a life whose nature is incapable of sinning; it is God's "seed," which "remaineth in" the believer, and from it can proceed no sin, even as elsewhere we are told that from the nature we obtain in our human birth there can proceed no good.

If we view the passage as in relation to the *practical* life of the child of God, it is also true that, once born of God, he cannot continue in the life of sin he practised before; it would be misery to him. He loves holiness, and henceforth trends its paths.

No notice is taken here of the evil nature which still abides in the child of God. This is expressed in chap. ii. 1 of this same epistle, and fully developed in Rom. vi. and vii.

QUES. 20.—What is the meaning of the title "Son of man," as given to our Lord?

ANS.—The title "Son of man," which our Lord constantly took, connected Him, on the one hand, with subjection and obedience to God; and on the other, with universal headship—not merely with Israel. It expresses the excellencies which God has found in Him as man. Adam had been made in the image of God, after His likeness; but he fell, and what man should have been for God totally failed in him. In our Lord He has found it. No matter in what circumstances He was placed, Jesus never deviated from the true path of man before God. Obedience, which is the highest virtue to be found in man, so wholly wanting in the first, is seen in all

its perfection in the Second. Let suffering be what it would, He obeyed, and obeyed in that mind which makes His life on earth an offering of sweet-smelling savor to God. It was His meat and drink to do His Father's will.

Jesus is therefore the true man after God's heart, the very essence of the humanity which was in the mind of God, answering to all that God desired in man. All this, and more, is expressed in the lovely title "Son of man;" and it is in relation to that title that His sorrows and His future glories are seen, barring out, of course, the glories which have ever been and ever will be His as God.

We would recommend to you a book of no ordinary worth on this subject, "*The Evangelists*," by J. G. Bellett, to be had of the Publishers, \$1.00, postpaid.

NOTE.—The attention of the Editor has been called to the answer given to Ques. 16, in our July number, which is liable to be misunderstood, chiefly because of what it omits saying. He therefore supplies the deficiency here:

The three Persons in the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—being in nature the same, coequal and coeternal, there can *therefore* be no disparity between them, nor precedence of One over the Other.

But to accomplish God's purposes of love and glory, the Son, in grace, became man, and this necessitated the place of subjection which, in creation, a son has toward his father. It is *only in this sense*, therefore, that the Lord could possibly say, "My Father is greater than I." Nor does this in the slightest degree interfere with His place and eternal glory as God, any more than His humanity interferes with His deity. Nay, more; for He has by this place of subjection and humiliation accomplished that which but brings new lustre to the glory of God—to His glory, therefore, who is indeed "the true God and eternal life."

Holy indeed is the theme, calling upon us to take off our shoes when we approach it, lest there be found with us fault even in expression.

HOW PRAYER IS ANSWERED.

I ASKED the Lord that I might grow
 In faith, and love, and every grace ;
 Might more of His salvation know,
 And seek more earnestly His face.

'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
 And He, I trust, has answered prayer ;
 But it has been in such a way
 As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favored hour
 At once He'd answer my request,
 And by His love's constraining power
 Subdue my will and give me rest.

Instead of this, He made me feel
 The hidden evils of my heart ;
 And let the angry powers of hell
 Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more, with His own hand He seemed
 Intent to aggravate my woe ;
 Crossed all the fair designs I schemed ;
 Blasted my gourd, and laid me low.

Lord, why is this? I, trembling, cried.
 Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death ?
 "'Tis in this way," the Lord replied,
 I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ
 From self and pride to set thee free,
 And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
 That thou may'st seek thy all *in Me.*"

SEVEN STAGES OF THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

(Continued from page 230.)

Third: **Edom** (Num. xx. 14-21; Deut. ii. 4-15.)

THE believer's life is one of continued progress toward the end, as was Israel's; but all their exercises did not cease with Egypt, nor yet at the Red Sea. Onward and upward was their march toward the land of their inheritance, with further lessons to be learned in God's school. These lessons, however, are of a different order, and belong no more to the book of Exodus, but to that of Numbers. "Edom" lay across their path to the promised land (Num. xx. 14-21). It lay side by side with Israel the whole forty years across the desert. It represents the flesh now in the believer. God warned His people not to meddle with it; they were not to war with Edom (Deut. ii. 4-8.)

Edom is a word almost identical with *Adam*, and the fact of this enemy of God's ancient people being left beside them day by day for forty years, was a humiliating lesson for them; it was a trial calculated to lead them to continual prayerfulness and watchfulness to the end.

They had escaped one enemy—Pharaoh, but afterward needed to watch against another—Esau, or Edom. These were very real lessons for Israel; and when we consider that they convey parallel lessons to us, we search the New Testament to find what these lessons are, and what it is that answers to this new and hateful foe of God's people of old.

Romans vi. 14, "Sin shall not have dominion over you," answers as we have seen, to the rule of *Pharaoh*—the previous part of the epistle telling how it was broken. Rom. vii. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," answers to *Edom*. It is the flesh which remains in the believer until the end, and which, though condemned, is side by side with the new nature, as was Edom also with Israel. With neither of these enemies was Israel to fight. Deliverance from their power was not by the effort of man, but by God. We have seen how He set them free from Pharaoh and what answers to this in ourselves. In the same way, with Edom they were not to meddle; it teaches us that the way to gain mastery over the flesh which is in us is not by meddling with it, but by treating it as *condemned*, and reckoning ourselves *dead to it*. Esau and Jacob are yet along side each other. That which is born of the flesh, (the elder) yet dwells beside that which is born of the Spirit (the younger); and the only way to overcome the flesh which dwells in us is to walk in the Spirit. Thus shall we not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, and thus only shall the elder be subject to the younger. The power now in those born of God is on the side of right, not of wrong; on the side of holiness, not of sinfulness. Occupation with good is our only means to escape the power of the evil in us.

Other enemies there are, ahead of us, which demand battle (such as Eph. vi. 10-18), but in Romans vi. and vii. the key to and secret of victory is not to fight, but faith treating it as condemned, and placing God between us and it. If Christ and the blessed things which are in Christ are kept before the heart, and communion is cultivated with Him

where He is now, and the truth of His Word searched and loved, we will realize indeed that the flesh is yet in us, as Edom was alongside Israel, but its presence need be no hindrance, for the Spirit in us gives us power to refuse its workings. It will keep us humble however. It will produce prayerfulness and watchfulness at every step of the way. It will cast us upon God as our only wall of defence against it, and for the needed grace to ever treat it as an enemy and a thing utterly condemned by Him. What immense relief this gives the soul! and how much unnecessary trouble is saved by following God's thought, grasping His mind in this, and being truly subject to Him day by day which is the path itself of practical sanctification and true holiness.

Fourth: The River Jordan (Joshua iii., iv.).

In the *Passover* we saw what removed God's judgment from His people and what lays the ground for their redemption and relationship with Himself.

In the *Red Sea*, what further blessing we have in Christ's death, as God's appointed way for our deliverance from the bondage of law and the power of sin.

In *Edom*, God's way with His people in relation to the principle of sin, the flesh, which abides in them to the end.

Now in the *crossing of Jordan* the Spirit puts another touch upon the canvass, and thus completes the picture of what and where the Christian is in the eyes of God—that is, how God views him in Christ, and the place he occupies.

The passing of the Red Sea had let them out of the place of slavery. The passing of Jordan gives

their entrance into "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it" (Deut. viii. 7-9.).

Jordan sets forth *our death with Christ*; and as the twelve stones were brought up out of Jordan and placed on the Canaan side, it is a reminder that the people who descended in Jordan had also risen up and had entered their possessions in the land of promise. We have here the lessons of Colossians iii, "risen with Christ." We have died with Him, but we are also risen with Him. The step from Romans vi. and vii. to Col. iii. is, as in Israel's case, from the Red Sea to Jordan, from Exodus to Joshua. Christ has died, was buried, but He now is alive and risen; and God sees all His people in living association with Christ, the glorified Head of the new creation—those redeemed and brought to God. Has He died? so have we. Has He been buried? so have we. Is He risen? so are we. Has He entered the heavenlies? (as we fully see in Eph. i. and ii.) so have we—as *seen by the eye of God*, in the person of the Lord our living representative. True, we are not there *with Him* yet, but we are seen *in Him* there, and that is the fullest and most perfect pledge and assurance that, at His coming, we shall be also *with Him*. Thus, in God's reckoning, we have passed over Jordan because the Lord has passed over; we have died with Christ and are risen with Him; and further, in Christ we are seated in heavenly places.

All those stages in Israel's history were planned

by a divine mind and traced by the divine hand. What a new scene spread before them as they passed over Jordan! The land (for us, type of the heavens) spread before them with its hills and valleys, fountains and streams, its wheat and barley," etc., a glorious, pleasant land. *They* were our types, and so is their land; the better things were reserved for us, and those blessings are ours now. As to the apprehension of the truth, many believers never pass beyond the wilderness, if even, as to their experience, they pass the Red Sea. They, according to the beggarly thoughts of the natural mind, suppose that the enjoyment such as is presented here is only for the end, when we are taken home to heaven. But God spreads all our inheritance, His gracious gift to us, before our souls, and He would have us, by faith *now*, lay hold of all of it. As to our bodies we are yet in the world—in Egypt; as to our day by day experience we realize that this world is but a wilderness through which we are passing; but, being in Christ, we are already heirs of everything, and God our Father would have us exercise the faith which apprehends our heavenly portion *now*; and by the help of the Holy Spirit we are led into our heavenly place and blessings, there to rejoice in the riches of God's *grace* and the riches of His *glory*.

Fifth : Gilgal (Joshua v. 1-9).

The people are now in the land of their inheritance. To us, the parallel is that by faith we have apprehended the place which is ours in Christ Jesus—a place full of heavenly blessings. Israel was to take possession step by step of the land and all that was in it. So are we, when once we know our place

in Christ, to take possession by faith of the blessings we have in Him. But enemies were there, and they were now to battle with the enemies, and enter into the enjoyment of all their possessions, as we too must give battle against our spiritual foes in order to lay hold of our heavenly blessings. Israel proved slack in this. And do not we?

Gilgal was their first camping ground in the land, and the place of their circumcision which had been neglected in the wilderness. Their exercises and trials did not cease when they crossed Jordan, but they changed. So we are not to suppose that our trials end when we have found our place in Christ, but their character is changed. They had to contend with the seven nations there, and drive them out; but in this, alas, they often failed. So have we to contend with enemies such as mentioned in Eph vi. 12. As a matter of fact, their conflicts in the wilderness were few; they had a skirmish with Amalek, but after they crossed the Jordan they were in frequent battle. Their pilgrim character in the wilderness becomes a soldier character in Canaan. At Gilgal, upon their entrance in the land, they are circumcised; they roll away the reproach of Egypt. This reproach was their slavery, their bondage; in being circumcised they declared that they were no longer Egyptian slaves, but God's freemen. Free indeed! Free from condemnation, from the power of sin with all its degradation; free from all, to be only God's forever! What a declaration!

Gilgal to us is in Col. iii. 5. After we have learned that we have died with Christ and are risen with Him, we reach also our spiritual Gilgal, and there we are to use the sharp knife as did Israel. We are

not to tolerate in ourselves anything unsuited to, or inconsistent with, the Lord and His holiness. "*Mortify* (put to death) therefore your members." At this stage we are beyond the lessons of Pharaoh and Edom, but we are to remember *the flesh* is in us still, even though we are born of God, and ever desirous of being indulged. When its tendencies arise, we are to judge ourselves—use the sharp knife upon all that comes from it; and by this spiritual exercise we declare that we are subjects or slaves of sin no longer (Rom. viii. 13). We are God's freemen, free to serve God, to serve righteousness, to honor and live unto Him who died for us and rose again.

Gilgal was Israel's camping ground in the book of Joshua. From this point they start for every fresh battle, in dependence upon God; and here they returned after every victory, to give God the praise and glory. A suited place this is for God's people—indeed the only suited one if we desire to make spiritual progress. For all service, for all progress, the place of self-judgment is the only one from which we go to victory; and after victory, to return again to our knees in self-judgment, taking no glory to ourselves but giving God all the praise, is the only safe place. From this spot let us start each morning, and here return each evening. Here is the key to all *true* success and victory, power, joy, fruitfulness, and practical sanctification.

Sixth: The Old Corn (Josh. v. 12).

The next lesson, after Gilgal and circumcision, for Israel was their change of food. The *old corn*—product of the land—was now to be their meat, and

this before they raised the sword against their enemies to drive them out of the land. Jordan was past, Gilgal had been reached, the sharp knife had been used; and now God shows them the precious *wheat*, yielded so abundantly in the land that the grain of the previous year had not all been used. They had long been promised this, and now the Lord is fulfilling it. They can now eat of it, and prove the sweetness and sufficiency of it, and gather strength to go forward and meet their foes.

Their food in Egypt—fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, garlic—speak of their slavish condition; in the wilderness, manna told of their humiliation and strangership; but now having reached their land, the place of God's purpose for them, the food of a free, exalted people is to be theirs.

Manna was bread from heaven truly, and that is Christ; but Christ *come down* from heaven, in humiliation and sorrow on earth. It is thus He is presented to us in the four Gospels. Here we trace His holy path, behold His deep and tender compassions, hear Him speak as never man spake. His being God is declared at every step of His way, that the humiliation to which He has stooped for our sakes may appear; drawn thus to Him in love and adoration, He is our wilderness food which enables us to suffer the humiliation of being linked with Him in this scene of His rejection. The cross is at the end of His journey, and His sufferings in it present different lessons: as the Lamb "roast with fire" He bore our sins on the cross, sustained the judgment of a holy God against us, and made full atonement; and as the Ark He passed through the deep depth of judgment all alone, to bring us on the other side, to

reap with Him the fruits of His victory. In this however, we are not partakers of His sufferings, but are made worshipers. We joy and delight in Him, and will forever.

But in Joshua we are carried further than this. We are in the land of promise, type of the heavenlies. "The manna ceased" now, and the "old corn" is given them. This, of course, is Christ also, but Christ in heaven from whence He came and to which He has returned—the heavenlies. Faith has made acquaintance with Him in humiliation, and now carries the believer's heart and mind where He is (2 Cor. iii. 18; Col. iii. 12; Heb. x. 19-22), and the Holy Spirit feeds and delights the soul upon His beauties and glories there: this is, for us, the "old corn."

Thus, on account of being as yet in our mortal bodies, we are still in Egypt (this world); and on account of the experiences, sorrows, discipline we pass through, we are still in the wilderness; so, by virtue of the faith in us which can take in the counsels of God for us, we are already now, by the power of the Spirit, enjoying our heavenly inheritance. At times the soul finds special comfort in the Saviour's life of suffering here. *This is feeding upon the manna.* Then we think of Him as glorified in the heavens where He now is, and where our portion is with Him, and thus we feed upon Him as the *old corn*. As viewed thus the manna ceases. But whether as manna or old corn, it is the same person, the selfsame Jesus. Nor do we ever get so far in our experience and into the realms of faith as to need the roasted lamb and manna no more,* but for the

* This is important to notice, as a very *misleading* teaching has gone forth, that there may be a stage of soul reached where

time being, when carried on by faith to where He now is, it is of His glories we think. Those different views of the Lord will be before the redeemed as food and delight forever; only, when we view Him in the heavens it greatly changes things, especially in His relation to Israel as the Messiah; for in this aspect we know Him no more (2 Cor. v. 16).

The One who suffered, and purged our sins upon the cross, is now upon the throne of God, at the right hand of the majesty on high; Christ, in His most highly exalted position. And, as a consequence, the Holy Spirit is now present with and dwelling in each believer, to link each one with Christ *where He is*, and give us the present enjoyment of the wonderful place grace has given us

Israel's food in their bondage in Egypt is mentioned, in Num. xi 5, 6, as of six kinds. That of Canaan has seven kinds—the number of perfection—the perfections of the Lord Jesus—wheat, barley, vines, figs, pomegranates, olives, and honey; but the *old corn* (wheat) was the first upon the list (Deut. viii. 8).

Seventh: The Captain with the drawn sword (Josh. v. 13-15).

At this stage the Lord appears in a new form, to lead them on to battle and to victory: without

"manna" is no further needed, and that only a low state of soul feeds upon manna! But the lowly life of Jesus on the earth is ever food for God's people now; and it is *manna*, "the hidden manna," that will be our food in highest glory, and is the precious promise to the faithful in the Church (Rev. ii. 17). The thirty-three years from the manger to the cross will ever be the "sweet savor" to God, and food for the redeemed.

Him they could do nothing: with His presence and His guiding, no foe would be able to stand before them, as their after-history fully demonstrates.

The Captain with the drawn sword identifies Himself with them. To us it is the Christian warfare now, as depicted in the epistle to the Ephesians (ch. vi. 10-18).

Our captain is the Lord of hosts. He associates Himself with us, His own people, to lead and guide us in the conflict with our spiritual foes (which the seven nations illustrate), and to make us take possession of our spiritual heritage, that we may enjoy our spiritual blessings even now. Many of God's people fail to grasp this aspect of New Testament truth, and vainly think that all the blessings, as well as the enjoyment of heaven, are only at the end. But the taking possession, as illustrated by the book of Joshua and Ephesians, chap. vi., does not refer to heaven after death, or at the Lord's second coming, but rather to heaven as enjoyed by the believer while here on the earth, and the spiritual conflict which is necessary to this end.

The seven nations united to keep back Israel, under Joshua's leadership, and sought to hold the land, still in their own power, from the true and rightful heirs. So does Satan now, with the principalities and powers of the heavenly places which are under him, seek to hinder believers from pressing on and taking possession of what God has given them with the Saviour glorified in the heavenlies.

Israel was not to fight Edom in the desert, but they were to drive out the nations which occupied the land. So we are not called upon to battle with sin which is within us (Rom. vi. and vii.), but we are

bid "to wrestle against spiritual wickedness (wicked spirits) in heavenly places" (Eph. vi. 12). Israel's warfare was for an earthly inheritance, ours for a heavenly one. But for this we need to "be strong and of good courage," as Israel was bidden to be. To this end, we feed upon Christ, the old corn, and the Captain with the drawn sword takes His place at our head.

The enemy will contest every foot, yes, every inch; hence we are exhorted, "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." Our foes are spiritual foes, and they are also strong and numerous; but we have the Captain also with the drawn sword, and our Lord who leads the battle is stronger than all our foes. But in this great conflict we need the exercise of faith; for it is the fight of faith—the spiritual conflict against heavenly foes. No carnal weapons can avail in this war.

Faith looks on, and sees the fertile fields that lie before it, to go in and possess them: it values them, and counts them well worth fighting for, and they well repay the aggressive believer.

As Israel, with the Captain before them, marched on, their enemies around them fell and were overcome; when they were self-judged and obedient to the Lord, success attended them at every step and turn. See how Jericho fell before them, a great city, and fortified; and yet, when their hearts were lifted up, and they neglected the prayerful, dependent spirit, a very small place, such as "Ai," drove them back, and they were defeated and put to flight.

How often have we experienced the same, as the people of God, in our day! But these very failures

became sanctified lessons for them further on, as all ours should also. Past failures and defeats ought to lead us to tread the path more carefully and guardedly, seeking to be guided by Him at every step (Prov. iii. 5, 6).

After Israel's failure respecting Ai, they achieve wonderful things. Many places are taken, and the enemy driven away: they capture hills and valleys, cities, towns, villages and outlying fields, with treasure and spoil.

This is the record of the book of Joshua, and a very delightful book for every spiritual mind to read and meditate upon; for their whole history is but the type of our own. Every earthly good they find and get possession of in their land illustrates spiritual blessings laid up for us in heaven. If their blessings, being only temporal, were worth fighting for, how much more ours, which are eternal!

They fought for and possessed much of the land; yet there remained much that they never possessed. Their full blessing they never entered into, and never shall until the second coming of the Lord. Then they shall enter into it all: every enemy shall be driven out of the land; "and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts," for Israel shall occupy all, from the Euphrates to the river of Egypt (Zech. xiv. 21).

So with us. The spiritual, heavenly inheritance is before us; and though we may already possess much, there yet remains much to be possessed—quite enough to prevent spiritual pride in us. It is at the return of the Lord Jesus for us, as the bright Morning Star, that we shall enter into the fulness of all that belongs to us through Him. We shall then

enter our home in the heavenly sphere, with no foes to hinder; as Israel, now cast off, shall enter their earthly home and possessions. All shall then enjoy complete possession, according to God's purpose.

A. E. B.

To be concluded in next number.

GOD'S SUNLIGHT TEST.

Phil. i. 10.

OCCASIONALLY the full force and beauty of a passage is lost in transference from the inspired original into a foreign language, although it should not be surmised that the whole truth is obscured. The substance of a passage is in no case disturbed in translation, but a fuller sense and richer thought is what is often obtained by referring to the original of any writing, and especially the Holy Scriptures. And we are loth to miss anything that the word of God contains; for we know it is ours, and that the Holy Spirit will encourage and reward every effort to better understand His Word. Especially if our hearts are hungry for Christ, and we are seeking grace for a life of holiness, will He make God's word precious to our hearts.

The word in the tenth verse of the first chapter of Philippians that we have in mind is "sincere." This is a compound word in the original, composed of "sunlight" and "judge," and means that a thing has been examined in the sunlight and found pure. Judged in the sunlight! How suggestive! The force of the idea rests on the fact that for an object

to be seen in its true color and correctly discerned, it is necessary to make the examination in the direct sunlight, the only pure, white light of nature. Thus also, spiritually, the word of God is the only true light morally, and the examination of our hearts and lives must be in its direct rays.

It is, first, the Christian's privilege to know that as far as his standing in the presence of God is concerned nothing can be discovered against him, though examined by the searching eye of God in the light of His holiness. This is so because the blood of Christ cleanses perfectly from all sin. Christ's death on the cross so perfectly glorified God about sin, and answered every demand of His nature against sin, that He can not only clear the guilty, but He can also make the sinner fit for His very presence. In Christ, therefore, a child of God is found by God to be perfectly pure when judged in the sunlight of divine truth.

This being so, we are encouraged to seek to have our ways pure and holy also, as far as possible. And indeed the verse before us is for the practical life. We are encouraged to seek grace that our lives may be such, that, when viewed in God's "sunlight," they may be found pure, to the glory and praise of Christ. This is the desire of God for us, though we may fall short of it. Judged in the sunlight and found pure in our ways! What child of God is there that does not find this to be his heart's prayer? May we all realize more deeply the importance of this little compound word! Judged in the sunlight, and found pure!

F. H. J.

"THE WAY OF CAIN."

Gen. iv. and Jude 11.

RELIGION is a subject on which, generally speaking, every man thinks he has a right to adopt and hold his own particular views. To judge by the way in which people express themselves, one would imagine God had never given a clear and authoritative revelation of His mind, but had left them to individual theories—amidst great uncertainty, to form, each one for himself, his own creed. The loose and off-hand manner in which sentiments connected with truth are frequently uttered, is very startling to one accustomed to follow closely the text of Scripture.

"Religion," in the proper sense of the word, is *what God has made binding* on His creatures, not what they are pleased *to bind themselves by*.

There never was more than one *divinely appointed mode* of worship on the earth, at one and the same time. Like the river, which, in one stream, watered the happy garden, and was only parted into different heads after it had issued thence, there was one religion in Paradise. And even, when sin had entered, and Adam and his wife were exiled, they went out with one *divine* promise, and *one divine* hope.

But the little human family soon ceased to assemble around the parental altar. The sons, Cain and Abel, grew up; and, independent in their avocations, we see them differ also in their religion.

Now every man's religion is either that of Cain, or

that of Abel. It is interesting to see, that, as regards their great features, the endless variety (to the eyes of man) may be classed under these two heads, and find their respective prototypes in that of the first two men born into the world. We may say, that *the altars of Cain and Abel are standing to the present hour.*

Behold then, Abel, "the keeper of sheep," and Cain, "the tiller of the ground," drawing near to God.

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord" (ver. 3). After long and patient toil, the earth has produced its fruits for Cain—the reward of watchful and weary seasons. He does not sit down to enjoy them without first acknowledging the divine title to his thanks and homage. "A kind Providence (may we not imagine him to say) has recompensed my toil. The Creator's blessing has produced these fruits from the reluctant ground. Before I taste them, I will present to Him the first-fruits. I shall not omit to own Him as Lord of the earth, and Supreme Benefactor. I admire the beauty of the creation. I offer to my God the fair, the beauteous works of His own hands. This is my *religion*. Is it not natural, simple, pleasing to Him?"

"And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof" (ver. 4). The world was not then so familiar with blood, and suffering, and death, as it soon became. To persons who had still fresh in their memories the innocence and happiness of the garden, the sight of blood, the death-struggle of the animal, and, presently, its coldness and stiffness, must have been an awful spectacle. Had

nature taught Abel to approach God in this manner? Surely, never. Does not nature shudder at Abel's religion? That deep red stain which marks the ground—how looks it near Cain's fruits and flowers? That poor unoffending lamb—was it pleasing to a merciful Creator that its life should be taken? Perhaps you will say, "Yes, God taught Abel to offer these sacrifices; this lamb, like millions of others afterwards offered, was a type of Jesus—the Lamb of God—and Abel was worshiping as God appointed, just as we, with a fuller revelation, worship through Jesus." True, so far. But it is very important to have a clear understanding of Abel's offering.

Abel saw that nothing in the whole compass of fallen nature could be brought as an acceptable thing into God's presence; that all nature's grace, beauty and attractiveness, had upon it the blight of the curse—the taint of sin; and, therefore, was unfit to be offered to a holy God—a "God that answereth by fire." He would indeed as little have ventured to bring thorns and thistles, as to bring the "fruit of the ground; for all, in their way, had become alike memorials of sin and its results.

To worship, then, as Abel, one must have faith. "*By faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (Heb. xi. 4). The first thing proposed to faith now, is God's satisfaction and delight in the person and work of His own Son. If one has not apprehended *that*, if one is not like-minded with God about the atonement of Jesus, and has not the consciousness of full and free forgiveness through His precious blood, that relationship between the soul and God does not exist on which true worship is grounded.

Blood shed,—life taken from the earth,—the animal cut in pieces, and laid in order, with its richness, the fat,—consuming fire which spares nothing, and the sweet savor that characterised the whole,—such were the elements of this “more excellent sacrifice.” And as Abel stood by, and saw all ascend in smoke and flame to heaven, so the believer now stands by a still more excellent sacrifice, and connects his every act of worship with its infinite acceptableness and eternal savor.

Let us observe a little more particularly the contrast between Cain and Abel. Cain worshiped as if he had been born in Paradise (as though there was no account to settle between a holy God and the ruined sinner); his offering would have been well enough in Adam's hand, when sin was unknown, and *blood* not needed. Abel worshiped as conscious of the fall, and *came by shedding of blood*. Cain worked hard for his fruits, and fancied that, because they were of value in his own eyes, they must be so in God's too. Abel labored not; he singled out his lamb from the flock, and presented an offering which cost him neither time nor pains. Like the Pharisee of a later day, Cain was wrapped up in himself. He *thanked God*, it is true (Luke xviii. 10-14), but it was for his own fancied excellence; whilst, like the conscience-stricken publican, Abel says, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Thus did Cain and Abel again meet in the Temple. Thus, again, was the *Cain*-worshiper rejected, and *Abel* received. “The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect” (ver. 5).

This is an important word—“*Unto Cain and to*

his offering He had not respect." What! an offering, in appearance so beautiful—rejected! Of what avail are prayers or observances *if God has no respect unto them?* All may look well and sound well; *man's* eye and *man's* ear may be pleased: but *what does God think of it?* Cain chose his own way of worship. If it were only permitted to man to do this, he would be satisfied. Were each allowed to be religious *in his own way*, who would not be religious? What have not men done, given, suffered, in support of *their* different religions? The history before us, however, teaches that God has allowed man *no choice* in the matter.

Thus "*THE WAY OF CAIN*" (Jude 11) is a comprehensive title. Under it may be ranged all the false, though sometimes plausible, theories about God and man, which owe their common origin to the *the substitution of human thoughts for divine revelation*, and the admitting the presumptuous idea that a fallen being may have a *will* in the matter of religion. It is not pure, unmixed error, nor is it only the grosser violation of divine precept and human morals. It is a name which may be inscribed on the long catalogue of Papal errors; which Mohammedanism bears on its front; which the Vedas and Shastras of India, and in short the text-book of every false religious system, ancient and modern, of every nation under heaven, carries on its title-page.

In our own land, "*THE WAY OF CAIN*" is thronged by myriads, both of deceivers and deceived. The Socinian despiser of the blood of Jesus—the despiser of dominion, "speaking evil of dignities," and carrying the rebellious spirit both into things spiritual and temporal; who, in bringing "a railing accusa-

tion " against divinely constituted powers, does that against " the ministers of God," which Michael the archangel durst not, even, against Satan—the Antinomian perverter of the grace of God, living in open sin and uncleanness, and talking of " electing love " —the mocker at holy things, " walking after his own ungodly lusts"—*these* are some of Cain's modern brethren.

But are such the only ones among the nominal Christian body? Ah, no! We are living in days when multitudes, professing to believe on Him who was foreshadowed by the sacrifice of Abel, are yet in their hearts standing before God in all the presumption and self-righteousness of his elder brother. What an awful delusion is the *nominal Christianity* of our time!—the unsanctified benevolence, the sickly sentimentalism, the spurious charity—the "*form of godliness*," which would screen a pagan assemblage of vices (2 Tim. iii. 1-6), how awful is all this! And if Cain put his fruits in the place of the burnt-offering, in what do these essentially differ from him, who are now fast returning to trust in ordinances, who direct the poor lost sinner to the " sacraments," " the church," the " priesthood," and the like " broken cisterns"—instead of to the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness in the BLOOD OF CHRIST.

* *

LETTERS ON SOME PRACTICAL POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

(First published about 1870; by F. W. G.)

THIRD LETTER.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Having already taken up in some measure the subject of the Lord's Table, it is natural to go on to think a little of the Lord's Supper—that solemn and precious remembrance of Christ Himself which puts us in the right attitude, if it be real with us, for looking at other things. It thus, as you will probably have noticed, precedes, in the epistle to the Corinthians, the whole question of gifts and of their exercise, and even of membership in the body of Christ. With our eyes really on Him, we are in communion, and competent to entertain these questions.

And therefore the great importance of seeing clearly, in the first place, the object and character of that great central meeting which gives its character to all other meetings. It is described for us in simple and familiar style in the Acts, but so as to show us what, in the mind of Christians, was its primary object: "On the first day of the week, when the disciples came together *to break bread.*" As the Passover had changed for Israel the order of the months, and the year must begin with the sign of accomplished redemption, so, for Christians, time must begin its reckoning with the joyful celebration of the love that has visited them. On the first day, therefore, they came together to "break bread." It does not say, as we sometimes hear, "to a worship meet-

ing." Worship, no doubt, they would; but that was not what was present to their minds. It was their Lord who was before them—Him of whom that bread spoke. So in 1 Cor. xi.: "When ye come together into one place, this is not"—it was a rebuke because their way of doing it destroyed its meaning—"this is not to eat the Lord's Supper."

The purpose of coming together should be distinctly before our minds. We must be simple in it. In two opposite ways this simplicity may be destroyed, and the character of the meeting be lowered and souls suffer. Let us spend a little time in the consideration of this.

In the first place, when we come together, after six days of warfare in the world (would that it were always spiritual warfare, and that we realized the world as an enemy's country simply), we are apt to come full of our spiritual needs, to be recruited and refreshed. We may not use the term, but still the idea in the Lord's Supper to us thus will be that it is a "means of grace." We bring jaded spirits and unstrung energies to a meeting where we trust the weariness will be dispelled and the lassitude recovered from. We come to be ministered to and helped. We require the character of it to be soothing and comforting, speaking much of grace and quieting our overdone nerves for another week before us, in which we know too surely that we shall go through the same course exactly, and come back next Lord's day as weary as before, with the same need and thought of refreshment, with the same self, in fact, as an object, and scarcely Christ at all, or Christ very much as a means to an end, and not Himself the end.

This is the evil of this state of things—Christ is not in any due sense before the soul, but our need, which He is to be the means of supplying. No doubt there is a measure of truth in this view of the Lord's Supper. Can we come ever to Him without finding refreshment from the coming? Does He not, blessed Lord, delight to serve us? Do not the bread and wine speak of refreshment ministered—“wine that maketh glad the heart of man, . . . and bread which strengtheneth man's heart?” Has He not spread us here a table in the wilderness? a table in the very presence of our enemies? Is not His language still, “Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved?”

Surely all this is true. But true as it is, it is not this that gathers us. “To show the Lord's death”—has not this deeper meaning? Are not His own words, “Do this”—not for the satisfaction of your own need, not for the recruiting of your own strength, but—in *remembrance of Me?*” Thus this sacramental use of Christ, as I may term it (common as it really is, alas, among those who think that they have outgrown sacraments) essentially lowers the whole thought of the Lord's Supper. The remembrance of Christ is something more and other than what I get by the remembrance; something more than “the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ,” although in this secondary way indeed His body and blood may be remembered in the sacrament.

The purposed end is not, moreover, attained in this way. Of course, I do not mean to deny that Christ is gracious, and meets us oftentimes in unexpected ways. Sovereign He is, and beyond expres-

sion gracious. Still, if our blessing flows from the apprehension of Christ, how will such apprehension of Him as this shows ensure a blessing? If we make ourselves our object, will *that* be a blessing? What honor has Christ, and what place, in all this? And what must be the character of meetings to which languid and wayworn souls come, seeking a stimulating cordial to return to what seems only too sadly indicated to be the main business of their lives?

We may have to approach this subject from another side. Let us look now, however, at the other way in which our souls may be tempted from the simplicity of the remembrance of Christ.

Scripture does not speak of a "worship meeting;" it does not, of course, then, style the meeting to break bread this. The term may be used very innocently, I do not at all doubt; nor do I in the least oppose the thought that the atmosphere, so to speak, of the Lord's Table will be "worship." "In His temple doth every one speak of His glory." But we have need to guard against an abuse of this also—not imaginary, but a frequent one.

When we look at the worship of heaven, in that picture which so often tempts our eyes in Rev. v., it is the simple presence of the Lamb slain that calls out the adoration of those elders, in whom some of us have learned to recognize our representatives. Worship, with them, was no arranged, premeditated thing, but the pouring out of hearts that could not be restrained in the presence of Him who had redeemed them to God by His blood. And here is the mistake on our parts, when we think we can make worship a matter of prearrangement, while it is, in

fact, a thing dependent upon another thing, and that the true remembrance of the Lord.

We can recognize the fact that in this thought we have a very different and a much truer one than in that which makes the motive to come to the Lord's table a motive of mere self-interest. Still, the mistake often leads to a similar result—that the very thing we are seeking becomes an impossibility. Worship itself becomes a legal claim, which, as such, we cannot render. We are in the presence of ourselves, not of the Lord, and the result is a strained and artificial service, painfully reaching out after an ideal which is quite beyond it, and robbed of power and naturalness.

Thus there will be blessing on the one hand and worship on the other in proportion as our eyes are taken off ourselves and fixed upon the object which both ministers the one and calls forth the other. Blessing there will be; for how can the sight of Him do otherwise than bless? And worship there will be; for this is the true and spontaneous response of heart to the sight of One who, being Son of God, yet loved us, and gave Himself for us. The great point pressed, therefore, in Scripture, is discernment—remembrance—"This do in remembrance of Me." "Ye do show the Lord's death." "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Earnestly, affectionately, solemnly, is this pressed, as the pith and essence of the whole matter.

Of course, we are not to forget that while our eyes look back upon the Lamb slain, it is from the hither side of His resurrection that we contemplate this. "The first day of the week" speaks of resurrection

out of death, and gives Him back to us in all the reality of a living person. While we remember His death, we do it in the glad knowledge of His resurrection, and with the Lord Himself in our midst. Who could celebrate the Lord's death but for this? who could sound a note of praise, did He not Himself first raise it? as He says, "In the midst of the Church will I give praise unto Thee." No spectre—as the astonished disciples thought—not conquered of the grave, but Conqueror, Himself with us—this alone turns the most calamitous sorrow into exulting joy. Death, but death *passed*, do we celebrate; death which, thus seen, is only the depths of a living love which we carry with us, unexhausted, inexhaustible; unfathomed and unfathomable.

"Lo! the tokens of His passion,
Though in glory, still He bears;
Cause of endless exultation
To His ransomed worshipers."

"A Lamb as it had been slain" is the object of the elders' worship. The Living One bears with Him forever the memorials of His blessed death. The Cross is not only atonement effected for us, but the bright and blessed display of God manifest in Christ, and *for us*, in every attribute displayed.

One more letter relating to this subject will, D. V., be published in the next number of HELP AND FOOD.

We must take care not to administer help before faith is at work in the soul; for if we do, we spoil the soul for faith."

CHRIST ON THE THRONE OF GOD.

Heb. i. 3; viii. 1, 2; x. 12; xii. 2.

THERE is no point, perhaps, which the Spirit of God takes more pains to press, in writing to the Hebrew Christians, than the connection of the throne of God with the Lord Jesus. And the immense weight of such a relationship must be evident, on the least reflection, to one who knows what God is and what man is.

There are two things that the Jew never acknowledges: One is, that God came down to man—God really and truly come down to man, and not that He merely made a revelation of Himself. This they could easily believe. All their old polity was founded upon a manifestation of the divine presence; but a real personal presence of God upon earth, to have God becoming a man, truly a man, they utterly refused, and perished in their war against it.

The other is that man was to go up and be with God. Judaism, as such, finds all its place upon the earth. In its best shape, it is earthly, not heavenly. According to God's intentions about it, and the glorious counsels that He has yet in store for Israel, it is the blessing of Israel upon the earth. There was therefore an immense barrier in their minds against the thought of a man being in heaven. Accordingly, in writing to the Hebrews, the Holy Ghost sets Himself to give the strongest possible expression to these truths.

In chapter i. it is the glory of Christ's person. The Messiah was divine. It was not merely that He was raised there, that God exalted Him above His fellows, though this was true; but He was God. He

who was a man was God; He who was God deigned to become man. And now that He is gone up to heaven, He is not gone up as God only, but as man. In Him, therefore, God had come down and man had gone up. He had not ceased to be God; He could not cease to be what He is; but He had carried humanity on high, now bound up with His own person forever; humanity itself, in His person, being on the throne of God. It is this, too, which is shown here to be bound up with the work that He has done. For it is evident that the value of the work in the sight of God depends on the glory of the person that did it. It is so even among men. The man who supposes that an action depends merely on itself, and not also on the person who does it, knows nothing as he ought to know. The same words from persons of a totally different character, and of different measures of dignity, would have, and ought to have, altogether another effect. Now, this shows what an immense source of strength and blessing for the Christian is the holding fast the eternal glory of the person of Jesus. So it is said here, He is the brightness of glory, and the express image of His substance.

Observe, by the way, it is not the express image of His "person," because each person was Himself; the Father was Himself, the Son Himself, and the Holy Ghost Himself. Christ is never said to be the express image of the person of the Father; He is the image of the invisible God. The word that we have here is given nowhere else. It is "substance."

"And upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins." Creature could not mix in it; that divine and glorious person undertook the whole work alone, and He

would not take His seat otherwise than as having perfectly accomplished it. He would only sit down there "when He had by Himself purged our sins." Then, and not before—not till sin had been perfectly put away—did He sit down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Thus our sins are gone according to the perfectness of the place of glory in which He is now seated. The Lord Jesus has not merely taken His seat on the throne of God as a divine person: He was, and is, evermore a divine person; and had He not been so, He could not have taken His seat there as He did; but He is glorified on that throne because He had, and when He had, by Himself purged our sins. What a perfect witness to the absolute putting away of sins for the believer!

Thus, God graciously, but with perfect wisdom, binds together our faith in His personal glory, our perception of His present place as man, and the joy of the perfect abolition of our sins before God. You cannot separate them. If one of these truths is shut out, there is weakness about all the rest. If one let go the glory of Christ, how can he henceforth realize the efficacy of His redemption in the remission of sins? If you hold fast His personal glory, you are entitled to know forgiveness according to the glory of His seat on the throne. If He was glorified on that throne after He had taken your sins on Himself, it must have been because they were all absolutely borne away.

But the throne is used in quite another way in chapter viii. We were once enslaved by sin, and we have still to deal with it, though entitled, by Christ's death and resurrection, to count ourselves dead to it. For, believing in the Lord Jesus, and in the for-

givenness of our sins by Him, we are in living relationship with God, our sins blotted out, and inbred sin judged in the cross. Consequently sin is regarded as foreign to us, because in the nature in which we are in relationship with God there is no sin, and the other nature is a constant encumbrance, which we learn to look upon with hatred. But, as a matter of fact, we have the old nature still, though delivered from it by faith, so we are liable to Satan's using the world to act on our flesh. Consequently we need a priest, and we *have* a Priest—the best Priest that God can give, the only Priest that ought to be confided in. "We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." There we find the glory of our Priest: the very same glory is bound up with His Priesthood as with His atonement and His person. And we find that as a Priest He could not be on a less place than the throne of God. God has seated Him there. Such is the witness to the glory of Him who intercedes for us, and is engaged to bring us through the wilderness.

But in chapter x. we have the combination of the sacrifice with the priesthood. "This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." It was not a temporary seat, because the sacrifice was absolute in its consequences; and in virtue of this He takes His seat permanently, or in continuity, on the right hand of God, to prove that there was nothing else that needed to be done, as far as the blotting out of our sins was concerned. No doubt He will descend from heaven to receive His bride to Himself, as also to judge the world. But as to the question of purging our sins,

He will never rise from that throne. His being there is the pledge of sin being put away. As I look up at the throne, and know that the Son of God is seated there, I ought not to have one question about my sins being gone. There are those who think that this would diminish our present abhorrence of sin; but it is an objection of unbelief, not of holiness. It may have an appearance of jealousy for what is good; but it really flows from ignorance of God, and unbelief of the power of the sacrifice of Christ. For the believer, the ground of hatred of sin and of guarding against it lies not merely in our having a nature to which sin is an aversion, but in the certainty that the victory is won before we start in our course as Christians. Therefore our business is to walk consistently with the truth that our sins are gone. If we trifle with sin after that, we lose sight of the deliverance which Christ has wrought for us; we are, so far, walking in unbelief of the blessed place into which Christ has brought us by His blood.

But there is a fourth place in which the throne is introduced. In chapter xii. 2 Jesus is set down at the right hand of the throne as the witness that God is against the world and *for* Him whom the world cast out—the Captain of faith; not merely the sacrifice or the Priest, but the perfect pattern of faith as a man here below. Now, as such He was a sufferer. The more faith, the greater the suffering. The Lord Jesus was not only the object of faith for others, but He deigned to become a man (and a man of faith) Himself; and, as a man, He had all the suffering as well as the joy of faith, as it is said here, “Who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured

the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." It was not what He was going to receive, but His own grace, that brought the Lord here. He had all things, and needed nothing that could be given Him. Nor is it even true of the Christian that reward is the motive before him. The Christian does not start upon his career on earth because of the glory he is going to have in heaven. It is always the effect of divine grace made known to the heart, and this alone, which separates from the world and delivers a man from himself. It is the absolute work of redemption. He knows he is starting with God's favor, and he has the encouragement of the glory at the end of the course. It was the fulness of love that brought the Lord down. But when here in the midst of sinners, and of rejection and failure all around, this was what sustained Him in His errand of love; "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame."

And here we have on God's part the answer to this humiliation: "He is set down at the right hand of the throne of God;" and this just when everything appeared to be ruined; for the very last thing the world saw of Jesus was His cross. Apparently, as far as man could discern, a total victory was gained over the Son of God. God's purposes appeared to collapse in the cross of Jesus. He was the only righteous man, the only righteous judge, the appointed governor of the world; yet He had not the throne, but the cross. He was the Messiah of Israel, yet the despised and rejected of men. He was the object of faith to the disciples, yet they all forsook Him and fled. All appeared to be one mass of ruin

and failure. But faith looks not to the earth, nor to man, but to God; and it sees that the Man who was rejected and crucified by the world is set down on the throne of the glory of God. And when the moment comes for God to display Him in glory, how He will reverse every thought of man, and prove that faith alone was always right! And faith only is right, because it is the answer in man's heart to the revelation of God.

The Lord grant that, rejoicing in such a Saviour; in such a portion as we have now in hope, if not in present possession; and in being actually glorified with Him by and by, we may look through all present shame and sorrow with joy to that throne whence He will come to receive us to Himself in the Father's house.

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SEVEN STAGES OF THE JOURNEY FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN.

(Concluded from page 267.)

Practical Results.

The various steps we have gone over in the history of God's people have brought us to where we can now look at the practical results, and at the ways of God with them.

As we have seen, Israel failed to take possession of all that God had given them; and this failure leads us from the book of Joshua to that of Judges.

They did not drive out all their enemies; "the Canaanite dwelt in the land" (Judges i. 27-30). Their failure arose from the self-confidence which pre-

vented their drawing upon the never-failing resources in Jehovah their God. The enemies not driven out became aggressive and bold until they overpowered Israel. Similar failure has occurred among God's people in our dispensation. It is recorded in the parable of our Lord, "while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares" (Matt. xiii. 25). God's people may become careless and indifferent, but the enemy never sleeps. If we neglect to judge ourselves constantly, and cease to be governed by the word of God, little by little the evil increases and develops; and, instead of being overcomers, we are overcome.

If we leave the aggressive, triumphant spirit of the book of Joshua, we drop into the entanglements and defeats of the book of Judges. How important, therefore, the apostle's exhortation in Eph. vi. 13, "and having done all, to stand." Having gone in and taken possession, there needs to be the strength to hold and maintain the same; and for this we need "the whole armor of God," and the continued aggressive spirit to march on and lay hold of the further possessions which lie before us, leaving no enemies behind. Not one foot of the ground taken should ever be surrendered. "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

Alas, declension is now seen everywhere; those who once possessed, are being driven back, and the enemy is encroaching. This is especially true concerning the Church testimony as a whole: the vigor, freshness and spirituality of the first days have been given up, and we are in the difficult days predicted in 2 Tim. iii. 1-15; Jude 25; outlined in Rev. ii. and iii.; and all illustrated by Israel in the book of

Judges. Joshua passes away, then the elders. Then departure is very marked; declension, and even open apostasy from what their fathers had fought for and won at great cost.

Indeed, throughout the Old Testament striking illustrations are furnished us of the declension and failure of Israel as a nation; whilst bright and happy exceptions to the rule shine out, also, here and there.

Never did they enjoy so much of the whole land as in the days of David and Solomon; but after they pass away, failure develops again, and the conditions described in Judges return. It is written concerning Rehoboam, that he "forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel with him" (2 Chron. xii.). Those words give us a clue to all the after sorrow and disaster—the key that unlocks the *mystery of their weakness* and of the strength of their enemies. God's government there is over all, and His chastening hand falls upon them; for God is true to Himself and true to His people. After this it is further written, "Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, because they had transgressed against the Lord. . . . And he took the fenced cities which pertained to Judah, and came to Jerusalem. . . . So Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem, and took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he took all; he carried away also the shields of gold which Solomon had made." The enemy is triumphant.

In Joshua's day the people were strong, for they walked in self-judgment and obedience. Jehovah could be with them then, and they drive out the enemy and take possession. But with Rehoboam it was dif-

ferent; they were in possession of what their fathers had won by many struggles, but had become indifferent and careless; so they transgressed "and forsook the law of the Lord." Then the enemy came in, and they were weak as water; God was not with Rehoboam; so defeat and loss follow.

Shishak represents the god of this world—the prince of the power of the air—who ever watches the people of God and seeks to get a point of attack in their weak hours. The record of his victory, so soon after the bright, golden days of David and Solomon, leads faithful hearts to weep even now, three thousand years later. "Be not high-minded, but fear," is a needed word of admonition in our day; for human nature, even in God's people, changeth not, whether in the past dispensation or the present—with Rehoboam or with us.

In Paul's day, like failure in the Church gave the devoted apostle and Timothy, his son in the faith, much sorrow of heart. "All in Asia have left me" were among his last words. They were turning away from the truth at the very time he was about to go to a martyr's death for the same, because he knew its value, its power, and what it had cost. Whole companies, as "fenced cities" were taken away by the tide, as individuals also had been severed from him and the testimony of the Lord. All this was but the beginning of grievous departure, an earnest of what we may now observe on every hand in the closing of the history of the Church. Yet Paul had rest of heart; for he could say, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure." God never fails; His truth, sacred and precious in every part, is ever the same, and is a stay and guide to the de-

vout believer—no matter how difficult the days may be. Moreover, the Holy Spirit abides with the Church until "the Morning Star" appears. The land lies still before us, with its fruitful hills and fertile valleys flowing with milk and honey; the smile and favor of our God rests continually upon it (Deut. xi. 12): let us therefore maintain and defend with spiritual energy what we already possess of it. While the failure is general, it is not *all*. God preserved true witnesses for Himself amid the darkness of their day and time, and they did shine in their sphere amid all the departure and gloom in Israel.

Two such bright exceptions we will especially note here, for our encouragement and profit. They are taken from the list of David's mighty men (2 Sam. xxiii. 8-12).

Eleazar ("help of God") comes first, at the time when the Philistines "were gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away." Those enemies of the Lord had moved up over the fields of Sharon, and entered the possessions of Judah, "Ephes-daimmim"—border of blood, as it implies; and the narrative is quite conclusive that the place fully answered to its name. At this place there "was a parcel of ground full of barley" (1 Chron. xi. 13, 14). "He arose and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword; and the Lord wrought a great victory that day, and the people returned after him only to spoil."

In Eleazar we see a man who answers to his name. A weak man was made strong, because his help was in God. The people gave him none; they forsook

him and fled when they saw the Philistines; but he arose and smote the enemy one by one. He was a man like the rest, but dependent upon Jehovah, and true to Him and to Israel's heritage. Such, in the hands of the Lord, are worth a thousand. In the conflict he became weary, *but his hand clave to the sword*; he felt the force of what was written afterward, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully (negligently), and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer. xlviii. 10).

The ground was not only God's gift to His people, but food for them—a field full of barley. Those who fled before the enemy did not think it worth contending for, but Eleazar valued it, and stood in the midst of it and defended it. "Having done all, to stand" was a principle that governed him that day; if all the rest of the Israelites turned away, he encouraged himself in the Lord, and got the victory.

Every part of the truth is our heritage from the Lord; we are here to care for and defend it: and the weapon with which to meet the enemy is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

After the battle and victory, the people return to share the benefit; but no credit to them: had it not been for Eleazar, Israel would have suffered loss. The Lord wrought through a dependent man, and the result was a great victory—the might, the battle and the victory all the Lord's. How blessed to be thus used of God!

After Eleazar was Shammah. "The Philistines were gathered together into a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentiles; and the people fled

from the Philistines. But he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it, and slew the Philistines; and the Lord wrought a great victory." Here we learn, as in Eleazar's time, that the same enemy surrounded Shammah, and the people again had fled. History was again repeating itself with both the Philistines, as the enemy of God's people and of God's heritage, and with His people, for their lack of confidence in Him; for they fled as did the people in Eleazar's time. This was a very discouraging time if Shammah had put his trust in men. But, as David long before, he "encouraged himself in the Lord his God," so did Shammah; he stood in the midst of the ground, and defended it alone.

At a later time his Lord did the same—"all forsook Him and fled"—even the disciples; but He with a firm step went to the cross, faced the battle and, by the sufferings that He endured, overcame the enemy, put all the powers of darkness to flight, and gained for those timid disciples, as well as for us, a glorious victory (Col. ii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, 15).

Still later, when Paul's life was in danger because he would not surrender the truth entrusted to him, and "all forsook" him, he wrote, "Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me" (2 Tim. iv. 16, 17).

In Shammah's case it was a piece of ground full of lentiles. It was little in man's eyes, but faith values all that is of God, and this man of God would not surrender it.

In the case of the Lord Jesus, God's glory was at stake respecting sin, and the everlasting blessing of millions of precious souls; hence He endured the cross and despised the shame.

In Paul's case, after Christ returned to glory and all men sought their own, he stood for the truth which circles around a glorified Saviour, and defended it.

God would encourage His people in our days by the noble example of such men and their soldier-valor to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). The truth given us is a priceless gift, a sacred trust to guard and keep as our spiritual heritage. The whole land is ours, and we need to guard every part, great or small, even if but like the little patch of *barley* in Eleazar's day, or of *lentiles* in the time of Shammah. All is needed, every part is intended to serve as food, to nourish and sustain the new life in the children of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by *every* word of God," said our Saviour.

What Eleazar and Shammah achieved at those two different periods may have been considered of little importance by many; but when David got his rightful place upon the throne, and all the acts of those who followed him in the days of his rejection were brought into review, Eleazar's and Shammah's names were placed first upon the list. In his kingdom they were his mighty men, and did shine as the stars of heaven.

Many now also may achieve much by faithful adherence to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, by their refusal to surrender any part, known, loved, and enjoyed; and amid the constantly renewed assaults against it, yet, with a firm, unyielding grip, as Eleazar, "cleave to the sword."

We are nearing the end of the dispensation. The dark clouds are growing thicker and darker each day

in our sky, and the Scripture of truth has announced that in the last days perilous times should come, and that men should depart from the truth. We need Calebs now, men who will *wholly* follow the Lord; Gideons, who keep close by the wine-press, threshing out the grain to guard it from the enemy; Eleazars and Shammahs, who, single-handed, will defend and save the fruitful fields; Pauls and Peters, willing even to give up their lives for the truth; men like Timothy, as the others pass away, to commit the truth to others also, and not be discouraged by the repeated failures of men (2 Tim. ii. 2).

A. E. B.

LETTERS ON SOME PRACTICAL POINTS CONNECTED WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

(First published about 1870; by F. W. G.)

FOURTH LETTER.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—The grand point then, surely, in the Lord's Supper is the remembrance of Him, while doing it nevertheless in the apprehension of His presence with us always, according to His promise, "In the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto Thee." We shall best enter into His praise as we most simply have our eyes fixed upon Himself—as *our* sayings and doings cease to occupy us, and we become receptive of His glory, and of His joy. Thus the pipes will be filled and the stream of praise flow out. The scene in the upper chamber at Jerusalem will be repeated; only upon His dear face will be no shadow of the darkness so soon to come, but the

brightness of a morning without clouds, the morning of resurrection. His own hands will distribute the bread to us; the melody of His own praise will fill our hearts; the nearness in which He stands to God will make our meeting to be indeed in the holiest of all, as He presents us to His Father and our Father. Oh that He Himself were thus ever before us as the great Actor in the Presence-chamber of God, anticipating His future Melchisedec work, as He brings forth the bread and wine, and blesses God in our behalf, and blesses us from God!

Only let me guard this from any mistake. We must not so conceive His acting for and by us here, as to suppose it needful to exclude His being the object of praise as well as the Giver. We must not think it an interruption if *our* voice break in too with "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;" for here the Spirit of God is only putting us "in communion with the *Father*," as well as "with His Son Jesus Christ." Surely we may say this is needed, in order that "fulness of joy," which the apostle connects with this, may be manifested in our assembly. Would there be no lack of harmony in the Father's ear, if the note of praise to the Beloved Son were absent from our worship? Does not the Father claim our communion with Himself, as also the Son with Himself? Do we worship the Father aright, when we refuse or omit the worship of the Son? When every knee shall bow in subjection to the Son, it will be "to the glory of *God the Father*;" and now, as our hearts bow in homage to the Son, the Father too is glorified.

If it be asked, "When the Lord gave thanks in the upper chamber at Jerusalem, did He give thanks

unto Himself?" it may be fully conceded that He did not and could not; but this by no means implies that we are in such sense either to imitate Him, or to be His mouthpieces, as to be excluded from His praise. Pipes we may be through which His joy and praise flow forth; but yet not *mere* pipes: the figure would fail, if thus pressed, as all figures somewhere fail. We are not mere pipes or machines, but beings with hearts, which, if God fills and uses, He uses according to their nature, not arbitrarily repressing the emotions stirred by Himself. Our praise would not be even the echo of His praise if He who leads it has not His own place in it.

"Communion with the Father" necessitates it, as I have said; and without communion with the Father, the whole character of worship, which is the fruit of communion, is fatally lowered.

I return to what we were just now considering, that occupation with Christ is what is to give character to gathering at His table. From this, worship will follow, not as legal requirement, and not as an official performance, but as the overflow of hearts filled up with Him.

The tendency to degenerate into officialism has to be watched and guarded against. So many, alas, are not just in the requisite state of soul—so many who are occupied all the week with other things, and on the Lord's day are disposed to hand over to others the activities of a priestly calling which belongs to all. Hence certain individuals come to be looked upon as the *quasi*-official priesthood; and especially those who are known as publicly engaged in the Lord's work—preachers and teachers, for example—are apt to be put into this place.

A long step towards clericalism is thus taken, and an actual, if not formal, barrier is set up to any saint beside, especially if illiterate, infringing upon that which comes to be looked upon as the place of a special few.

This is a great evil, and which is budding out extensively into a real quenching of the Spirit, and destruction of the power of worship, while those engaged in secular employments (so called) shelter their unspirituality under these. Let brethren look to it how they acquiesce in this, whether by putting or being put into any such distinctive place. Worship is not official; and all God's saints are worshipers; women alone being (because of what is suited to their creation-place) enjoined to be silent in the assembly. All other restriction is unscriptural and injurious; and terribly so the thought of any lawful calling (lawful to the Christian, of course I mean) being opposed or derogatory to spirituality. If we cannot "abide with God" in it, we have no business with it at all. No real duty is a *weight*. If it seem to be so to us, either it is not a duty, or we are not taking it up in reality as such.

But, in fact, there are few places like the Lord's table for revealing to oneself the true state of one's soul. If with the precious memorials of His death before us, and Himself present in our midst, the Holy Ghost, who is come to occupy us with Him, is only able to occupy us with ourselves; or, worse still, if our thoughts wander without rebuke from Him who should have power to engage them with Himself, what does it reveal but a state in which Christ shares but the lesser portion of a divided heart? Whatever our burdens, whatever filled our

hands or took up our time—were our *hearts* free, what a holiday time that would be in which they could escape to the object of their desire! and the blessed Spirit of God—could He lack power or will to fulfil the work which He has taken upon Himself? The rabble of disorderly thoughts—could they press in to take possession of a soul in the presence of its Lord?

May He possess us so with Himself that all else shall fall into its place in the great anthem which our lives should raise to Him, and which should never find more complete and harmonious expression than when, with Himself before us, we (anticipating the song of eternity) "show the Lord's death until He come."

PROBATION AFTER DEATH.

THERE are three theories of probation after death. One maintains that the first 1000 years of the lake of fire will be a probationary period, ending in the release of many from that place. Another view is, that at the second coming of Christ the *impenitent* of all time will be raised from the dead, and that the purified of all ages, who will be raised some time before them, will preach Christ to them; the vast majority of whom will believe and be saved. The third theory contends that Christ is preached to the dead. Its advocates hold that the disembodied spirit will have the offer of salvation through Christ; that this offer will be made to all who have died unsaved; that the millions of the heathen who have died without hearing of Christ, during the time they are in the disembodied condition

will hear of Him and will repent and believe. Some say that the great majority, at least, will do so.

Are these views in accord with Scripture? Does the word of God teach there will be a probationary period for men after they have died? A brief examination of a few scriptures will be sufficient to answer these questions.

The first view, the one which maintains that the first 1000 years of the lake of fire will be a time of probation, we may dismiss at once as not needing any discussion. We have already seen in our article on Universalism that the word of God does not teach that any one who goes into the lake of fire will ever get out of it. So any theory of probation for men after they are sent to the lake of fire is without foundation in the word of God. It cannot have any Scriptural basis.

We will, then, turn to the second view. The advocates of this tell us that the wicked will be raised at the second coming of Christ. But Scripture does not place *their* resurrection at that time. It does speak of the resurrection of two classes—the just and the unjust. According to John v., the resurrection of the first class is one to *life*; while the resurrection of the other class is to *judgment*. It is plain, then, there are to be two resurrections; the one differing in character from the other. But, further, Rev. xx. shows that there will be a *thousand years* between the two. Now, it is the *first* resurrection that is connected with the second coming of Christ—not the second: the resurrection of the just, not the resurrection of the unjust.

The adherents of this view tell us that the tried and purified of all previous ages will indeed be raised

first; and that, after the wicked have been raised, the former class will preach Christ to the latter. Scripture, on the contrary, tells us that those who belong to the first resurrection will reign with Christ during the thousand years that will intervene between the two resurrections, i. e., the raised saints will reign over living men—men who have not died. It does not say that they will preach the gospel. They certainly cannot preach the gospel to the wicked, for they will still be in the death state.

Scripture, then, holds out no hope of a man who dies in his sins hearing and believing the gospel after his resurrection. What it says is, "*Now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). *Now*, i. e., this present life, not after resurrection. The idea of the raised just preaching to the raised unjust is nowhere found in the word of God. It is a fiction, a false doctrine. Let men beware how they listen to it!

It remains to examine the third view of probation after death, i. e., the view of some who, while they deny the other two views, hold that between death and resurrection there will be a chance for those who have not heard and believed the gospel in this life to hear it and be saved. In defense of this view 1 Peter iii. 18-20 is usually quoted: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing: wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." It is contended that this passage means that when Christ died He

went as a disembodied spirit among disembodied spirits and preached the gospel to them. But is that what the passage says? Let us look carefully at it and see.

Notice that it reads, "By which also He went and preached." Now it is clear that Christ went and preached *by the same Spirit* by which His body was quickened after He died. It was the Holy Spirit who raised up the body of Jesus. It was by the Holy Spirit that He went and preached. Christ, then, did not *personally* go and preach to these spirits in prison. He *did* go personally among the disembodied spirits, but His personal going among the disembodied spirits cannot be the going to them that is referred to here in 1 Peter iii. It is of great importance to keep this in mind in reading the whole passage. It will help to elucidate it. Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, but He did not go personally. He did not preach personally. He both went and preached by the Holy Spirit. The preaching, then, was not done while Christ was personally as a disembodied spirit among the spirits of the departed.

We may ask now, *When* did Christ go and preach to the spirits in prison? As it was by the Holy Spirit, it must have been *some time* when the Holy Spirit was testifying to them. We may also inquire, When did the Spirit testify to these spirits? Was it before they got into prison? or was it after? Now there is no record of the Holy Spirit testifying to departed spirits. Not a single instance can be cited of the Spirit preaching to dead people. There is not so much as one illustration of the Spirit's witnessing to a disembodied spirit. This fact alone is enough

to cause us to be suspicious of the teaching that makes the preaching of 1 Peter iii. 19 a preaching to dead people—to departed spirits.

But further, it is plain that the preaching here is to a certain class of the dead—not *all* the dead. It is to the spirits of men of the days of Noah. If it is said this preaching was to people actually in the death state, we may ask why was it only to the spirits of men who lived in the days of Noah? Why was it not to all the dead? So, again, we are led to question the interpretation that makes this preaching to people after they are in the death condition.

But if we turn to Gen. vi. we find that there was a testimony of the Spirit to living men in the days of Noah. The Spirit was striving with them *then*, and, further, a limit was put to the time during which He *would* strive with them. "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years" (ver. 3). Here we have the Spirit witnessing to *living men* for one hundred and twenty years before the flood. To this testimony of the Spirit *they* were disobedient. *By* the Spirit Noah was a preacher, but the men of his day disobeyed his preaching. It was Christ preaching to them, not personally, but by the Spirit, through Noah.

We have, then, in Gen. vi. the fact referred to in 1 Peter iii. 19—a preaching of Christ by the Spirit to living men who disobeyed the preaching, and are now in prison, i. e., in the death state. The preaching was done while they were alive; and so, too, was the disobedience. Both were during the long-suffering of God in the days of Noah.

1 Peter iii. 19, then, cannot be used to support a

theory of probation for men after death; and the prevalent idea that Christ, during the three days in which He was in the disembodied state, was preaching the gospel to the dead has no scriptural basis.

But there are scriptures which very plainly contradict such a thought as an offer of mercy to the impenitent dead. The one we have already quoted to show there will be no preaching of mercy to men after their resurrection, equally shows there will be none to men while in the disembodied state: "Behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2)—*now*, not after death. Then, too, our Lord, in John viii. 21, said, "I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and *shall die in your sins*: whither I go, ye *cannot* come." If they died in their sins, death would hand them over to the judgment of the great white throne, and the great white throne would send them to the lake of fire. There is here no hope of mercy held out for those who die in their sins.

Let us look now at Luke xvi. 19-31. We have already used this passage in a previous paper to show that the dead will not be unconscious. We will look at it now to see what light it sheds on the question of probation after death. We call special attention to verse 26: "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." In verse 24 we have a man in the death state. He is not a living man on the earth, but a disembodied spirit in the spirit-world—a clear case of one who has died, has passed from among the living, and is now among the dead. There he is in "torments," and desires "mercy." He says, "Have mercy on

me." But *no* mercy is granted him. Not only is there *no* offer of mercy made him, but his *desire* for mercy is *denied*. But more: he is told that "there is a great gulf fixed," separating the dead into two classes. There is a great moral gulf *now*, in *this* life, between the believer and the unbeliever, but it is not a fixed gulf in the sense that it cannot be crossed. Grace, the grace of God, has provided a bridge on which the unbeliever may pass to the side of the believer. But after death no such bridge is provided. In the death state the gulf is fixed, and there is no passing from the one side to the other. This makes it plain that eternal issues are settled in this life, and not in the death state.

There is, then, no gospel to be preached to men after they die. Probation for the dead is without foundation in the word of God. Scripture holds out no hope to a man that, if he neglects the salvation God has provided for him in this life, he will have an opportunity to be saved in the life beyond.

Those who are promulgating the doctrine of probation after death are doing man a serious moral wrong. They are deluding them with a false hope. Those who receive the teaching are deceived. A sad present result of embracing the doctrine of a chance for salvation in the life to come is indifference to sin. Men will indulge more freely in what they are persuaded they have a chance of escaping the consequences of hereafter.

We have seen that the doctrine of probation after death, in the various forms in which it is held, is unscriptural; it has no support in the word of God. We have also pointed out the pernicious character of the doctrine, not only as offering false and delusive

hopes to men, but also as tending to make men careless about sin in this present life. We close our brief comments not only with an appeal to men to listen to the voice of the God of truth in the written revelation He has given to us, but with an earnest exhortation to those who believe in the Scriptures of truth to be diligent in protesting against this and other errors so harmful to our fellow-men. Let our voices be heard in the defence of the truth, in maintaining the teaching of the word of God, and in warning men against prevalent doctrines that set false and delusive hopes before them and leave them free to continue on in the service of sin in defiance of God's warning to flee from the wrath to come.

C. CRAIN.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 21.—What is the location of the "tree of life" mentioned in Rev. xxii. 2? Are there two trees?

ANS.—There is but one tree of life, and that is in "the city of God," in the "midst" of its "street," and on "either side" of its "pure river of water of life." But it must be remembered that all these terms are symbols. In God's dwelling-place we shall have eternal life as surely as we have it now; and, as now, it will be in Christ, and hence life in dependence. The "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb," speaks of the fulness of the Spirit as being still the power of the life. We shall be forever secure against any independence of Christ and the Spirit.

C. C.

QUES. 22.—Please explain Matt. xii. 40. In a small book by Dr. R. A. Torrey, speaking of Matt. xii. 40, he says: The first day of the Passover week was always a Sabbath—no matter what day it came on; that Jesus was crucified on a Wednesday (the preparation of the Passover Sabbath, which came that year on a Thursday); and just as the first day of the week drew on, at sunset Saturday, Jesus arose.

I am not satisfied, and would like to be clear as to it.

ANS.—The day of the week on which our Lord was crucified has been made to be Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday, by different writers. Luke xxiv. 21 would seem to settle it definitely that the crucifixion could not have been on either Wednesday or Thursday. The two disciples on their way to Emmaus say, "To-day is the *third* day since these things were done." Had the crucifixion been on Wednesday, that Sunday would have been the *fifth* day; and if on Thursday, it would have been the *fourth* day. This compels us, then, to adopt Friday as the day of the week on which our Lord was crucified.

But Matt. xii. 40, at first sight, seems to be as definite a statement as Luke xxiv. 21: "So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." But it must be remembered that "a day and a night" is a Hebraism. It is a figure of speech called *synecdoche*, by which a part is taken as a whole. Examples are found in Jewish writings. In the *Jerusalem Talmud* there is an explanation of this figure of speech. "A day and a night together make up a night-day," and "any part of such a period is counted as the whole." Another instance of such a use of this figure of speech will be found in 1 Sam. xxx. 12: "For he had eaten no bread, nor drunk water, three days and three nights." According to the Hebrew way of counting, the "three days ago" (ver. 13) would make *that* day on which David's men found the Egyptian the *third* day of his sickness. We cannot, then, use Matt. xii. 40 as conflicting with Luke xxiv. 21. C. C.

QUES. 23.—In Num. iii. 15 God commands Moses to number the Levites, that He may take *them* instead of the first-born among the children of Israel (ver. 12), the result being—"Gershon, 7,500; Kohath, 8,600; and Merari, 6,200. Total, 22,300." Comparing this with the total number given in ver. 39, viz., 22,000, we find an excess of 300.

That 22,000 is the exact number is borne out by vers. 43 and 46. Can the excess be accounted for?

ANS.—I think a possible explanation of the difference in the numbers may be in supposing that the *first-born* of the tribe of Levi must be deducted from the total number of the males of the tribe (22,300). At least it is evident that if there were at the time of the Exodus 300 *first-born* of the tribe of Levi, they would already belong to the Lord, according to His claim made in Exodus xiii., and so would not be available for an exchange. They could not be substituted for the first-born of any of the tribes. This implies that the tribe of Levi was numerically the smallest of the tribes, which seems to be the fact. C. C.

QUES. 24.—In 1 Chron. iv.—vii. the genealogies of the children of Israel are given, the tribe of Dan being omitted, although we get the statement in chap. ix. 1, "So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies." Why the omission?

ANS.—The principle used by Paul in Rom. ix. 6, "For they are not *all* Israel which are *of* Israel," will explain the omission of Dan in these genealogies of the sons of Israel. (See, also, Gal. iii. 7.) Dan, according to Gen. xlix. 16-18, represents Israel in a character in which, and at a time when, Israel is not really Israel. 1 Chron. ii. 1-ix. 1 gives the genealogy of the sons of Israel as being truly such. In type it is Israel according to faith, not after the flesh. Hence Dan's name is fittingly omitted, save in one verse, chap. ii. 2. Ezek. xlviii. 1, 2, shows that the tribe of Dan will have its inheritance in the land along with the other tribes in the Millennium. Dan is omitted also in Rev. vii. It is clear, if Dan represents Israel as an apostate generation, no apostates will be sealed for earthly millennial blessing. They will receive the mark of the beast—the seal of the Antichrist—not the seal of God. (See chap. xiii. 15, 17.) C. C.

QUES. 25.—In 2 Chron. xxviii. 19 we find the statement, "For the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz king of Israel."

Why is he here called king of Israel, being, properly, king of Judah?

ANS.—"Israel" is here probably a copyist's error. Several attempts have been made to defend it, but they seem far-fetched. A copyist might easily substitute "Israel" for "Judah." The Septuagint has "Judah," which would suggest the error has been introduced into the Hebrew text since this version was made. C. C.

QUES. 26.—In 2 Sam. xxiv. and 1 Chron. xxi. David numbers the children of Israel by the hand of Joab, the result being given in vers. 9 and 5 respectively. In the former, Israel, 800,000, and Judah, 500,000; and in the latter, Israel, 1,100,000, and Judah, 470,000. Why the difference?

ANS.—The only way to account for the difference is to suppose a copyist's error in one place, perhaps in both. Josephus says 900,000 for Israel, and 400,000 for Judah. The text he had apparently differed both from our present Hebrew text and from the one the Septuagint translators had. C. C.

NOT ON THE HONOR ROLL.

MANY of us, when children in school, looked forward with eager anticipation to the weekly or monthly display of the Honor Roll, when the names of all students who were accounted worthy of special commendation were enrolled where all might behold them. To be left out of the Honor Roll was a great disappointment.

God, too, has His Honor Roll. In the day of manifestation it will be publicly displayed. Fragments of it have been already put before us in His Word, as in the twenty-third of 2 Samuel, the eleventh of 1 Chronicles, the second of Ezra, and the seventh of Nehemiah; and, in the New Testament, the sixteenth of Romans and the eleventh of Hebrews. These interesting and instructive passages are well worthy of perusal, as setting forth the kind of persons who will be mentioned with honor at the judgment-seat of Christ; and, what is of equal solemnity and importance, the class who will be omitted.

Many names we might naturally expect to find there will be absent. Many we dreamed not of beholding will be there, emblazoned with glory.

Among the warriors of David, there was none more doughty than Joab, the captain of the host. Brave to rashness, loyal even to cruelty, he was through all the years of rejection one of David's most determined upholders. But there was a something about Joab that was ever lacking: he was *an unbroken man*.

He is the picture of some champions of the truth

to-day, who boldly confess Christ and contend for the faith, but are after all men of *will*, who will rule or ruin.

Such men often rise up in the assemblies of God's saints. Characterized by spirit and ability, they soon forge their way to the front. Able exponents, perhaps, of the Scriptures, or gifted preachers of the gospel, they for a time carry everything before them. The young especially are often led blindly by men of this stamp; and even aged saints are bewildered by the force and energy, the brilliancy and knowledge, they display.

But those who walk with God discern a something which they often grieve and pray over in secret, yet would find it difficult to put into words. There is a lack of brokenness before God, a sense of fleshly determination that will brook no refusal.

When a crisis is reached in matters of difficulty, such as frequently arise in an assembly, men like these are noted, not for calm, dispassionate waiting upon God, but for an energetic taking of things into their own hands and forcing issues through, before more timid or more spiritual saints are fairly awake to the real question before them.

Such a man was Joab—a man who might have been one of the brightest stars in the circle that surrounded David, but a man whose lustre was dimmed by pride and self-will.

It is most solemn that after all his energetic service, when the time came for making up the Honor Roll, Joab's name was omitted. You search in vain for any mention of it in the list, twice-given, of "David's mighty men." It is not there. Joab had failed after all for want of that spirit of self-

judgment which should ever characterize one who goes forth to fight the battles of the Lord.

His two brothers, never so famous as he, Abishai and Asahel, are both there (2 Sam. xxiii. 18, 24); but he, the brilliant man of the family, is omitted!

Yea, more, his very armor-bearer, a man never heard of before, is there, enrolled among the heroes; but the name of the master is conspicuous by its absence, save in connection with these three names, which only the more emphasizes the omission. In ver. 37 we read of "Nahari the Beerothite, armor-bearer to Joab the son of Zeruah."

Through all the battles in which he served the chief captain, this man had steadily pursued the path of devotion to David; never once referred to, never brought to the front before. But now the Honor Roll is made up, and his name occupies a conspicuous place upon it, while the name of the doughty chief upon whom he attended is absent.

There are surely solemn lessons for each one in this, beloved brethren. Oh, to be "faithful in that which is least;" to go on cleaving to the Lord in simple dependence upon Himself till that day!

Then the Roll will be made up, when many a Joab will be missing, and a host of comparatively unknown Naharis, never heard of outside their small immediate circle, will receive the Lord's approbation and be found among the mighty men!

H. A. I.

For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternally, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS

ON EPH. V. 25-27.

I WANT to get before our hearts, beloved brethren, if I can, distinctly and clearly, what the interests of the Lord Jesus Christ are upon this earth to-day. We need to be clear about it; for if we don't know what His interests are, and where they center, we cannot act, individually or collectively, consistently with those interests and in suitability to Him.

Scripture tells us that God loved the world: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son" (John iii. 16). I'm sure we are all familiar with and delight in that blessed truth. It lets us see where the love of God was centered. God loved *the world*. It is not some special individuals in the world, but the world itself—the world, looked at in its concrete form—the whole world. It takes in all, and shuts out none.

Then, for the display of that love, and the carrying out of the purposes of God's heart, the Lord Jesus came down here saying, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God;" and by His one perfect offering of Himself on the cross, He glorified God about the whole question of sin, and opened up a righteous channel for God to act consistently with all that He is in Himself, and take poor sinners into favor and give them a new life and nature and eternal blessings with Himself. All that is very blessed indeed, and our hearts know it in some little measure, thank God. We have learned how He has satisfied His own heart in the way He has taken to satisfy ours, and we have found our rest in it.

It says, "God so loved the world." It never says

Christ loved the world. Nor does it say God loved the Church. It says, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." If we want to know what are Christ's interests to-day, where the circle of His interests lies to-day, we have the answer in this beautiful passage before us—it is the Church. The Lord thinks everything of the Church. The circle of His interests all centers there. He loved it, and gave Himself for it. He is engaged in active service on high to-day on behalf of it, and He is going to take it to glory to be with Himself by and by, and then bring it back and display it in all the brightness and splendor of His own glory, with which He will adorn it, when it will shine forth as the Holy City, New Jerusalem, having the glory of God—the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

It is an immense thing for our souls to get hold of that, and find ourselves in the power of it: especially is it needful for those who are young in the truth and ways of the Lord. It is a great thing for us all to see that the affections of the Lord's heart flow out at the present time to His Church, and not to the world. The second psalm says, "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." But the Lord has not asked for that yet. He says in John xvii., "I pray *not* for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given Me out of the world." By and by He will ask for them, and God will give the world to Him, and as Son of Man He will possess everything. Son of Man is the widest title the Lord has, and as such He will possess and reign over all things.

In connection with His love, there is a very beau-

tiful passage in John xiv., last verse: "But that the world may know that I love the Father," etc. You see He is in the fullest fellowship with the mind of His Father, and He goes forth to accomplish His will and prove to the world that He loved His Father. And how did He prove it? He said, "Arise, let us go hence;" and He went to the cross, and there laid down His life; and thus, in the very sorrows and agonies of death itself, He proved His perfect obedience, and devotedness, and love, to His Father.

Then there is another view of it which we had before us already: "The Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*" (Gal. ii. 20). Here it is seen in its individual character. We are each privileged to say it; and how blessed to be able to say it! "The Son of God loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." That is how it is seen, told out to each one of us; in going down into death itself—nothing short of it—in order to meet and put away forever everything that was against us, and thus win the affections of *our hearts* by that marvelous revelation of the love of His own heart.

But what we have in Eph. v. is neither His Father, nor individuals; it is the Church. "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it." It is the Church as a whole, and His love is seen in the same blessed way; never stopping short of death—"He gave Himself for it." Blessed Saviour!

We have another picture of it—you remember it, perhaps—in that beautiful passage in Matt. xiii. 45, 46. A certain merchantman was seeking goodly pearls. And "when he had found *one pearl of great price*, he went and sold all that he had, and bought

it." It was just *one pearl!* But He knew its value! How wonderful to think of the Lord selling all that He had to buy it! That is just another way of reading, "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it!" The pearl is the Church; it is the *one thing* of value to Him, and all His affection and interests center in it. He will have other interests on earth by and by; but meanwhile they center in the Church.

The Church had its commencement, as we were seeing this afternoon, on the day of Pentecost—that was its birthday. Of course, there were saints prior to that. There were saints from Abel downwards, but they do not form any part of the Church. It is formed by the Holy Spirit indwelling each individual and uniting us to each other and to Christ the Head in heaven. It is "the Church which is *His Body*" (Eph. i, 23); and which will be displayed as *His Bride* in the day of glory (Rev. xxi.). He gave Himself for it. He is sanctifying and cleansing it. He will present it to Himself by and by, and it will be the object of His love for ever and ever. All His interests center in it, and every one has to get to know that in his own soul, so that we may come into the power and enjoyment of it. I cannot be in the power or the joy of it, if I don't know it. How gracious of the Lord to make it known to us, in order that we may be in His mind about it!

It is a sorrowful fact that the majority of the Lord's people have not the slightest idea about it. If you doubt it, talk with them. You will soon see they know nothing about it. They simply say, "He saved my soul, and I'm going to be in heaven when I die." And I say, Thank God for that! That is a great thing to be able to say! Some will add, "And

now we must work for God, and do all we can to get others saved." Very blessed thing, surely! But is there nothing more than that? Surely there is; and He would have us in communion with Himself about that which lies nearest His heart, and thus be able to act intelligently and consistently with it.

It may be objected, Surely the Lord died for more than the Church. Does Scripture not say He tasted death for every man? Certainly it does. "He tasted death for every man." We cannot be too clear as to the extent, the far-reaching extent, of the death of Christ. There is such value in the blood of Christ that it gives God *title* to bless *all men*. But we know, alas, that all men will not be blessed—many refuse it. It is only those who receive Christ that find the blessing; and it is they who constitute the Church; and it is *that* Church that He loved and gave Himself for. *That* is the pearl of great price; and however much it may be tarnished and encrusted with sin, He is going to make it just what His loving heart would have it—all He wants it to be; and then present it to Himself in all the glory He can put upon it and clothe it in, to be with Him in His Father's house forever. Is it not wonderful!

Then we have the way He takes in order that His thoughts about it may be accomplished. He has "given gifts to men" (Eph. iv. 8); "set some in the Church" (1 Cor. xii.), and for the benefit of the Church. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." He has made the fullest provision for it so long as it is here. The evangelist goes and gets the stones out of the quarry, and the pastor and teacher square them and fit them into their place.

Thus there is the Spirit guiding and controlling, so that every member of the body, and every joint and band, adds its share to the building up and edifying of itself in love. Nothing is left to human wisdom to invent as an improvement on the divine plan. Christ is the Head of His body, and He by His Spirit guides every member of it, and knows just what is needed so long as it is here in the place of need.

Thank God, there are some to be found who have grasped the truth, and seek to answer to the mind of the Lord, and are acting on these divine principles. We do not say we are the Church: we must never be so presumptuous nor so foolish as to say such a thing. We are a testimony to the *ruin* of the Church and in the midst of that ruin are seeking to carry out the principles flowing out of what it is; and we find the favor and blessing of the Lord in doing that. We seek to be in fellowship with the mind and heart of Christ; and if we seek souls, it is that they may be added to the Church. If we meet saints, we seek to instruct them with a view to their intelligently apprehending their place in the Church and acting consistently with it. We do not seek to restore anything, but in His presence, and according to His mind, seek to act with Him and for Him.

Just a word or two more. What is it the Lord has before Him in the future? He is going to present the Church to Himself, "a glorious Church; not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but holy, and without blemish." Is not that a precious thought? It lets us see *who* He is. Who could do that but a divine person? Alas, there are many spots upon the Church just now—the marks and defilements of the journey and our failures in it.

Then, there will be *no spot*. Wrinkles are the signs of trouble, and care, and worry, and old age. Just think, dear brethren, the Lord is going to present us to Himself without a trace of any of these! He will have no spot, no wrinkle, no furrow, on the brow of *His* Bride when He presents her to Himself. Blessed, precious Lord!

Yes, we are to be the true Eve of the last Adam. Eve was not presented to Adam as his body, but as his bride and wife; and while we *are* the body of Christ, we are to be presented to Himself, and by Himself, as *His Bride*; and we are to share with Him not only all His loving heart can give to us, but delight ourselves in viewing glories that are peculiarly His own, and because they *are* His own.

In Rev. xxi. the Church is seen coming down out of heaven as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and figured as the holy city, New Jerusalem, "having the glory of God." As a light-bearer on the earth, the Church has sadly failed. The history of the seven churches in Rev. ii. and iii. makes that clear. The Church did *not* display Christ; nay, she glorified herself. But in the eternal state, all the blessed results of His work will be seen, and she will be seen then setting forth in every conceivable way all the perfections and glories of Christ. The light of the city is simply reflected light, and every precious stone that sets it forth is but different views of *His* glory. He is everything, and shines forth in all. May our hearts enter into it more fully, dear brethren, and live in the power of it, thus answering here and now to His heart, for His glory and praise.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

THE Sadducee, denying there is spirit, consistently affirms the bodies of men will not rise from their graves. But there are others who affirm it also. Some tell us that the resurrection consists in the departed spirit forming a new body for itself. Others say a new body will be created, and accordingly hold that the resurrection is the creation of a new body.

It will be well to raise the inquiry, Does the word of God teach that the body will rise again? To answer the question it will only be needful to examine those scriptures which refer to the resurrection.

In Acts xxiv. 15 Paul, in his address before Felix, very simply declares, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." Did he mean that the resurrection would be a resurrection of the body? In Matt. xxii. 31 our Lord also speaks of "the resurrection of the dead." Did He mean the resurrection of the body? Numerous other allusions to the resurrection are found in the Gospels and elsewhere. Is it intended that everywhere, where the resurrection is spoken of, we are to understand that it is of the body?

Now the answer to this question is plain and unequivocal. We only need to weigh thoughtfully the various statements of Scripture to see that in its references to the resurrection it *always* means the resurrection of the body. Take, for instance, Matt. xxvii. 50-53, where we read of the wonderful effects of the death and resurrection of Christ. It is said, "And the graves were opened; and many *bodies* of

the saints which slept *arose*, and *came out of the graves* after His resurrection." Now we are not told who these saints were, nor in what age of the world they lived. It is going beyond Scripture to say that the bodies of these particular saints must have been but recently buried; that they could not have been long buried, and so have been entirely decomposed and gone to dust. This was probably true of some of them at least; but where Scripture does not speak we will not presume to do so. But there is one thing we may confidently say. *If* there were among this company of saints who arose at this time any representatives of, say, the age of Abraham, or the age before the flood, the bodies in which they appeared to the people in Jerusalem who saw them *came out of the graves*. If any of them were saints who lived in ancient times and whose bodies had undergone a complete process of disorganization, they were perfectly reorganized while yet in the graves, and thus came out of the graves.

Now this leads us to the doctrine of the reorganization of the body in the grave itself, prior to, but of course in order to, its resurrection. Is this the doctrine of Scripture? Does Scripture really teach us to believe it? Is the passage we have looked at in Matthew a sufficient foundation for such a belief? Are there other scriptures which confirm it?

Let us turn now to John v. 28, 29. "For the hour is coming, in the which *all that are in the graves* shall hear His voice, and shall *come forth*." It is clear that our Lord teaches that at the resurrection something comes forth from or out of the grave. It, of course, must be the reorganized body. The spirit is not in the grave, and does not come from there. It

comes from the place of departed spirits. It is the body that is in the grave. It is to be reorganized for the spirit, that left it at death, to reoccupy it. The reorganization will take place in the grave. At the resurrection the reorganized body will come forth to be forever tenanted by its own spirit. The language employed by our Lord here certainly implies all this, and is in accord with the passage in Matt. xxvii.

But what we deduce from these two passages is clearly affirmed in 1 Cor. xv. 35-58. There were some among the Corinthians who denied the resurrection of the dead. Ver. 35 makes it clear that they denied there would be a body come from the grave. They are ridiculing the very idea of a resurrection of the body in the questions the apostle puts into their mouths, "How *are* the dead raised up? and with *what* body do they come?" Now Paul answers them in a way to convict them of ignorance of the Scriptures and the power of God, as the Lord did the Sadducees. It is a question altogether of the power of God. Is God able to reorganize the body? Even if it has dissolved and actually returned to dust, can He *re-form* it? And if He is able to reorganize the body, can He not, in reorganizing it, make it such a body as it pleases Him?

Now, that God *can* reorganize the body, nature itself demonstrates. The seed of wheat, or any other grain, when sown, becomes disorganized; but God, by processes which He has ordained, works in the disorganizing seed, and a body is formed, which comes up out of its disorganized state. A living body is raised up out of the dead body. If, then, nature witnesses to the power of God in death, why

should it be an incredible thing for God to raise dead men—to reorganize their bodies and raise them up out of their graves? When once it is realized that it is simply a question of the power of God, there is no difficulty. He is able to work in death in the disorganized body, and organize it anew.

But that does not imply that the reorganized body will be just what the disorganized one has been. The body that has been disorganized is a natural body; the reorganized body is a spiritual body. The one is a mortal body, the other is immortal. The one is corruptible, the other is incorruptible. The former is a body of flesh and blood, the latter is a body of flesh and bones. As to this, the apostle appeals again to the testimony of nature. There are different kinds of flesh—one of men, another of beasts, another of fishes, another of birds. There are also bodies terrestrial and celestial, each differing from the other in character and glory. So, too, the reorganized body differs from the one that is disorganized. But here again there is no real difficulty if it be realized that it is a question of the power of God. The power of God was displayed in the formation of the natural body. The dust of which it was made was inert, lifeless, unorganized material. By the power of God it was organized into a body to be quickened by the breath of God. So, too, in the dust to which the natural body returns, God will work to reorganize it into a spiritual body. It will be reorganized in the grave, and come forth from there; but it will come forth to be no more a mortal body, but a body in which mortality is "swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. v. 4).

Thus we find that Scripture insists on a real resur

rection of the body from the grave, and effectually disposes of the theory that the spirit forms a new body for itself, as also of the view held by others that God creates a new body and nothing at all comes from the grave.

There is one scripture which may possibly be quoted against me. It is 2 Cor. v. 2—"Desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is *from* heaven." It is better to read here "*of*" heaven, not "*from*" heaven. The apostle is not teaching that our eternal house or body will be formed in heaven and come from there, but that it will partake of the character of heaven, and be thus suited for heaven. There is, then, no contradiction here to what we have gathered from Scripture elsewhere.

I wish here to guard another point. In using 1 Cor. xv. as I have done, it must not be taken that I hold that in that chapter the apostle is writing concerning the resurrection of the wicked as well as the just. I have not been giving an exposition of the teaching of the chapter, but availing myself of a principle which is there, and which the apostle employs in his arguments to establish the doctrine of the resurrection of the bodies of the believing dead. It is of them, and of them alone, that he speaks there. But while this is true, it is also true that the bodies of the wicked dead will be raised by the power of God as well as the bodies of the righteous. The gates of Hades are under the control of Him whom God has made Lord of *all*—both the gate in and the gate out. He will raise all the dead—both the just and the unjust. It will be at His voice that all the dead will rise; the just, at the resurrection of life; the unjust, at the resurrection of judgment.

Now before closing it may be well to call attention to the serious consequences of denying the resurrection of the body. It does not matter which form of the denial we take; the consequences are equally vital. Of course it is easy to see that the Sadducean denial of resurrection in any form sweeps away everything. According to their view, there is no Christ any more, and there is no future life for men, no future blessedness for believers, no future punishment for unbelievers.

The theory that the spirit, after leaving the body, forms a new body for itself, is also fatal, both as to Christ and as to us. If Christ's spirit formed a new body, and the body that went into the grave did not rise, then His former body saw corruption; it must have gone to dust, and Christ has not, then, conquered death. This only needs to be pointed out. The truth of the holy humanity of our blessed Lord is too important to suffer the loss of it by allowing the resurrection to be defined as the formation of a new body by the departed spirit. In the case of the saints, it will not do to allow this definition either, for resurrection would not be "*mortality* swallowed up of life" (2 Cor. v. 4). For this to be true, redemption must have application to the old body. (See Rom. viii. 23.) If, when the Lord comes, the bodies of the living saints are reorganized, there will also be a reorganization of the disorganized bodies of those who sleep in Jesus.

The same serious results follow from defining resurrection to be the creation of a new body. The truth of Christ's holy humanity is lost, and He is robbed of His glory as the Victor over death, and the saints are denied their portion of sharing that

victory with Him; i. e., their bodies remain forever the prey of death. In the resurrection, if they have new bodies created, they will be a new order of men—not children of Adam redeemed and saved, not children of God by redemption—but men by creation. How great the loss!

It will now be seen that it is of supreme importance to firmly hold to the doctrine of the identity of the old and the new body. This doctrine is clearly stated in the passage we have considered in 1 Cor. xv. "*It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body*" (vers. 42-44). The apostle is here asserting the identity of the natural and mortal body with the spiritual and immortal body.

The same principle applies to the wicked also. If there is no identity of the body they have in this life and the body which they will have when they stand before the great white throne or have been consigned to the lake of fire, then they will not be the same men: it will not be the *sinner that sinned* that will be judged and punished.

Many other considerations might be mentioned, but perhaps it is not necessary. It is sufficiently plain that the doctrine of the Scriptures is that the body will rise again. Whatever the varying conditions of the bodies of men when the resurrection takes place, there will be a reorganization of the body: this will take place in the grave, and thus the reorganized body will come forth from there.

C. C.

THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE.

THE PEANUT.

THE peanut has a lesson somewhat similar to the reed grass. It belongs to the pea family, grows in warm climates, and is about one or two feet long. The short flower-stalks start close to the ground; and as soon as the seeds are fertilized, the stems bend down, still growing, and thrust the young peanuts into the ground to ripen out of sight in the darkness.

Fruit in the believer is for God, the Husbandman, and must develop and ripen here in a scene of death, unseen by man. Although there should be, and will be, outward evidence of it, still, the real work of the Spirit of God in the soul will be unseen by the eye of man, involving exercise, sorrow, trial, disappointment; and cultivation at the hands of the Husbandman, and under His eye alone. All this goes on in a world that grows more and more worthless and distasteful as the years go by. The beauty, the bright flowers, and the fragrance of the spring-time of our spiritual life, give place to the heat, drought, storms, and cultivation of summer, that fruit may be brought to perfection. Sober work this! The petals of the flowers drop off, the beauty is gone, and the peanut must be thrust into the place of death, to develop and ripen before it is fit to eat.

If the work of the Holy Spirit is not hindered in the soul, there will be some fruit in which the Husbandman can delight and find a sweet savor of Christ.

How appropriate that the peanut should be a very

wholesome and nutritious food, rich in oil, type of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit! And also, how suggestive that the roasting of the peanut should bring out and improve the flavor! Fire is suggestive of trial and testing (1 Pet. i. 7; 2 Cor. viii. 2; Heb. xi. 36; 1 Pet. iv. 12; Rev. i. 14). Thus the line of thought naturally suggested by the peanut is somewhat different from that of eel grass.

We are in a natural world where the varieties and differences are countless and amazing. If each of these has its special lesson, then I can understand why there are so many—because the spiritual truths and principles contained in the word of God are rich and complex beyond description, and it will require eternity to enjoy it all. Every scrap of His Word and His work that we can gather up here will be just that much of the richest food to be enjoyed with the Lord in the glory throughout eternity; but we must gather it here. T. M.

Newark, N. J., 1906.

SOME REMARKS ON ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

THIS is a subject that needs to be kept to the front: the reasons are good and sufficient for this assertion, chiefly because the denial of eternal punishment is linked invariably with the worst kinds of errors, and also because it is becoming so very prevalent in the Church at large.

Were the question, as so many think, one of eternal punishment alone, it would not require so much attention, but could be allowed to rest where other

more or less erroneous things are allowed to rest; that is, with the individual conscience.

But it ought to be apparent on the face of it that anything so vitally connected with the death of Christ in relation to *sin*, must of necessity be of the greatest possible importance, although it may not appear so at first sight. Whatever is so vitally associated with Christ's death must in some way partake of the character, as to importance, of that death. Is it not safe to say that the punishment of the unrepentant must be measured by the death of Christ for sin? Is it not correct to say that the death of Christ is measured by the character of the person who died? Does not that death necessarily reflect what must be the punishment of those who die in their sins? Although the death on the cross receives its true value from what and who He is that died, yet that only the more reveals the true character of sin, and consequently the punishment for sin. The death of Christ and the punishment of the unrepentant must correspond.

We may perhaps be able to find an illustration that will enable us to see what is involved in sin, and how sin on the part of finite man can be infinite in effect. Suppose a flag of the United States was insulted. Is not the *whole* nation insulted? Does every flag, or every citizen, have to be insulted before the *nation* is injured? No; a part here is equivalent to the whole. Nor does the source of the insult have to be a nation of equal standing with the one insulted; it may be the most insignificant country insulting the greatest nation on earth; the result is the same. The insult is measured by the *character of the nation insulted*. Or, to refer to a fact in nature, we can

illustrate our point still more clearly. The luminous ether is supposed to be coextensive with space, and of absolutely uniform texture. Suppose we now form the mental image of a luminous body like our sun placed exactly in the centre of this ether. The agitation of the ether by the luminous body will now radiate from it in every direction, and thus the whole of the ether will be agitated from a single body at the centre. And as the ether may be said to be infinitely large in extension and the luminous body as of finite dimensions, and, compared with the ether, it may be said to be infinitely small, so we can picture in our minds something infinitely small setting in motion something else that is infinitely great. It is just so with sin. It is against God, and therefore the effect of sin, or what sin is, must be measured by what God is. To sin against the love of God, is to sin against infinite Love; to sin against His holiness, is to sin against infinite Holiness: and so with every attribute of God, it is to sin against infinity, to sin against *God*. Thus to sin against God, though man is finite, his sin is infinite. And so all this talk about God being too good to punish *finite* sin with *infinite* punishment falls to the ground as void of truth.

But there are other ways of arriving at the same conclusions concerning eternal punishment. And when we say punishment we mean infliction of pain, and not cutting off or extinction after death, as some mean when they use the word punishment. When a person uses the word to mean something else than eternal punishment, they mean eternal cutting off, or eternal annihilation, or eternal unconsciousness, but not eternal *punishment*.

In Heb. ix. 22 we are told that "without the shedding of *blood* there is *no* remission" (of sins). Now, if the blood of Christ is the *only* means by which sins are cleansed or remitted, it is evident that *punishment* cannot; and if punishment cannot remove sins, and as the soul lives forever, the punishment must last as long as sin remains—that is, forever. If we say that punishment remits sins, we deny Heb. ix. 22. The blood of Christ and punishment cannot both cleanse from sin; it must be one or the other, and the word of God says that sins are cleansed by blood. Thus it is *one* of the two; and since Scripture nowhere says punishment cleanses from sin, it remains, as stated in Heb. ix. 22, that the blood of Christ alone does.

But there is another way that eternal punishment is seen to be a Scripture doctrine. In 1 Peter ii. 24 we have it distinctly stated that Jesus bore the sins of believers in His own body on the tree. Now it is plain that if He bore them, they are gone; for surely none will say that He still bears them. And if sins are gone only when borne by Jesus on the cross, manifestly those who reject Him have their sins upon themselves, and must bear them. But to bear one's own sins is to bear them for eternity, seeing that they can be removed only when borne by Christ. So that we have the conclusion that one, bearing his own sins, must bear them for eternity, and punishment for sin must last as long as sin remains, that is, for eternity; for punishment for sin must be coextensive in duration with the presence of sin. Each succeeding instant finds the sins still there, and so also the punishment for sin.

Another important passage is found in John viii. 21. Those who reject the Son of God are said to be in a

state that prevents them from going to Him in heaven. "Ye shall seek Me, and shall *die in your sins*," are the solemn words of Jesus. To "die in sins" is a very important statement. Does the state or condition "in sins" cease at death? The following considerations show that "in sins" continues after death. Where did Jesus speak of going? To the Father. Did any at that time ever think of going to the Father as natural men, or before death? No; they would go to Him after death, if at all. It was not simply *death* that would prevent them from going to be with Him, but the condition that death would reach them in—"in sins." And since it was only after death that they could hope to go to Him, it is clear that the reason they could not go to Him is that they would be in their sins *after* death. If death was the only thing that stood in their way from going to Him, why did He mention "in your sins" at all? It was their *sins* that prevented them from going where He was going; hence it was "in sins" after death.

So with Hebrews ix. 27. If "in sins" is only *until* death, how can there be judgment after death? But since there is judgment after death, it remains that there is also a state of being "in sins" after death. And since there is nothing to alter that state or condition after death, punishment must be everlasting.

When does a believer go to be with Jesus? After death. And why can such go to Him? Because they have no sins upon them—they are *not* "in sins." They can therefore go to Him. Believers are not "in sins," but "in Christ," "in the Spirit."

When the believer obtains eternal life, a new qual-

ity is not added to the soul. Eternal life is from and in Christ, for He is Himself the eternal life. It is not a change in the nature of the soul. Hence, when a man dies, his soul continues to live whether he be a possessor of eternal life or not. But the unbeliever is "in sins."

F. H. J.

"THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED ME."

(Gal. ii. 20.)

JESUS, Lord, who loved me,
Bore my sins upon the tree,
Died that Thou might'st set me free,
I am Thine.

Jesus, Lord, who by Thy blood
Hast redeemed my soul to God,
Brought me now to know His love,
I am Thine.

Jesus, Lord, I love to trace
All the marvels of Thy grace;
Set by Thee in this blest place,
I am Thine.

Jesus, Lord, mine eyes shall soon
See Thee on Thy glorious throne,
Be with Thee in that blest home;
I am Thine.

Jesus, Lord, Thou then wilt see
All Thy ransomed ones with Thee;
Satisfied Thou then wilt be
With Thine own.

Jesus, Lord, for evermore
We shall praise Thee and adore;
Tell the story o'er and o'er—
Love Divine.

CURRENT EVENTS.

AS the national restoration of Israel is intimately linked with the closing of the Christian dispensation and the rapture of the Church from earth to heaven, the late action of the Sultan of Turkey, and its results, cannot but deeply interest all who wait for our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven.

All hindrance to the return of the Jews to their land has been removed, and they are now free to flock into it as much as they desire.

The International Zionist Conference, recently held in Cologne, have accordingly adopted and proclaimed a programme for the re-settlement of the Jewish people in their own land, which, seeing the immense emigration which has already begun from Russia, indicates a true fulfilment of Ezek. xxxvii. The "dry bones" seem indeed to be "shaking" and "coming together, bone to his bone." Israel is looking on to a national restoration.

They little dream of what they are yet to pass through before they can be established according to God's great mind and love toward them. They have no thought of the "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be" (Matt. xxiv. 21), which is yet to deluge them in that very land of their right desires, but in which they called upon their own heads and those of their children the blood of Him who is the only King, able to make them the Royal Nation of the earth.

The Christian heart, knowing this, sorrows for them, while rejoicing at the glorious end the faithful remnant will surely get.

They are going back to reap first the fruit of their aw-

ful crime against Immanuel; then the fruit of the infinite grace of that same Immanuel.

And we, beloved brethren, fellow-members of "the Church, which is His Body," what does all this say to us, save that we are near the end of our journey? At any moment now we may see and hear our "Lord Himself descending from heaven with a shout" (1 Thess. iv. 16-18), to take us out of this scene of sorrow, and into His and our home of love and eternal rest. The heart upleapeth with joy, and says, "*Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*"

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

QUES. 27.—"And to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be *with me*" (1 Sam. xxviii. 19). Was this the place where all the dead rest? or did the prophet mean that Saul and his sons were going to be cut off from the earth simply? From this passage, can we say that both the saved and the unsaved are together?

ANS.—We believe that the expression simply means that Saul and his sons would on the morrow be killed in battle and be among the dead, as Samuel was—among the dead as in contrast with those living on the earth.

It in no wise defines *the place* they occupy among the dead. Lazarus and the rich man, in Luke xvi., are both among the dead as contrasted with those who are still living upon the earth, but they are in very different *places* there. One is in the place of bliss, the other of torment, with "a great gulf fixed" between the two.

QUES. 28.—Is the word *wine* used in Scripture the real fermented juice of the vine, or simple grape juice? Did the Lord use grape juice, or what we call "wine," at the Supper? And what was it at the wedding at Cana?

ANS.—You will ever find in Scripture that drunkenness is attached to wine; that "*much wine*" is not good; that "*a little wine*" was commended to a sickly man; that to be "*given to wine*" unfits one for holy duties, etc., etc.;—thus showing that what is called "*wine*" is not "*grape juice*," which cannot make

one drunk, but the *fermented* juice of the grape, which does make drunk.

Let us remind you, and all, that wine, from which many make themselves drunk, and which it were far better for many to abstain from, is by no means the only test God has put before man in creation. Fornication, adultery, do not argue that woman is an evil. Covetousness does not argue that gold is an evil. Murder does not argue that a knife or a weapon is evil. Let *sin* be hateful to us, and we can then thank God for everything He has made.

QUES. 29.—In the book of Genesis I have been able to trace the years from Adam to Isaac, which are 2206 years; or, when Isaac begot Jacob it was 1798 years B. C. But I have been unable to keep up the chain. Where, and in what books of the Bible, will I find the rest, to the birth of the Saviour? In Luke we find the natural genealogy from Adam to Christ, but not the years. Is there not some other book—traditions, perhaps?

ANS.—There are too many difficult questions to be considered to make it possible to give a satisfactory answer. 1st. Is the present Hebrew text in Gen. v. and xi. the correct text? There is good evidence, yet perhaps not decisive, that at one time the text in these chapters was very different. 2d. Were the children of Israel 215, or 430, years in Egypt? Authorities are divided. The latter term suits best with the computation of the age of Amraphel, a contemporary of Abraham, based on statements found in recovered Babylonian inscriptions. There are, however, one or two doubtful elements in the computation, so that it is still uncertain. 3d. How far can we trust the traditions? They are very conflicting. By comparing the Scriptures with well-founded dates in contemporary history, a continuous chronology may be traced back from the crucifixion of Christ to the exodus of Israel out of Egypt, 1444 B. C. Of course many details can be only approximately placed. Further back we cannot claim accuracy, in the present state of our knowledge.

C. C.

QUES. 30.—Will you kindly explain in *HELP AND FOOD* Matt. xxvi. 6-13, and Luke vii. 36-39? Is the Mary mentioned in both the same person? There is much that is different in both incidents, and would lead one to think the Mary in Luke was not the Mary of Bethany; but one lately expressed the thought that the story in all four Gospels was one and the same.

ANS.—The incident narrated in Luke vii. 36-49 occurred some time during our Lord's Galilean journey, at the beginning of His ministry. The incident narrated in Matt. xxvi. 6-13 occurred just at the close, only a few days before the crucifixion. Simon was a very common name; so, too, was Mary. The Simon at whose house Mary anointed the Lord had been a leper. As having been healed, he would be one of those who "loved much." John xii. 2 would give us to think that it was as "loving much" that he took part in the supper they made the Lord at Bethany. The Simon of Luke vii. was not one of those who "loved much." It is plainly a mistake to identify the Simon of the one account with the Simon of the other. There is no proof that the "woman who was a sinner" of the one was the same as the Mary of the other. Nor can we identify the Mary of Bethany with the Mary of Magdala.

C. C.

QUES. 31.—Is the gift of healing in the Church now as in the time of the apostles?

ANS.—If it is, let it be seen, for miracles are for *sight*, not for faith. We have seen, as faith has ever seen and will ever see, prayers answered and sick people made well, whether with or without medical aid. But this is a very different thing from the gift of healing. A man with such a gift can, in the name of Jesus, say to a sick man, Walk, and he walks; to a dead man, Arise, and he comes forth. We have neither seen nor heard of such in our times, though we know well our Lord is able now, as in former days, and indeed may yet, in heathen countries especially, accompany His gospel with remarkable signs of power.

Various questions remain over for our next issue. Here we close with this, the last one of the present year, thanking God heartily for His many mercies in this service, and for His forgiving grace in all the failings which He has seen in it. How sweet to serve *Him*, and all His saints *because they belong to Him*! Sweeter, too, as the end draws near, grows the fellowship of one's fellow-servants in this "work of faith and labor of love."

Editor.

