

OCCASIONAL HELPS.

EDITED BY W. T. T.

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OUR PLACE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

It is impossible to over-rate the importance of the two great subjects which I propose to consider; they lie at the basis of all true practical Christianity. It is equally important to understand the relation of the one to the other; indeed, so essential is such apprehension, that it may be safely affirmed that, where the first is not known, the second does not follow. With regard to our *place*, it is first of all to be understood that it is the exact contrast to all that belongs to us in *nature*. As born into the world, we are *lost*, and in that state we have contracted *guilt*, and we are moreover in a world into which death has entered, and where death is rampant. By nature then our *condition* is miserable, and this world, where we find ourselves, is both blasted and blighted, and, from the standpoint of "under the sun," the testimony must be, "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Now out of this wretchedness and misery, God in mercy purposed to deliver us, and *has* accomplished all that was in His heart, in and through His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. But deliverance out of our misery, most full and blessed as it is, was not *all* His purpose, but introduction into all the blessedness of an open heaven through deliverance, and union by the Holy Ghost with Him Who died and rose again and ascended up on high. It is very wonderful how apt we are to *limit* what was in God's heart for us, and what has been accomplished and secured by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus—and it is this very limit, beyond which so many never get, which is

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productive of the very painful and low type of practical walk to be seen all around us. It may perhaps startle the reader at first, to be told that forgiveness of sins is not of itself power, nor can forgiveness *of itself* enable a man, *i.e.* give him *power*, to walk so as to please God. Forgiveness is relief, and blessed and needed relief too; but power relates to my place in Christ, and the portion I have in Him. For example, when we read in Col. iii. 5; "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth" &c. it is an exhortation flowing out of the place we are in, and that place, as expounded in Col ii. and iii. is, *dead and risen* with Christ. It is all important and blessed to see that I get both *relief* and *power* from Christ. The first relates to *how* He meets me in my deep need; the second has to do with the new place in Himself, into which He has brought me. Both are most blessedly expounded in the parable of the good Samaritan, viz., "bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast" &c. It is amazing how few there are, who have laid hold by faith of the fact, that the Christian has been transferred to an entirely new *condition* and *place*, in and by Christ; that a Christian is a man after another order of being altogether, sprung from the Second Adam now, as surely as, by nature, he was of the first Adam. Oh, what a reality to the soul is the deep blessedness of the fact that, as a Christian, I am now part of Him who said, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." John xii. 24. Who can over-rate the magnitude

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of the fact that, as a Christian, I am *sprung from Him!*—part of that fruit which His death has brought forth.

Then another truth, akin to this, and closely allied with it, is, that a man *in Christ* no more belongs to this world than he does to the man who, upon it, fell. The same precious death which severed his connection with the one, has equally severed it with the other. This world, this ordered system, which Satan is heading up against God and His Christ, is no more *my place*: by the cross it has been crucified to me, and I to it, by a double death, as it were, a judicial sentence passed upon it, and me. I am for ever liberated from the slavery of being its friend. Blessed, wonderful emancipation! reaching up to the full tide of blessedness, when it is stated that His place, where He is, Who has risen from the dead, has become, in sovereign grace, and by union with Him there, ours, who are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and seated together in heavenly places *in Christ*—there remaineth nothing more for us to desire, save to see Him face to face, and, in a body of glory like His own, to be with Him for ever. In the presence of such manifested purpose and favour, so wonderfully accomplished by Him, and bestowed upon us, the soul bows down in adoring wonder, worship, and praise.

These two great kindred truths, of which I have spoken, are very blessedly expounded in Ephesians ii. There the Christian is looked at *as out of man, and out of earth*. In the closing verses of chap. i. Christ, viewed as the glorious

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Man, is set forth as the subject of the working of the mighty power of God, "who raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Oh, the amazing brightness of the glory which shines in every line of this magnificent declaration! If God had a man to turn out of Eden for disobedience, He has also had a Man to reward, Who glorified Him on the earth, even to death, the death of the cross. He it was, and none else, Who was raised and glorified, and all things set under His feet, and He, constituted Head over all things to the Church, His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

Then in chap. ii. we are introduced to the *same power* in operation, quickening the heirs, to give them a part and a place, in and with Him, so glorified and exalted: and, in order to set forth the blessed *reach* of this power, the position in which they are found is unfolded, viz., dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit working in the children of disobedience: out of this state of death and distance from God, His power quickened them, so that they have been also raised up together, and seated together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*. And in the ages to come, God

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will display in them the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards them through Christ Jesus. Then in verse 11, He contrasts the two states; "at that time," referring to their old condition, "ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but *now*," referring to their new condition, "in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off (*i.e.* dispensationally, for, morally, a Jew was no nearer than a Gentile), are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Blessed contrast, and still more blessed Person, *in Whom*, and by *Whom*, it has been all made good and secured,

There are some consequences which follow from our being consciously in this place, which I will note here. There is *superiority* to circumstances, as we pass along through this world, and there is *rest* amid the turmoils and troubles to which we are ever subjected in a region like this. Nothing can carry the soul into the atmosphere of superiority and rest, but the divine consciousness, by the Holy Ghost, of our place in Christ, and our union with Him in glory. When these are so *possessed, known, and enjoyed*, rest and superiority follow as *divine* consequences. No amount of *effort* can secure either; they are not to be acquired by any artificial struggle; effort always betrays weakness, and carries restlessness in its bosom. There is nothing more distressing to witness, than the morbid and oppressed strivings of real and earnest souls after that which they make as truly a matter of *attainment*, as the sincere legalist does eternal

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life. The truth is, if a man is a Christian, he is in Christ, where Christ is, and the Holy Ghost dwells in him. He is out of man, and out of earth. Is there no sanctifying power in this, where it is really and divinely apprehended and known? I do not speak now of the mere assent of the understanding, but of the soul truly operated upon by these divine verities. The question has often been suggested to my own soul, whether there is not a danger of displacing the truth of God, by making *us* less the *subjects* of the Holy Ghost's power by means of the truth, and more the active party in the matter. I believe there is a tendency in many of us in this direction, and I cannot conceive any result that can follow save failure of a serious nature. I do not for a moment deny that there is to be on our part dependence and subjection, and that, too, kept alive constantly in the soul. All this most surely must be found in connection with what I have already spoken of, as well as "bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body," *i.e.* the practical application of the death of Christ to ourselves; but this in no sense traverses the truth we have been considering, but, on the contrary, coincides and unites with it. Self-occupation and "bearing about in our body the dying of Jesus" are as distinct as midnight and noon-day; the latter, known, would strike at the root of the former. Self-occupation is an indigenous plant; it is not only, in one of its aspects, the obnoxious weed which grows rank in many a field, and which is branded and shunned, as such, by almost all; but it is also, in another of its

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aspects, the apparently beautiful flower which faintly would blossom, and give forth its refreshing sweetness, and invite the passer-by to pluck and regale himself with its ripe perfume. Another consequence which follows from knowing our place in Christ, is, practical separation from all around us. In proportion to the sense we have of being at home in heaven, do we practically walk, as from home, here on the earth. No one can make himself a pilgrim; no one can acquire strangership on the earth. The spirit and mind of Christ, as well as familiarity with the place where He is, as our home, alone can impart the tone and character of pilgrims to us.

Another consequence of our place, known and possessed in power of the Holy Ghost, is the manner in which *everything* connected with us, over which we have authority, is shaped and formed, so as to suit the truth which has suited us to itself. Our home relationships, our families, are not to be, and will not be exceptions in any wise, if the truth lays hold in power on ourselves. How deplorable the failure amongst us in this respect; the world, sought for the families of those who had surrendered it for themselves; prosperity, in respect of it, gloried in, even where this very success was Satan's blindfold to delude and destroy. After this fashion, many a testimony has been ruined, many a one, alas, has the sorrowful confession to make, viz., "they made me the keeper of the vineyards, but mine own vineyard have I not kept." Alas, the children, and families, and households of the saints, are a great reproach to the testimony. Other instances I could bring forward, but

enough; it is self-evident that, if this heavenly position is maintained, neither pride, nor love of the world, nor love of money, will be tolerated; it will operate upon us in every direction and on every side; it will permeate everything; it will be seen in everything; both forming and maturing that which is of Christ in each of His beloved people. The Lord give us to know this truth in reality in these last days.

W. T. T.

“THE HEAVENS OPENED.”

ACTS VII.

THIS chapter is a very remarkable one in this respect. It is the Spirit of God summing up the whole history of man, until Stephen was thus put to death. It is the rejection of the last testimony of God, all the dealings of God with man and the result of it as summed up by the Spirit of God and what man's condition was as under those dealings, and then the blessed truth that a Christian, cut off, goes straight into Paradise. What makes the chapter striking is that Stephen was the first that was carried up into heaven this way after Christ; he went to heaven so as to close the then testimony to man upon the earth. It was the turning point in the history of man under God's dealings and of what the ways of God were. Stephen went to join Christ in heaven; that gave backbone to his testimony. He recounts everything that had passed since Abraham, right on to the death of Christ, and then goes to heaven.

We speak of salvation—the grace of God that brings salvation. Salvation supposes something *lost*, if people are lost, I speak of the necessity of this salvation. It is not *help* we want, salvation meets what is *lost*. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." It is not merely the change in people though there *is* a change in all their ways, habits and spirit. God had come down and met people in the condition they were in; they could not meet Him at all, but **He** brought them out of that condition. Christ died "the just for the unjust, that he might *bring us to God*." We were away from God then, and God has been dealing with us to bring us to Himself, because we are not with Himself at all. The death of Christ has nothing to do with help; if He had not been the Son of God He would not have done it. The testimony we have of the Lord Jesus Christ is "He came to seek and to *save* that which was lost."

Now it is the summing up by Stephen here, that brings this out so distinctly and definitely. Man turned out of paradise—the flood—the law, **after** that we all know the world that now is. There have been these provings, testings and **dealings** of God with sinners which is important, because man fancies he can remedy this. Now God has done everything *He* could do and the result is man is proved to be *lost*; I do not mean **finally** lost for God can save him, but as to the **state** he is in, entirely away from God. He has **not** got life. Life through whom? "That life is **in His Son**." "He that hath the Son hath life." **If** you have not the Son you have not life, there

is nothing to be helped. You have not got the thing which puts us into relationship with God. There may be natural conviction of sin, or the law applied to the conscience, or the wonderful grace of the gospel making you feel confounded that you have lived without it all. He is on the one side *guilty*, on the other *lost*. As regards his condition and state he has not righteousness. "None righteous, no not one." You may be extremely amiable, pleasing and sweet to nature like the young man in Mark x. the Lord tests him, and directly he goes away from Christ for he loved money. It is very pleasing of course to find amiability and the like, but it is a natural thing in man as you may find in any other animal, one vicious, another well disposed.

Remark the perfect calmness of Stephen before the Sanhedrim, the way in which he goes through the whole history they gloried in (as God can go through your history and tell *you* all that ever you did), and brings their own path and conduct to themselves, to shew them what they were and how it had all issued in their state. He begins at Abraham where everything began afresh. People built Babel, not as some have fancied so high that the flood could not reach them, but to make themselves a name that shall not be scattered. Then when they had been scattered they turned idolators, worshipping devils, and then God called out Abraham. Now you must leave your country, and your kindred and your father's house; grace comes and calls him entirely out from all this. He *half* went, first, and did not get there. Then when Terah was dead "he removed

him into this land." There is no condition whatever connected with Abraham. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," blessing to the Gentiles. God comes in His own grace and promises His Son. Then He sets about to deal with man in every possible way. Four ways—the law, the prophets, His Son and the working of the Holy Ghost. We sinners are not in paradise, even an earthly one—man has been *turned out* too, for you cannot have corruptions, passions and lusts walking with a holy God. It cannot and ought not to be. If you could take man and put him into heaven, he would get out of it as fast as he could.

You get these four steps. He gives the law, they did not keep it; the prophets, "which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted;" His Son, "of whom ye have now been the betrayers and murderers;" the Holy Ghost, "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Everything in which God could deal with man had to be gone through and tried, and that is the way it turned out. This grace, this special mercy that spared them on the intercession of Jesus, and now there was a testimony of a glorified Christ if they would receive it, and they sent back the messenger, "we will not have this man to reign over us." They put to death the humbled Christ, and refuse the testimony of the glorified Christ.

There we get the history of man and the history of your hearts. Who has not had the law practically and broken it? Who has not had the testimony and neglected it? Who has not had Christ presented to him and preferred money,

vanity, dress or a thousand things? and the testimony of the Holy Ghost remaining without any effect. It is the very history of the world and of the little world of your hearts. I find I am a *sinner*, that is God's judgment of my state, but there is salvation for the vilest, I should not be here if there were not. But more; when "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," when He came into this ruined world in *grace*, they would not have Him. We forget we are in a world in which the Son of God has been and is not. How came that? God says to the world practically, what have you done with My Son? What can the world say but, we have crucified Him. Was there any reason for it, was He really a malefactor? Was He even like John the Baptist, severe? There He was healing all who were oppressed of the devil, removing every sorrow, even of death, manifesting God, for God was with Him. Ah, said the world, we will not have God, and as He willingly gave Himself He could be easily got rid of. And this is what man is! God came in grace into the midst of this world and man would not have Him, and there is this additional fact for us, that He *died* for us.

Go and introduce Christ where men are having their pleasures, quiet, gentle society, or rough society, what would be the effect? It would stop them directly. Take a man aside for a few hours, he will think of his pleasures or his troubles, but you never heard of a natural man thinking of Christ, for it is never on his heart, and if it is brought to him his natural inclination rejects

it. There is God's account of all of you.

What does wisdom do? Justify God, not themselves. I justify God where the testimony of the condemnation comes, I say God is right, I *ought* to repent, and I justify God in the testimony of sovereign grace in His Son, I bow my head with thankfulness. When a man is really taught of God he justifies God.

Now we have to see how God meets this state, which is the gospel. Not what *I* have wrought but "what hath *God* wrought," and I find "God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son;" also "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins." He saves what was lost, makes propitiation for guilt and gives life to those that have none in themselves. Christ has come into this world to shew what God was to the sinner, that wonderful, unspeakable fact that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." God Himself has come as a Man to shew His interest in man, and has gone through it, the Holy One whom sin could not defile, to carry the blessedness of God's own love to everyone who had a need. What brought Him here, did I ask Him to come? Just His own love. We get this blessed love of God come amongst us. I know God not in speculating about what He *may* be, but in the blessed knowledge of what He *is*. If He had not shewn me all my sins I might say "If you knew all I was you would have nothing to say to me, I know my own heart but I know *God's* heart too."

People call God merciful, which means that

they hope God will think as little about their sins as they do themselves; it is awful how little man thinks of sin. They think it horribly bad to wrong their fellows, but they may calumniate God as much as they like. God cannot and ought not to be indifferent to sin; He would not be the holy God if He were. Am I to go defiled into heaven and spoil heaven itself? The love is an idle love that never displayed itself; where love is thorough and real it measures the wants and takes the case thoroughly into account. He bearing my sins in His own body on the tree was made sin for us; whether as regards the tree or the fruit, He stands before God and these sins have been dealt with. I do not wait till the day of judgment to own them or to know that they are put away. Where there is faith, "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and we stand, as God has told us, in His presence as white as snow.

When we look at the cross, the more we weigh it, the more we see how perfectly God has been glorified. I own that my sins brought Him there. The only part I had in the cross were the sins that brought Christ there, and the hatred that put Him to death. If it humbles me in the dust all the better. The work is divinely perfect between Christ and God about these sins. The wrath was such that even in the thought of bearing it He sweat great drops of blood, and while it bows my heart and my conscience, I find that God has already dealt with the sins in the grace that put all away, before ever I come to the day of judgment.

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I may have been attracted by grace or alarmed by the terror of the Lord; one is the love getting into your heart, the other the light getting into your conscience, and God is both light and love. The work in which He bore my sins and put them away is perfectly done, in virtue of which God has set Him as Man at His own right hand; there I find salvation. The work is finished, I accept it, I am only too glad to have it, but the thing that gives me peace is that *God* has accepted it, for He has raised Christ from the dead. The glory of God Himself now in the face of Jesus Christ is the witness that the believer's sins never can be remembered any more. Whereas the glory of God formerly alarmed and frightened us, now God has set Him at His right hand that you might be able to look at it in perfect peace. How could I walk with God if I did not know whether He was going to condemn me or not; you cannot if you are afraid of Him; but I am made the righteousness of God in Him. He is in the glory as *Saviour*. Oh the thought that He became a Man, that God is unveiled, and came into this world in unbounded love, making the day of judgment a time of triumph for the believer! I say of *triumph* beloved. The believer will be perfectly like Christ, "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." We are left here to have our senses exercised.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," I am in Christ. Not only the clearing away of all the wretched things that I have and am in the first Adam,

but God has put me into all the blessed things in the second Adam, in Christ. I know before God I am as Christ is. People think this presumption—if you ever think to be with God *without* it, it is presumption. If you are in the flesh you *cannot* please God. The Lord Jesus has said (when the Comforter is come), "at that day ye shall *know* that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you."

It is lovely the way it is brought out to Stephen; he was *full* of the Holy Ghost, I do not say everyone is, though we have the Holy Ghost. The effect of seeing Christ in glory is that we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. He who is in the glory is the One who bore my sins, now let me look upon that glory, let me think of it, let me tell it; He "loved me and gave himself for me," and my heart delights to look at Him. The effect is I am "changed into the same image," my heart gets *full* of Christ. Stephen in a certain sense becomes perfectly like Christ, he says "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," the Lord Jesus said "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Stephen says "Lord Jesus receive my spirit," the Lord Jesus "Father into thy hand I commend my spirit."

When the soul really sees and knows Christ by faith as the One who has saved us, we get like Him, though of course we have to be on the watch against temptations every day. What is very difficult for us in this world is entire superiority to circumstances. There were the people raging against Stephen, and not only that, when

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they set about dragging him out of the city, while the stones were flying round him, he kneels down and prays for them. Stephen through the Lord's grace is the *quiet* person, entirely superior to circumstances, always *himself*, with his heart in heaven. There I get the effect of realizing the presence of Christ. So far as we are *above* the circumstances we pass through, we are always ourselves, and we are the *right* thing in them. It's difficult I grant, and requires communion with the Lord and diligence of heart in seeking Him in prayer. Supposing the world does kill us, why we go straight to Christ in heaven like Stephen did—a witness for Christ here and a companion of Christ up there, to whom he goes in blessed joy and gladness of heart.

Now beloved, where are we as to this? Are our souls trusting in that grace in which the blessed Lord came, till He comes to receive to Himself those who have believed on Him.

The Lord give us to have our eye fully open to Himself—to know and taste that the Lord is gracious, and then we shall be able to wait for His Son from heaven, the only thought we have, to please Him while here. May we have our eye on Him where He is in glory, so that we may be like Him, and rejoice with our hearts in joy unspeakable and full of glory.

(J. N. D.)

"ONE THING."

THREE times these two words, occur together in the New Testament, and it is interesting to trace the connection in which they stand in each place,

and the relation which also they bear to each other. We read,—

In Mark x. 21—"One thing thou lackest."

In Luke x. 42—"One thing is needful."

In Philipp. iii. 13—"One thing (I do)."

In the two first places, the Lord Jesus Himself speaks; addressing two very different states of soul. The first, one whose portion was of this world: the second, one who had found her treasure and rest in Himself. In the third case we have the utterance of the truest and most devoted servant, that Christ has ever had upon this earth.

Different as are the persons concerned, and the circumstances in each case, the key which explains them is one. Christ Himself is this key, and the value which each of the three persons referred to in these passages set upon Him, is that which is discovered and brought to light.

Let us look for a moment at the first. One comes running and kneeling before the Lord Jesus, and thus shows earnestness and reverence. But the first word that he utters reveals his spiritual state. "Good Master," he begins, bringing out the gentle rebuke from the Lord's lips, "Why callest thou me good, there is none good but one, that is God." This man could own Jesus as Master or Teacher, and qualify Him as "Good." But he went no further, and He who is God over all blessed for ever, cannot accept a lower title from the heart and lip of man, than that which is His due. Either He is God, or He is not "Good Master," for there is none in the absolute sense "Good but one, that is God." The man continues "What shall I do, that I may inherit eternal

life?" Two things are betrayed in these words, first his ignorance of his own ability, or, we may say, disability; "what shall I *do*," as though eternal life were the reward of works, and not the "gift of God:" and secondly, the confession that he had not this eternal life which he desired and sought. "Life," whether natural or eternal, is a gift. It is not within man's reach to create or procure it. It is the "gift of God." The Lord now refers him to the law, as that which he knew to be the requirement of God for man upon the earth, and the man's answer is both ready and confident, "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Strange that in the very presence of the lawgiver, the human heart can be so deceived, and can be so ignorant of its own deceit, and so little able to measure its workings within, or its fruit in the outward life and ways. For the law as given by God is spiritual, whilst we are carnal. "By the law," says the scripture, "is the knowledge of sin." But yet the man with all his self-confidence was not at rest: and it is of the very mercy of God that He will never allow self-righteousness to content the heart. We are bold in declaring that not one soul on the face of this earth, is, has been, or ever will be really at rest in the presence of God, on this ground alone.

But yet there was uprightness and sincerity in this man. He meant what he said, though he had not sat down, and counted the cost of what he asked for; and the Lord Jesus who gives credit for every bit of truth and honesty; while He as surely detects and condemns its opposite,

"beholding him, loved him." But now comes the test. The Lord loves the man: and who can know the depths of that love, which He who came from God to seek and save the lost, cherishes towards these objects of His grace. But the heart and conscience of man must be searched. Man must learn what he himself is, if he is to know for his blessing, what God is in Christ. The two lessons are inseparable, and must go together. The Lord said unto him "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, take up the cross and follow me." The real question for the man was this, Can I satisfy you? Can you resign your share of this world's good and glory, and cast in your lot with Me? Can you take up the cross, bear My reproach, be despised, and looked down upon as a follower of Jesus of Nazareth, and find in Me, and in My love, that peace, and rest, and contentedness of heart, which all that this world has bestowed, or can bestow upon you, can never give?" "And," we read, "he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." We hear no more of him, and the end of that man, with all his good desires, is amongst "the secret things which belong unto the Lord." What we do know is that the world kept him from Christ. He could do anything but that "one thing," summed up as we believe in the two words "Follow Me." And in how many many hearts is this story of approach to, and of turning back from Christ again repeated. How many an one who knows in some measure,

the "bitterness of his own heart," desires eternal life; but who when it is offered him as the free gift of God, in virtue of the death, and atoning blood of Christ for sinners, and for sin, and of His resurrection life, as the One Who has abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light, turns from it, unable to take the low place of a condemned sinner in the presence of God, and bear the reproach of Christ, while he resigns the praise and glory of this evil world. May the Lord lay this to our hearts.

But what a happy contrast is presented in the next passage, though even here we find the intrusion of the flesh (and that in a true saint) in a scene otherwise of perfect communion in the Spirit. For Martha was a saint, a true believer, one whom Jesus loved (John xi. 5), and who herself had faith and confidence in Him (John xi. 20, 21). But she was restless, and mistook activity for service, whilst burdened with self-imposed cares. For the Lord never burdens or overweights His servants. He never lays upon them, whether in trial or service, more than they can bear. We assume many a burden too heavy for us, but if we learn of Him, and *share* His yoke we shall ever find it easy, and His burden light. All depends on its being *His* yoke, and not that of the world whether in its secular or religious aspects.

Martha's question proved her state. "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone." Of course He would have cared had this been true. Slothfulness in His work is as distasteful to Him, as a carnal activity; but it

was not true, and had her service been of the right sort, she would have rejoiced in doing that which was allotted to her, and never have conceived the thought that another should share what was her task alone. Then she adds, "Bid her therefore that she help me." Thus ignorance of service, and ignorance of communion go together. As though the Lord would send from His feet, and out of hearing of His Word, one who had found her rest there, to share in the unguided activity, and cumbered service, even of a sister in the flesh and of the Lord. How faithful and yet how tender His reply, "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." "One thing;" what that is, we learn from Mary's attitude. She sat at Jesu's feet and heard His Word. In Him her heart had found its rest, and in His presence, she could be content. This was the "one thing" which satisfied her, and where He was there she could abide also. Moreover, the "good part" which she had chosen, should not be taken away from her: "Lo, I am with you alway." "He that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." "If any man love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Nothing can still the heart, and keep it quiet in this present world, but the presence of Christ, known and enjoyed. Energy and activity, whether natural or religious, will not do. The truest, and

happiest service must come to an end, though it will by no means lose its reward. But communion with Christ, and to be satisfied in His presence, is a portion that faileth not; for that which is the heart's solace here, will be its joy for eternity, when "he shall go no more out."

If we now turn to the third passage, we find the same mind in the servant and Apostle Paul, as in Mary the saint. That which kept Mary at Jesu's feet, kept Paul running with eagerness the race set before him. Mary could rest here, because Jesus was here. Paul could not rest here, because Jesus was at the right hand of God. It was "one thing" with him, as with her; the presence of the Lord, known, desired and sought for. The One of whom Paul could say, "He loved me, and gave himself for me," had now left this scene, and was at God's right hand. The "one thing" with him then, was "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The same word of Jesus which could keep and satisfy the heart of Mary in the world, called the Apostle from the world, "not as though I had already attained or were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

The Lord lay this "one thing" to our hearts; His own presence so known and cherished, that we can forsake the world and follow Him; can rest in His presence here as He makes it known to us; and be found pressing on to that day

when we shall see Him as He is, and know Him even as we are known. "So shall we be forever with the Lord." H. C. G.

"NOT THIS MAN."

THAT such was to be the treatment that the Lord Jesus should receive from the world—its calm, deliberate rejection, was intimated by the manager at Bethlehem, as it was awfully demonstrated and proved by the cross. He was weighed and "set at nought." He was valued at a less price than Barabbas. The world chose a robber in preference to Him. The Man who had come amongst them in all the moral grandeur that attached to His character—the Man whose actions bore the distinctive feature of being invariably and absolutely perfect—whose words were those of one who "spake as never man spake," who went about in fact "doing good;" whose life consisted in that one thing and flowed in that one channel, and proved itself to be peculiar and alone; from which there was the entire absence of sin; His enemies able to lay no sin to His charge—nay, He was "holy, harmless, and undefiled," for that which dwelt within expressed itself without—He lived out what He was; and, moreover, He made the Father known, so that who saw Him saw the Father; as the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father He declared Him—God the Father, veiled heretofore, and hidden from human eye was made known by this wondrous Man; yet in the face of all this the world could

and did say—"Not this man but Barabbas." Blinded by sin to any appreciation of divine worth, and impelled by personal hatred and Satan's instigation, they refused and rejected the perfect One, and chose a robber in His stead, and the fact of His rejection was intimated by the manger of Bethlehem, and made good each step of the road that led Him to Calvary.

When seeking shelter at the Inn, His parents learned that it was full already, and there was "no room" where the wondrous Infant might be laid.

But there was room for others—and the Son of God must needs find a cradle in a manger. Is this mere chance? Does no spiritual significance attach to this first, yet loud intimation of the final rejection of the Lord? Surely it does!

And then Herod, full of pride and jealousy, having enquired of the wise men where the child should be born—sends his servants to do Him honour? nay but to slay Him. The king vents his rage in vain however, for Jesus is carried to Egypt! But how significant! The true "King of the Jews," a fugitive in a foreign land! The sojourn in Egypt ends by the death of Herod, and His parents bring Him to His own land—and yet they "turn aside into the parts of Galilee and dwell in a city called Nazareth." Fear and caution mark their every step. They carry a treasure which the ruthless hand of man seeks to destroy. They know that treasure is unsafe and hence they retreat into these obscure and distant regions. But all these events in the days of His infancy are a clear

certain augur of that awful fate which awaited Him, and the dark shadows of which threw themselves over His path in these early days. "Not this man," might have been heard as the unwelcome salutation He received on His entrance into the world. Just as though devils and men were alike cognizant of His origin, and just as though they conspired for His overthrow. Anyhow He was unwelcome. The world might have been made by Him, but the world knew Him not. He might have come to His own, but His own received Him not. Every voice, every tongue cried out "*Not this man.*"

See Him having returned from the wilderness where, as Heaven's champion, He had baffled the tempter, declaring in His own city His divine mission—"that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, that He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, that He was sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty the bruised, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," see how that *all* bore Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth, and yet because of that very grace—grace which brought Him from Heaven, grace which proclaimed deliverance to the captives of sin, whether Jew or Gentile—they led Him unto the brow of the hill that they might cast Him down headlong. Well may the reader ask "*why!*" But the fact remains, "*not this man.*" Again in His own words we read "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay

His head"—a repetition surely of the Bethlehem Inn! But what a thought that, worse off than the beast of the earth, or the fowl of the air—worse off than the meanest of creatures, was the Creator Himself when here on earth in human form. Again need we be reminded that when "every man went to his own house Jesus went to the Mount of Olives"—Jno. viii. 1; or that when asked by the spies whether it were lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or no, He had to ask for a penny; or again when the tribute money had to be paid He sent Peter to obtain the needed amount from the first fish that should come up.

Does not all this reveal to us One who had no home, no substance, no place, no friends? Do we not hear the language of all around His wondrous path announcing the fact "*not this man?*"

But is there no off-set? Did they never offer to "make Him a King?" Did they never "spread branches of palm trees before Him and cry Hosanna?" True on one occasion they would have taken Him by force and made Him King—Jno. vi.; but a throne established by force could not stand and, hence, in divine wisdom, "Jesus departed into a mountain Himself alone." On another occasion palm branches were strewed in His way, "Hosanna" pealed through the air and Gentiles sought to see Him. Did this not bid fair? Was this no token of success? Ah no! His all discerning eye could read all that lay behind so much fair show, and in solemn tone He declares "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die *it abideth alone*, but if it die it

bringeth forth much fruit" and hence "I if I be lifted up will draw all men unto me; this He said, signifying what death He should die."—Jno. xii. There could be no true success, no real Hosanna, no Gentile blessing or Jewish either but on the ground of His death. The corn of wheat must fall into the ground and die or remain fruitless.

We do read of a Bethany and of a few hearts that opened unto Him, but was it not His own kindness that paved the way for His entrance? He was no man's debtor. Sins forgiven; sickness cured; dead ones raised tell us of the tender way in which He ingratiated Himself into their affections. But elsewhere, the one only and universal cry was "*not this man.*" Need we follow Him through Gethsemane,—need we trace the path of Judas the traitor—need we watch Him as He stood before the High Priest, or follow Him to the Prætorium? Need we listen to the false charges—charges which could not be substantiated—witnesses which did not agree? With all this we are familiar. Need we look at the cross and witness the crowd "beholding,"—"the rulers deriding," and the "soldiers mocking," as though glad of His overthrow! We know it well. "He was taken from prison and from judgment and He was cut off!" They were in a hurry to get rid of Him. They hastened Him from prison and from judgment, if judgment it could be called, unto death; and even when laid in the sepulchre they rolled a stone to its mouth, and then sealed the stone—their every word and deed declaring, "*not this man, not this man.*"

J. W. S.

LISTENING, BEHOLDING, FOLLOWING.

The first thing needful, in order to walk with God, is to have the conscience perfectly at rest; the blood of Christ alone can secure this to us. If the conscience is not at rest, having no sense of being so perfectly purged that it is fit for the presence of God, there is no liberty in respect to it; and all things are regarded in the light of its felt need, and, as yet, unsatisfied demands. A conscience enlightened by the word of life will not rest, and cannot rest, short of full and uncondemning quietness in the presence of God, where He dwells. How blessedly perfect, then, must that work be, which, on the one hand, has so perfectly glorified God, down to the very lowest depths of humiliation and judgment, where the eternal Son of the Father, who humbled Himself to become a man, went and lay for us, and has, on the other hand, so Divinely and completely settled the question of sin, in its guilt and power, as regards our consciences, that the believer in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, is both relieved and delivered in regard to his conscience; and blessed up to the full height of that glory where Christ is, in whose once marred, but most blessed face, the whole glory of God now shines.

My reader, have you got such a conscience before God?—until you have, it is vain to speak of other things.

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Allow me to shew you, as far as I am able, and with God's help, how this blessed redemption-work of the Lord Jesus thus acts upon the conscience. As born of the first Adam, every man by nature is lost and guilty; the first, or "lost," is common to all men alike as born into this world. The other "guilty" viz: relates to conduct or acts; and hence, each man has his own guilt, or sins, to account for to God. Now, this twofold pressure on the conscience, is blessedly met by the death of Christ. Scripture declares that "the worshippers *once purged* should have had no more conscience of sins."—Hebrews x. 2. Observe carefully the expression, "conscience of sins:" what does it mean? Why, simply, that there is nothing between me and God; that God has no controversy with me in respect of sins; they are, for me, completely put away, and my conscience is perfectly purged. Now, mark, *consciousness of sin*, which means that I know I have an evil nature in me, is a different thing altogether from "no more conscience of *sins*." Knowing that I have an evil nature in me, need not, and ought not to give me a bad conscience. Yielding to that evil nature, indulging it, or giving way to it, will surely soil my conscience, and make it bad practically, so that I cannot stand against the wiles of the devil.

But I can well suppose some one of my readers, to whom all this is quite new, (and it is for such I write), earnestly asking this question, "How can I ever get that liberty from this evil nature, which I am conscious is in me, and under the

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dominion of which, I fear, I really am at this moment?" Well, there are few questions more important; and if the answer is not known in the soul, its history is the monotonous circle of self, self, self: the blessed fact is, that, not only are the sins of the believer all put away, that his conscience may be perfectly purged, so that there should be nothing between him and God; but his old man, *i.e.*, his evil nature, has been crucified with Christ on the cross; and God does not regard the believer now as in that nature at all, but in Christ risen from the dead, in whose death that old man was judged and condemned—"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans vi. 6). "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."—Romans viii. 3.

Now I quite admit there is a difference in the way in which these truths reach the conscience, and I will endeavour to point it out here.

With respect to the first, namely the question of my sins, believing on the Son of God, I have the testimony of God, in the word, to my conscience, that all my sins are forgiven, never to be remembered any more. This is not, in any sense, *feeling or experience*. No doubt such will flow from it, and the more so in proportion as faith is simple; but in no sense do I believe because I experience or feel it; but, on the contrary, I feel it as I believe it. The pillars of my faith are

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the atoning death of the Son of God on the one side; and the blessed witness of the Holy Ghost on the other. "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."—Hebrews x. 15 and 17.

There are three great objects on which the eye of faith rests. 1st. The cross, and the garden with its new sepulchre, hewn out of the rock, wherein the blessed One was laid, and out of which He was raised and glorified. 2nd. The Father's throne in the heavens, on which He who bore my sins, is now seated—soon to be on His own throne. And 3rd. The blessed witness of the Holy Ghost, the record, the testimony of the living God, which endureth for ever.

With regard to the other truth, viz., how we are delivered from the dominion of sin; experience has every place, *i.e.*, it has to be learned by experience; and this process leads to discovering these three things:—

1st. That in us, that is, in our flesh, there dwells no good thing.

2nd. That there is in us a *new nature* 'as well, as (yet quite distinct from), the old.

3rd. That, notwithstanding this, the old is too strong for us, and deliverance from it is looked for outside of self altogether, and from another: this issues in, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" it is the song of the prisoner bird, now liberated—it is its first note as it flies; it is not its highest, nor its every note; it is the starting-post of the soul, not its goal or prize. Perhaps

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many souls have recently found this new liberty and life—if so, the Lord be praised; but do not, dear reader, allow yourself to suppose for a moment, that it is anything more than the normal state of a Christian. It is not, I suppose, to be wondered at, that those who considered it a necessary thing to be tied and bound with the chain of their sins, for so many years, should regard their newly found liberty (if they have found it) as something wonderfully beyond what any one else had ever known,—and the highest and greatest good.

There is one further point, and when I have touched on it, I feel I shall have cleared the way for my subject.

Have you ever looked at two scriptures, to which I shall now allude? viz., Romans vi. 9—11, “Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now what does that mean? Why, simply this, that faith accepts this wonderful fact, that our old man is crucified with Christ, and the believer accordingly recognizes himself to be dead—the Lord give us thus simply by faith to keep our reckonings with God.

The other Scripture is, 2 Cor. iv. 10—“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”

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What does this mean? Why, this simply, that Paul constantly applied the Cross, the dying of Jesus, to himself, so as to keep in the silence of death, sin, that was in him. Oh, how one's soul ought to adore in the presence of such wonderful liberty and power, secured through the precious death of Him who was God over all blessed for evermore. This, then, is the realization of faith, as the other is the recognition of faith. The Lord give us to be established in these times that we may be free to listen.

LISTENING.

That we may listen to His voice we must be in possession of both liberty and rest. If you have not repose, you cannot give him an audience. I do not mean to deny for a moment that there is a *previous* exercise connected with the silencing of nature, the fading of other sounds which were wont to fill the ear of the soul; but this is the dying of what intrudes, in order that the disengaged ear may be turned without distraction to Him instead of a morbid heart that wastes a weary, restless life away by feeding on itself.

There is a repose in one who listens well, that is very blessed to witness—there was something of it at least in Mary, when she sat at Jesus's feet, and heard His word. Her very attitude was restful; she sat, and heard.

I do not deny the *activity* of life, either in its earnestness to obtain, or its readiness to surrender; but I contend it ought to be *restful* activity—an activity which is kept alive and sustained by an object outside itself.

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“ As ground, when parched with summer heat,
Gladly drinks in the welcome shower ;
So would we, listening at His feet,
Receive His words, and feel His power.”

I shall here note one or two results of listening in this spirit.

First, there is abstractedness of soul. Other sounds which otherwise might influence, now fail to interest. The ear is turned to catch every note of the voice of the Charmer ; and, oh, what a voice that is ! His enemies, even, declared, that never man spake like Him.

The bride (when the day of union had not as yet dawned and whose affection is restless) is spell-bound as she listens in the twilight, and announces with rapture “ the voice of my beloved,” “ my beloved spake ”—her whole soul turns to hear what the bridegroom of her heart has to say.

Next to abstraction is *absorption*, entire occupation of soul ; the ear, not only bent to hear, but filled with the sound of His voice ; and that, too, not as one who is apart from me, but One to Whom I am united.

“ 'Tis His voice that chains my heart ;
'Tis His hand that draws apart ;
'Tis the music that I hear.
Rivets, presses me more near ;
Every other sound has gone ;
Float I down the stream alone :
All the universe above,
Like a mirrow for His love.”

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BEHOLDING.

The eye of the soul is exercised as well as the ear: the voice of the object delights and engages the ear; the Person Himself delights the eye, the vision of the soul. It is a wonderful thing to know that the heavens are opened to the faith of a believer now, and Jesus in glory, pointed out by the indwelling Holy Ghost, to the one who looks up with steadfast gaze. Oh, it is everything to have the eye on the object. What distinguishes Christianity from what went before it is an object *outside* of us, and power in us: Jesus in the glory of God, and the Holy Ghost, Who dwells in us.

If the eye of the soul is turned in, the object is not seen. Failure will necessitate this, but self-judgment will clear the way out of it; so that the object may again fill the eye: self-judgment will hinder self-occupation, and promote earnestness and purpose of heart. Self-judgment is not an act, once for all performed, but a continuous habit of soul. Oh, what a blessed sight for faith, that transcendant Person, that glorified Man, that mighty Saviour! Well may we pray,

“O fix our earnest gaze
So wholly, Lord, on Thee.”

Let me again impress upon you the fact, that we do not behold the Saviour in glory, as apart from Him, but as those who are united to Him, one with Him. How very blessed to know, I am

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one with my object. I shall only touch upon one or two consequences of beholding.

First, as we behold we are transformed into the same image (2 Cor, iii. 18); *i. e.* as we are occupied with Christ, where He is, we become like Him; the moral features of Him Who is our object, are transferred to those who, by the Spirit, behold Him in glory. Stephen is a beautiful instance of this; he acted like Christ in the midst of the most trying circumstances, (see Acts vii).

Next, we find that the Object in glory forms the affections suited to Itself. Herein lies the difference between Christian affection and heart-longing, and that which is found in the song of songs; in the latter, the bride does not possess the profound repose and sweetness of affection that flows from a relationship already formed, known and fully appreciated. Previous to the day of union, the relationship sought for, was the consequence of the state of the heart, but now that the day has dawned, the state of the heart, the affections, are the consequence of the relationship. The same is observable in the Psalms; yearning, panting after God, are all to be found there; and the earnestness might well put us to shame: but the relationship, as well as the object of faith, and the power to enjoy the one, and behold the other, are wanting. In the Song of Songs, the bride is not united to the bridegroom; and in the Psalms, the Remnant, whose experience is so blessedly depicted in various scenes and circumstances, is as yet outside of all that which will, ere long, crown their hopes, aspirations, and yearnings.

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FOLLOWING.

The feet pursue the path marked out by His blessed footsteps, Who has gone before. For this divine energy is needed. The blessed apostle, who knew Christ in glory, heard His voice speak to him from glory, and had seen Him in glory, follows Him—"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." The mark denoted the spot, as it were, whither he pressed; the prize was that for which he ran. He did not think of his eye, or his feet. That on which his eye rested, and for which his feet pressed on, was everything to him: purpose of heart, earnestness, energy, there must be, as well as self-abnegation, every step of the course; diligence of soul and vigilance of heart too;—but if Christ, seen in glory, and known in glory, does not form and maintain these in the heart, I know of no other motive or power. The Lord keep us hearing, and beholding, and following His own Son; that the tastes, suited to Christ, may be both formed and kept alive in us; and we ourselves, thus divinely strengthened to refuse everything of the first man, because we are so satisfied with the Second Man; and that we may shew forth His virtues, and glories, and excellencies, in a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we shine as lights (heavenly bodies) in the world, holding forth the Word of life. W. T. T.

GRACE AND GLORY.

TITUS ii.

EVEN in the common things of life, beloved friends, the motives that govern us are what give character to the things we do. The apostle turns at once to the motive, which is Christ; and the moment he touches that spring ("that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things"), all wakes up in his soul. That is the motive; and then he goes on with the whole history of christianity till Christ's coming again.

It is a blessed thing in our common, everyday life, that we can get Christ as our motive. If a man is fond of money or pleasure, it is the motive he has; that is what he is. If he is full of Christ, *that* is what he is. You may get two men doing exactly the same thing, only with different motives. With the Christian, Christ is his only motive, or ought to be. There may be a thousand things he has to do, common duties of life, but he can serve Christ in them, and there I get a motive powerful enough. Perhaps you have a froward master; well, you can glorify Christ in that. It is everything that the Christian should understand that he has no motive but Christ; many a thing to do, but no other motive but this. The common things of life do not unspiritualize a person; I must attend to them, and do them properly; but if my motive in doing them is Christ, it is a mistake to think that they hinder my soul in spiritu-

ality. Supposing I was making anything for Christ, do you think I should not make it as well as I possibly could? Well, then, we ought to do everything for Christ. It is everyday walk that characterizes the Christian: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus," because, if I cannot do it in His name, I ought not to do it at all. If I can do it in His name, there is the motive.

To be guided, that is the thing: "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way." There is no way in this world. How did the Israelites get any way—the way which the vulture's eye hath not seen? Why, the cloud went before them, The fact that we have to find a way in which to walk, is a proof that we are all away from God. It is a world contrary to God, and I have to find my way. "When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them." I get a way then, but it is a Divine way, and I am following Christ in it. I get it by having Him going before me; and all I look for is the way here, because I am a pilgrim and a stranger. Christ has given Himself for our sins, to deliver us from this present evil world; but He has left me in it, and He has left me His own spiritual pathway on my way to rejoin Him up there. If I have a single eye, it will be a bright path; and Paul said, I count all dross and dung, that I may win Christ. If we have not made up our minds to follow Christ, then it is not an easy path. In following Christ, of course there are difficulties; but a man with one object, it has been remarked, always has energy.

“God our Saviour,” is the particular character of God in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. It is the blessed name He has taken, that He is God our Saviour; it implies that we needed to be saved. Why did I need to be saved? Because I was lost: not only that I had done some wrong things, but that I was lost; and it is just in understanding that, that we get the full, blessed, clear apprehension that we are saved. I find that God has interfered, and done a work entirely His own; and the question then is, what is the value of that work? Well, I say, it is finished, and Christ is in glory in consequence.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” (v. 13). Grace has appeared (v. 11), teaching us to look for the appearing of the glory, and teaching us how to walk in this present world. There I get the Christian between these two points; the grace that brings salvation, has appeared; but the glory has not, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” This appearing of the grace teaches how to walk, whilst we are waiting for the appearing of the glory. The Christian stands between the first coming of Christ (who revealed God the Father, and accomplished the work for our salvation) and His coming again, when He will take us into the full result in glory—we receive the Holy Ghost meanwhile. First, I get what this grace is, and what its character is. It has appeared—a full manifestation of it in the Gospel. It is God’s sovereign goodness to His people, when they were

sinner, it is the love of God, when there was nothing loveable. "For a good man some would even dare to die: but God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is, for what is vile and hateful, I find God giving the best thing possible that heaven could give, and that is, His own Son. I get to know God; and it is a blessed thing to say I know God. If I believe in the coming of Christ. I ask, what put that into God's heart? It came from His heart, and that is the way I know God. "Who by him do believe in God—that your faith and hope might be in God." I know really what God is, in His unsought love; it is simply and entirely the spring of God's own heart that has done all this, and this is the grace of God. I know God, for I know His love. He is a judge, and a righteous and holy One, too; but, still, I get this blessed truth, that, when I was a mere sinner, I have got to the spring in this perfect love, (in its nature sovereign above all evil), which has brought Christ into the world—that is what I have learnt in the Gospel. The Gospel is that blessed truth, that He did not wait, and say, You behave yourselves, and *then* come up to me; but He came down into this world where we were, Oh what a blessed thought it is (though it may be humbling, too), that the Son of God has been down in this world in the midst of evil; it was nothing but love that brought Him, and that is how we begin to know God.

Then, I get what it brought me. Help to a man *as he is*? No—how can you help a man

who is lost already? He came to sinners in their sins, and brought "salvation" to them, because they were lost.

Let us see what that character of "lost" is. There were the two things; I was guilty before God (not merely lost, though "lost" goes a great deal further), and besides that, there was the *state* I was in. "Guilty" refers to judgment; but when I say "I am lost," I speak of my present state. My carnal mind is enmity against God, so "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." I am "guilty" by reason of what I have done; but I am "lost" by reason of the state I am in. I am not in the earthly paradise in which Adam was, nor am I in the heavenly paradise where God is. Where am I? Totally away from God. It is not in the first moment of that awakening we learn the extent of this—that it is all over with me, (not that God cannot take me out of that place). You must make the tree good, as well as its fruit. It is not merely that I have *done* wrong—the fruit—by which I am "guilty"—but the *tree* is bad. God is holy, and I am unholy; so I never can be with Him—though, of course, grace comes in—but that was our condition.

Christ came into the world, after men were sinners, and after they had broken the law, when it had been given them. He did not wait till the judgment. But men would not have Him, and proved more completely that "the carnal mind is enmity against God." Christ proved that a Divine Person was in the world, for every power of evil fled before Him. He was there winning the

confidence of men's hearts, but when he had shown all this, they crucified Him. You never see a person ashamed of a false religion: but the moment it is the true God, he is ashamed—even the disciples were ashamed to confess Christ. What a deal that tells of man's heart! God is light, as well as love, and that brought out things in their true light, and "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Christ has come in love—not to judge the world, but to save it—and however bad a person was shown to be, if he cannot have confidence in a human being, he may come and have confidence in God. He came to win back the confidence of man's heart to God. He came to where man was. Take the cross as the expression of it all; there I get man's hatred, and God's love in giving His Son, in the same act. God is not covering over my sins, they are all shown out in the light; and there I am in the presence of One who loves me perfectly, when they are all there—that is salvation. God is the spring of His own heart, and He deals with my state of sin, not hiding it from me: and He manifests that He has loved me in that state of sinfulness, because He has sent Christ for me. God has dealt with my sins already; He has not waited till the day of judgment. What did Christ die for, if it was not for our sins? Did not God deal with Him at the cross about them? And what has He done with them? He bore them in His own body on the tree. But has He got them now? No; they are all gone; and Christ is "sitting" now, because He has nothing to do. I am not

speaking as to our walk now, because we need Him every moment, but as regards the work—it is all done. Seeing the Lord Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, shews me that God dealt with my sins when Christ bore them. The Person Who is going to be my judge, is the One Who has put away my sins. I have this blessed, true, infinite love, that did not even spare His own Son, and Christ took all my sins upon Himself and put them away. I am “in Christ” before God; not according to what I have done, but according to what Christ has done. I am not in my Adam-standing before God. Where are you then? I am in Christ. I have an entirely new place, condition, and standing, before God. Just as Israel, not only had the blood on the door-posts, so that God did not touch them, but they were brought out of Egypt—brought to God: so we have been redeemed out of the condition in which we were in Adam, and brought to God: as it says in Rom. viii., “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

Verse 12 is grosser sins; by which the world ensnares us. I am to live “soberly” with regard to what is within myself; “righteously,” because I have to do with other people; and “godly,” because I have to do with God. I walk subduedly before God, instead of in my own will and lusts. Look at the standard given us—to “walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.” But I must know God, or how can I walk worthy of Him? Are you going to commit sin with that which is a temple of the

Holy Ghost? We are to walk worthy of God, because we are to manifest Christ. You are dear children; well then, go and walk like your Father. It raises the standard, because it raises the motive. We get the standard of walk in association with these things.

“Well, the Christian has salvation; and the Holy Ghost, who makes him know it; and he cries, “Abba, Father,” for he knows he is a son of God, and thus he gets his place consciously, all founded on the unutterable love of God: Christ being his life, he reckons himself dead, as regards the flesh. There we have the past and present sins put away—all that the flesh produced, done with—and I am loved as Jesus is loved; “that the world may know that thou hast loved them, as thou has loved me.” It is all flowing from this blessed unthought-of and unsought love of God.

Then, where is our future? It is not merely dying and going to Christ, but the heart is set upon Christ, and I am “looking” now “for that blessed hope.” What blessed hope? Why, Christ Himself. Christ has become precious to me. He has loved me beyond all my thoughts—“to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.” Ah, I say, I want Christ Himself, when shall I get Him? We are not “looking for” death, but it is a profitable thing to look it in the face, and see that it is pure gain. We belonged to death in the first Adam, and in the second Adam death belongs to us. For the Christian, the only thing that death is, is that he has done with temptation, sin, and sorrow, and he has begun with Christ; but death

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is not what we are looking for, for Scripture says, we are "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son." The worth of what Christ has done, in putting away sins and gloryfying God, is such, that it puts us into God's glory. Christ has entered as my forerunner—the witness that I am to be there too: "where I am, there shall also my servant be." When He comes, it will close this scene of grace that is going on now; therefore "He is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering." As long as He sees a soul to be gathered in, He does not come, but the promise is, I will come Myself. He is not content to send for us, but He must come Himself. "Our conversation is in heaven"—that is our present condition. We look to be with Him—and to be like Him too—but the best of all is to be with Him. The thing by which He comforts the hearts of the disciples is, that He was coming again to have them in the same glory as Himself—it is the first thing that will happen. It may be happier to die, and so wait in heaven; but whether we are there or here, we shall then altogether be perfectly conformed to the image of Christ. He has accomplished the work needed for it in His first coming in grace; and what He does now by the Holy Ghost, is to make us wait for Him, which is the original calling of the church of God. "And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord." Have people been doing this? No, they have not; they went out to meet the bridegroom, but the wise virgin slept as well as the foolish.

Supposing I know salvation, what am I waiting for? For mortality to be swallowed up in life—to be changed into the same glory as Christ—to be raised, if I am dead—I am looking to be like Him in the glory. I need two things to be able to call it a “blessed hope:” first, the grace that bringeth salvation—that He has redeemed, purified, and saved me, and I have the certainty of His love. The second thing is, that He is the object of my delight. We must know the perfect salvation, but we must have the love of Christ in our hearts, to care about it.

Only one other thing I would desire, should rest on our hearts, and that is, the full, thorough, complete interest He takes in us. What satisfies Him? He is waiting in perfect, earnest love to us, but His heart will never be satisfied till He has us in the same glory with Himself and His Father. I know, poor, unworthy creature as I am—that He will not be satisfied till He has me in the same glory as Himself, because He loves me. “Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.” How is it that He does not give like the world? If I give away a thing I no longer possess it—is that the way Christ gives? *Never!* The way He gives is to bring us into the enjoyment of all He has Himself. Everything that Christ has, (except His Divinity), He brings us into, and then He is satisfied.

And now, beloved friends, is that the way you think about the Lord Jesus Christ? What made Him give it all to us—did any one ask Him? It was the perfect love. And is that unrevealed? It is not; He has loved us and given Himself for us,

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and it is revealed from Christ in the glory, and we have the Holy Ghost. If I am thinking of the things in the world, of course I cannot see the things up there, for the eye is dimmed, and cannot see afar off. Are you content to have such a place as that, with Christ in the glory? Are you content to be purified to Himself—to give up the world? Are you content to have Christ your one, and only object and motive? Of course, it tests the flesh and heart of man, and God means it to be tested. Are you content to follow Christ? The Apostle says that that is the whole bent of his mind, “That I may win Christ”—and to know Him better. The secret of all that is the constant sense of dependence. “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” We are redeemed from this present evil world. It is a world that has rejected the Son of God already. Man is a judged being, but there is salvation for him. Christ’s work entitles me to the glory: and now, says Christ, I am come to have you for Myself, like Myself, and with Myself in glory.

Beloved friends, are our hearts there? Have we tasted the love of Christ in all His life and death down here? And it is not wearied, or exhausted, or cooled, for He loves and cherishes us as his own flesh.

The Lord give us only to remember that the fashion of this world passeth away; but there is one thing that abides for ever, and that is, the Word of God—that, through His Grace, we may follow hard after Him. Oh it is a wonderful thing that the Son of God became a man, on purpose to win us back to God?
(J. N. D.)

THE LORD'S PURPOSE. THE SERVANT'S
OBJECT. THE SAINT'S HOPE.

THE will of the Father, the work of the Son, and the ministry of the Spirit, all tend to one end, as regards the people of God.—John vi. 39, xvii. 24; 2 Cor. iii. 18. They are to be in glory with Christ, and they are chosen, called, justified, sanctified and preserved to this end. Nothing short of this can satisfy the will of God, nor the heart of Christ, who saves to the *uttermost*, all who come unto God by Him. The Holy Ghost also works for the same result. He is “the earnest of our inheritance;” the pledge of, and witness to the Glory for which God’s people are destined. Whether by His own direct testimony to the hearts of God’s children, or through the ministry of the servants of God, He testifies to this glory, and prepares God’s people for it. The “good things” which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, *are* revealed unto them by His Spirit.

The hearts of Christians come greatly short in the apprehension of this purpose of Christ. The present results of His work, the present experienced blessings of their souls, providences, and mercies, occupy God’s people, much more than the prospect of the glory to come. Christ’s present love and care are valued as a solace in trouble, and as compensation for the loss of those things here below, which are inconsistent with Christianity; and, so far, this is as it ought to be; for surely nothing can exceed present experience, and that joy in God through the Lord Jesus

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Christ, which the heart *now* knows, except the glory to come, of which they are but the foretaste. But it is wrong when these are rested in as the end of our faith; for, as Peter says, the end of our faith is "the salvation of our souls," and that, in the full sense, we have not yet got. ♀

In the purpose of Christ, there is nothing short of placing those whom He has redeemed, in the same glory as He has Himself attained in virtue of His work. To the faithful servant, His word is, "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." It is not enough that the servant is rewarded, but he is rewarded by entering into the same reward, and sharing it with Him, "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." Of His saints, He says, "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;" and more, "The glory which thou gavest me, I *have* given them." To this end the blessed Lord still labours, sanctifying and cleansing His church, "with the washing of water by the word," in order that He may present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." And, if He has for a season gone away, it is, as He says, that "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

This then is the purpose of the Lord Jesus;

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and the heart of the true servant is in full sympathy with it, not only in looking on to that day for his own reward, with Him and from Him ; but also as to his labours and efforts on behalf of others.

The object of all true ministry is to bring the souls of men, whether of sinners or saints, to the knowledge of, and into the presence of God : for, this accomplished, the servant's work is done, and he himself retires. Such ministry brings God and His Christ into prominence, and keeps the servant in the background. It is a grievous departure from the true character of Christian ministry, when the servant is more prominent than the truth he presents. It is not that we would undervalue particular gifts, or qualifications for special characters of service ; such exist, and are used of God to arrest men's hearts and consciences, and divert their minds from the power and attraction of present things. The power of the Boanerges ; the wisdom and spirit of Stephen ; the faithfulness and courage of Paul ; the eloquence and learning of Apollos, can all be turned to account, where the vessel itself is in subjection, and but the channel of communication of the testimony of God to the consciences of men. But man's fairest qualifications or attainments are but hindrances to the work of God's Spirit, in such measure as they are allowed prominence, or are considered as necessary accompaniments of His work. So the true servant's desire for those to whom he ministers, is, that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

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The full end of ministry of which we have spoken, cannot however be realized here! So the true servant does not rest in present results, though it is true he looks for these, in the state of the souls of those to whom he ministers. Thus he "travails again in birth until Christ be formed" in them; he beseeches them not to "receive the grace of God in vain; giving no offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed." At the same time, no present result can fully satisfy him who is in sympathy with the heart of Christ; and so he "preaches, warning every man, and teaching every man, that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, whereunto he also labours." So also he exhorts them to abide in Christ, that at His appearing he himself may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him. Such a spirit contrasts with much of the work of the present day, when converts are reckoned up by scores, and great jubilations are made over the multitudes who are said to confess Christ. But, alas; little is heard of their future walk, and small account taken of the number of such, who may ultimately meet the labourer before the judgment-seat of Christ; still less the manner and state in which they may reach that goal, after their journey through the wilderness, and their wanderings and involvement in all the defilement and corruptions of the great Babylon. There should surely be joy on earth, as in heaven, over every sinner that repenteth; but the servant who has his Master's mind, will not be satisfied

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to count up the numbers of his professed converts, and leave out of his account their ultimate attainment to the eternal glory. For those to whom he has been used, are his crown of rejoicing, *not now*, but in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. So a good sportsman only counts the actual contents of his bag.

Now as with Christ in purpose, and His servant in object, so with the individual saint, there is no rest for heart, or feet, short of the same glory with Christ. Peace with God gives tranquillity amidst the sorrows and trials of the wilderness. The love of Christ secures the heart against the power and attraction of a present evil world. The presence of the Holy Ghost gives boldness and ability to walk apart from, and superior to the ways and fashions of this present scene; but where the heart is right with God, and the senses exercised to discern both good and evil, the very sense of His grace, and of His work in the soul, makes the present scene the more unsatisfying, and urges the saint more forward in the path which ends in glory. It is true that God gives refreshment by the way, and the waters of Marah are succeeded by the wells of Elim; but we must not mistake these for the rivers of Canaan, or forget, at the halting place in the wilderness, that rest which remaineth for God's people. The more, then, that faith realizes, and the heart finds satisfaction in Christ, the more the desire increases "that I may know him." The more the imperfection of the present scene is felt, the more does the saint confess that he but knows in part; that he is not already perfect, and presses on towards the

mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The soul that thirsts for God, the living God, will never rest at any point attainable in this present state. The One Whom he seeks to win, is at God's right hand, and every taste of His grace, and of His care, as shown to His saints here below, will only make him more diligent in the race. He runs that race, as though he alone must win, as though in fact but one man could reach heaven, and he must be that one, for "they that run in a race, run all, but one obtaineth the prize. So run, that ye may obtain." And a wonderful race is this that grace teaches the saint to run, in which, while every energy is to be strained to reach the goal, every weight and hindrance is to be laid aside, yet there is neither emulation nor strife, as regards his fellow. All his zeal and energy are Christward, "that I may know Him." "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." His efforts are not relatively against his brethren, but rather that they should be found as sharers in the onward and upward course. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." "But whereto we have attained, let us walk in the same steps." Thus, therefore, while he runs as if to distance all competitors, in fact he shares the sympathies of Christ, and will not reach the goal alone.

The Lord give us more of the spirit and ways of those who look and wait for glory; and, both as servants and as saints, bind out hearts more in sympathy with His own purpose as regards that day, for "a three-fold cord is not quickly broken."

H. C. G. B.

NO SIDE WINDOWS.

I HAVE lately very much enjoyed the thought that Noah had only one window to the ark, and that was at the top. This was a great mercy for him. For had there been any windows at the sides. Noah would most likely have been tempted to look out, to see what was going on around ; and then he would have beheld things, which would have filled him with sorrow, and alarm. The Lord knew this, and in His love He kept him from doing so ; and so provided that he could only look up. This kept Noah in a sweet spirit of dependance, and therefore calm and happy. What a beautiful picture this is for the believer now, while passing through this scene of sin and death ; because his happy position is to be like Noah, always looking up. For if he gets occupied with the things around, that which is going on in the world, or among God's people, then sorrow and weakness will be sure to follow ; and he will be filled with despondency. God has given us His Son to be the joy of our souls, the object of our hearts, telling us that we shall soon see Him, and be with Him for ever. He is saying "Behold my servant whom I uphold ; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." God would have us find our joy, where He is finding His, even that Precious One at His own right hand. God is saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice."

May we know the power and blessedness of this joy at all times : so shall we glorify Him as we pass through this world. Happy ourselves, we shall help others to be happy. Therefore let us be careful that we have no side windows.

H. T.

OUR PORTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

As we have considered in a former number, our Place and the results of it, where it is consciously known and enjoyed in the soul, it would seem suitable at this time to consider our Portion and some of its corresponding consequences.

I trust we have clearly seen that our standing and place are in the second Adam, where He is, and not at all in the first. If this be not apprehended in the soul by the power of the Holy Ghost, everything else will be both vague and feeble; it is the divine platform upon which in grace we are set, and where we are maintained by the Spirit, in order to our *enjoying* and *using* all that is ours in Christ.

There is a double danger, which it seems suitable to indicate here. *First*, measuring the greatness and blessedness of what we have in Christ, where He is, by any enjoyment of ours, be it ever so elevated; being, in fact, so one-sided about it, as to lead people to suppose that the possession of it depended upon the use made of it, or the enjoyment of it.

Secondly.—Overlooking the fact that earnestness and diligence of soul, prayerful dependence of heart upon the Lord, and counting on the energy of His Spirit, are all necessary in order that I may appropriate and use what is mine already; and thus better discover the good of what is mine; like a man entitled to large estates,

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who never *knew* the value of his property until he lived on it, and worked it.

It is an important thing to preserve the balance of truth in our souls, and to give every part of God's Word and revelation its divinely ordered place. Our Portion, then, is Christ Himself! And what a Portion!

Now while it is blessedly true that it is not in our power to forfeit the possession of our Portion, or to lose it by any folly of ours, it is equally true that the realization of its blessedness, the satisfaction of enjoying it, the consciousness of our union with Him who is our Portion, all depend upon ourselves. It is only by the Holy Ghost who dwells in us that we have power. If He be grieved, His witness in this respect is for the time lost to us; in that case He witnesses against us, that the failure which we have allowed may be judged, and He be free once more to pass the glories of Christ before our souls, and occupy us with them; thus have we fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and thus our joy is full.

It is also important to observe that our Portion is our object; that which marks Christianity specially is, that we are furnished with an object in heaven, and a power in us and with us on the earth. Nothing of this kind was ever known under the law; it proposed no object outside of wretched self, and it supplied no power to meet its requirements, which were backed up with condemnation and death. The new order of things tells of power at every turn, the power of God quickening,

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raising us up, seating us in heavenly places in Christ, our Portion and object, and "working in us." (Ephesians iii. 20). That is to say, power surrounds us on every hand, but power equally works in us for the realization of the enjoyment of that for which power has laid hold of us.

Now, it is important to remember, that neither enjoyment nor realization are our Portion or object, and yet the more earnestly our souls are fixed upon Him who is both, we do realize and enjoy. "Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," (2 Cor. iii. 18), secures two things to us :—

First—Satisfaction of heart with Him on whom the eye of the soul is steadily fixed.

Second—Transformation into the same image, from one degree of glory to another — moral likeness to our object and Portion.

Stephen, in Acts vii., is a fine illustration of all this. Filled with the Spirit, he steadfastly gazed into the opened heavens, and there his eye was filled with Jesus in glory, his Portion and object; no strife or clamorous uproar, which, like a wall of fire, encircled him around, could prevail to turn his eye or heart from that blessed One who Himself filled them. No; he "looked up steadfastly into heaven." There was his place, his home, his Portion; he is satisfied and at rest here on earth, from which he must shortly depart; he shares the fortunes of a rejected, crucified Christ; hatred, enmity, and violence here, are the counterpart of rest and satisfaction there, and to him, too, they are the consequence of it; these he accepts as those

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he enjoys. It is a wonderful scene to us, but how heaven must have looked down upon it, who can tell? But this is not all; not only does he behold, but he is like the One into whose blessed face he looks; like Him who said, "Father, forgive them;" he, too, says, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Truly, it is so; beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, he was "transformed into the same image from glory to glory."

There is a beautiful illustration of our subject in Leviticus vii. 34, where we find that the wave breast and heave shoulder of the peace sacrifice were the appointed portion of Aaron and his sons. "The wave breast and the heave shoulder have I taken of the children of Israel, from off the sacrifices of their peace-offerings, and have given them unto Aaron the priest and unto his sons, by a statute for ever, from among the children of Israel." What excellent things are here for faith to feed upon!

The strength and the affections of Christ, as well as Himself in whom is our all, are the blessed Portion of His people. Of old, it was said of Israel, "the Lord's portion is His people." Now, in the highest way, we can say, "the Lord is my portion, O my soul."—"Christ is all and in all."

"My Lord, my life, my rest, my shield,

"My rock, my food, my light;

"Each thought of Thee doth constant yield

"Unchanging, fresh delight."

I shall very briefly note some of the consequences which would follow from all this.

1st.—With such a Portion, things here would

OUR PORTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. 61

be eclipsed, and esteemed as dung and dross. The knowledge of Christ Jesus is the most excellent of all sciences; the possession of Him, true riches. Thank God, there is what another has designated as "the expulsive power of a new affection," and, for the heart possessing this Portion, and possessed by it, earthly themes now cease.

An incident in David's history is an apt though poor type of all this. When David returned to his own house, after the death of Absalom, among the first to meet and bid him welcome, was Mephibosheth, the son of Saul. With genuine and true hearted loyalty, he carried in his very person the evidences of David's absence, while he was as yet away (2 Sam. xix. 24.); but now that the king has come again to his own house in peace, Mephibosheth's cup is full, his portion was in David himself; and because it is so, even the good things of David, the bounties and favour of his hand, can he let go with a willing heart. "Yea, let him take all; forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace unto his own house."

2nd.—One other consequence is, the way in which every part of our history here is used up by us to show the good of what we have in our Portion; there is not one trial too many, not one sorrow too grievous for the heart that is possessed by Christ, to manifest the value and blessedness of Him who is our Portion, and our compensation in every grief and perplexity. May the Lord give us to abound and have all things, in having Himself, until we see His face, are like Him and with Him for ever.

W. T. T.

RISEN WITH CHRIST.

COL. III.

The whole of the exhortations here are founded upon this, that the believer is put into an entirely new place. Indeed everywhere, though there are different aspects of it (in Ephesians—seated in heavenly places; in Romans—walking down here; in this epistle—not going further than resurrection) we are in an entirely new place. Christ in every case is our life. Romans always looks at the Christian as down here. In Colossians, we are called upon to walk as being in Christ. In Ephesians, we are called upon to be “imitators of God as dear children,” that is, as coming out from heaven in our walk here. In Corinthians, it is “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation,” that is, a totally new thing. At any rate it is always a new thing, founded on the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If I look at the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, I say, it is not only that, but I am risen with Him; that is what we find in Colossians, but the cross, as the foundation, has closed all that man was in the flesh. God has not executed judgment yet, but He has convinced the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment—it is treated by God as a lost world. The death of Christ was that point where God Himself had

come into the world in goodness: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," and He was rejected. It was not simply that God had to turn man out of Paradise down here, because he was a sinner, but when God came in grace into this world, man turned Him out. In Hebrews it is, "Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared," and it was the end of the world, morally speaking. But God is now dealing in grace with this poor world, the fulness of grace meeting the perfect sinfulness of man. Just where man's sin was complete, the work of grace was complete. Where the highest sin was, the highest love was. It was the full blessedness of that work which brought salvation. It was the work of the Lord Jesus Christ which gave a character to the cross, for there everything came out completely; what man was, what the devil was, and what God was. You have the complete sinfulness of man in rejecting God come in goodness; then you get Satan thoroughly against Christ, and on the other hand Christ giving Himself up in love. When we come to dwell upon the cross, we find everything there; the perfect sin of man, and the perfect obedience of man in Christ, and the perfect love of God, and His righteousness even against sin, when Christ was made sin. The glory of God was effected there, and everything depends on that; while it throws one world out, it begins a new creation, a new state, which Adam innocent was no more in than Adam guilty. Man altogether was brought out and judged (not that judgment is executed against sinners), but then on the other hand, that

work is accomplished by which man gets a place in the glory of God—that is the basis of all. Satan is never called the Prince of this world till the cross, for until then it was not shewn that he had that power in turning the whole world against Christ; the carnal mind is enmity against God. “O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee.” He appeals to the righteousness of the Father in speaking of the world.

We have to learn what it is to be associated with a rejected Christ in glory, when they have not got Him on earth. Of course I do not see the things in glory, and we must walk by faith, with our eyes fixed on Christ, going through this world by the power which we see outside, with the consciousness of the relationship that is made for us by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not now a question of whether I can meet God in the judgment. I know I cannot, I give up all thoughts of it; and I then come as a poor sinner to the cross of Christ, to find that I met God in Christ. Instead of going on, as a responsible sinner, to see how it will end, I see that it is all ended, but that God has stepped in, in grace, and saved me by sending His Son. He sent Him because I was a sinner, and now He is become my life; and my part with God is in virtue of what He has done. People will be judged according to their works; Christ had the fruit of what I did, and I have the fruit of what He has done.

Then we get another truth, that receiving Christ as our life, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God,” that is, we are completely

associated with Christ where He is. He is our life, and it is hid with Christ in God because He is our life, and God thus identifies us with Christ. We all know His connection with this earth was closed when He died and went to heaven; they will see Him no more, except when He comes in judgment. Now the risen One has become my life, and I say, Oh then, I am risen, for He has become my life. He has associated believers completely with Himself, not only put away their sins as guilty persons. The Christian starts with "My Father and your Father, my God and your God," only in a poor earthen vessel of course. Being a son, I have now Christ, the second Adam, to be my life, instead of the first Adam.

Now you will find how completely the apostle unfolds this practically. It is not *our* estimate of the blood of Christ that gives settled peace, the thing is that *God* estimates it rightly. The question is whether the offended person has accepted it. Oh yes! that is settled, for Christ is at the right hand of God. He gave it in love, and God has accepted it in righteousness. I am crucified with Christ. Then you are dead? Yes, thank God, I am. If you are dead, what is your life? Oh, I have a totally new life, and that is Christ; I am born again.

The apostle takes up this point, "In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them." People make religion out of these ordinances; it is not owning that we have died with Christ. We belong to heaven, though we have not got there yet. Now I say, I look at the second Adam, my

life is hid because He is hid, and when He appears I shall appear—you cannot separate the two things. Having Christ as my life, I have power against evil. He does not talk of dying to sin, but that we are dead to sin. Christ having died, I have the title and duty to reckon myself dead; when I have Him, I have power. I had no power, “In due time, when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly,” but now I have Christ as power. I could not succeed in being anything I ought to be, but He has come and redeemed me out of that state. I find out my weakness, but I find I have Christ as strength. In the new life in Christ, there is power, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh;” it required righteousness from me, but never produced anything in me. It was a perfect rule for man as a child of Adam, but as he was a fallen child of Adam, it condemned him because he was a sinner. Did the law give life? Oh no! for then we should have had righteousness by it. Did it give me strength, righteousness, or love? It tells me to love God with all my heart. Why? Because you will be cursed if you do not. Christ comes and does the very opposite: instead of imputing the sins, He takes them, and becomes my life, my strength, and a blessed object for my soul to live by, “that I may win Christ.” The law could do none of this. By faith (Christ being my life) I can say to my flesh, You have not one word to say to me, you were

condemned on the cross. Where is the condemnation? In His death. Oh, then it is gone. The flesh will be there trying to act, and the apostle goes through these gross sins in verse 5, but you have not to die, you are dead, "mortify therefore," and now that you have power and life, do not let the flesh act. I live in Christ, and therefore I must not walk in these things which are contrary to Him.

Now in verses 8 and 9, you find another thing, where there is no lust. There are three characters of sin here. One is lusts (verse 5), another is violence (verse 8), and the other falsehood or lying (v. 9). Corruption we have looked at, it is "mortify therefore;" but now it is not a lust, but "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy." My flesh is unsubdued and unbroken, "but now ye also put off all these;" not only lusts, but an unsubdued will, which will not do for a Christian. And the third thing is, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" I have done with Adam. The exhortation is founded upon this: seeing I have put off Adam, I have the title and right to say, "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin," what the Scripture calls flesh. By faith I hold it as a thing that is not to stir. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus"—the power of death, the sentence of death in myself, that I should not trust in myself, but in God which raiseth the dead. I am carrying about the dying of the Lord Jesus, and I am not going to let the flesh stir.

Mark the blessed consequence of this; now I have a new man, I have put off the old man. If I am a Christian, God looks at me (and faith takes this as a truth), not as a child of Adam at all in this world. What are you then? A child of God. The law was a perfect measure for the first man; and now, what measure do we get for "the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him"? I know God. As in Eph. "which of God is created in righteousness and true holiness." It is a new nature which is like God, in fact it is Christ as my life. It is the same kind of life as He had (we speak now of that which is communicated). What is the measure of this "knowledge?" Why, what is in God—true spiritual knowledge—I am called to walk according to that; we are to be followers of God as dear children. I get the knowledge of what God's nature and character are in Christ, in a Man; well, then that is the way I am to walk. Did not He love His enemies? You go and love your enemies. Was not He holy? You go and think holiness. Was not He kind to the unthankful and the evil? You go and do likewise. There is of course growth in likeness to Christ. The Spirit of God takes of the things of Christ, and shews them to me; very well, that is the way you must walk. It is not merely that I avoid gross sins, but I have to put on the new man. This apprehension of how God has revealed Himself in Christ is a perfectly new thing. I have the mind and spirit of Christ, the new man, and Christ as my life, and the perfect pattern of it, according to

which I am to walk. What I get in Christ is alone and unique, perfect goodness in the midst of evil—go and walk like Him.

In v. 11, “Christ is all and in all.” “Christ is all,” the whole and sole object, and He is “in all” as the power of life and strength. “Christ liveth in me, that is “in all,” and “the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God,” that is “Christ is all.” He is *all* to me, and if He is all, there is nothing else. We have various duties, but the question is, is our motive in them all, serving Christ? If you get distracted from that, you get away from Him. I get sonship in John. In Eph. it is “Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children”; it is as dear children we are to follow. God puts us completely into this relationship, and then tells us to behave according to it. A child could not make himself my child, even if he were to behave like an angel.

V. 12. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.” I am bound, in walking as a Christian, to carry along with me the consciousness of this; I am sanctified as “the elect of God, holy and beloved,” God delights in me, I am His beloved one, He has sanctified me. In what measure and degree? What do I mean by holiness and righteousness? I mean what Christ was to God. What is righteousness? Why, what Christ was; well, then, what is redemption? Why, you get that fully at the end in glory. God puts us into this place

first, "Put on therefore as the elect of God;" now you go and behave like that. What a blessed thing it is, to see where He does put us, the present consciousness of relationship. "He died that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves;" Christ gave Himself up for a parcel of sinners. It is the standard that is given to us, not to "live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again:" but He does not call on us to walk according to this, until He has put us in the conscious relationship. Verse 12 is just what was in Christ. Do you get wronged and injured? You go and take it patiently. He forgave the people: you go and forgive them. You are the epistle of Christ. The world is reading Christ in us, just as they read the ten commandments off the tables of stone; and Scripture does not say, you *ought* to be the epistle of Christ, but, you *are*. Duties flow from that place. It is not merely a "kindness" among men, but it is "charity," which is God's love. Charity tests everything, whether it is up to the mark or not. We are so apt to degenerate, poor creatures that we are, that God Himself has to be brought in (v. 13), to keep up the measure of the love in its true, real character: Divine love which must be holiness.

V. 15. "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." What sort of peace do you think Christ had? Besides peace of conscience, there was the peace of an undistracted heart. Your heart is often distracted, and of course you have not Christ's peace. If He has brought us into the

relationship of sons, we must walk in the peace in which Christ walked. What I feel so important for us is this, that it is not only forgiveness, but the mind and purpose of God is, to bring us really livingly and consciously into the place where Christ is. By the Holy Ghost I know I am in Christ; then I know that Christ is in me. I am perfectly accepted as Christ is; then my part comes, which is, Christ to be shewn out, "That the life of Jesus should be manifested in our mortal flesh." He has left His own peace with us; and now, beloved friends, are we walking in the peace that Christ had in this world? It is perfectly true that we are to judge ourselves; we find we can do nothing without Him, and if we have been careless, we shall discover that we have not power and strength; but still what He has done, is, to set us consciously in His own place.

V. 16. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Here I have the positive enjoyment of all the Divine things which are revealed. Do not think that we cannot know and enjoy all the things that belong to us as God's heirs. Live like Christ, and you will certainly find something of the Master's reproach. If the spirit of the world is active in me, of course I do not see clearly; but the Spirit of God is given to us, that we may know these things. I have the Word of Christ dwelling in my heart, and the Holy Ghost takes the things of Christ and shews them to me. When I know that every saint will be perfectly like Christ in glory, I say, What a blessed thing that will be. Whilst we have

universal joy, there is a special link a person has with Christ's joy, which no one knows but himself.

"Teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord," v. 16. Spiritual songs to enjoy the Lord in. I have the Word which brings all these precious things—the love of the Father—into my soul, and my song goes up in praise to the Lord.

V. 17 is a very simple direction, but how it sweeps things away: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." If you are going to buy a house—are you doing that in the name of the Lord Jesus? It is the motive that governs us. My life is not made up of heroisms, but of a hundred different little things; do them all in the name of Christ: it is everyday life. Supposing I am living three-quarters of my day without Christ, I then have to make an effort to get back. At the bottom of your heart, Christ, and at the top, blameless conduct, perhaps, no one can reproach me, but a man in between the two. When I look back over to-day, has it been for Christ? Never do anything except for Christ; you will find it would keep the heart fresh.

Now let me ask you, Are you willing every day to take the place of being an epistle of Christ in this world? If you are, then of course you ought to do everything in His name. There is no growth in acceptance, for it is "in the Beloved," but there is growth in the Christian as to his path. I know Christ better, and I imitate Him better.

If I am in earnest, I am very glad to be kept close to Him. When Christ is in the heart, the whole thing is easy, but it is not easy when the world is in the heart. If you get a pretty bit of dress, that is more than Christ. It is the question of what is near the eye of the mind. If I am walking with the peace of Christ in my heart, I get the Word of Christ to dwell in me richly in all wisdom. Who gets the knowledge of the highest privileges of the Christian in John xx.? Was it the apostles? No, it was Mary Magdalene, for her heart was clinging to Christ: the disciples could do without Him; she could not, and He reveals Himself to her, and tells her to go to the disciples and say, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, unto my God and your God." In the measure in which we keep close to Christ, the Word of Christ dwells in us richly. The affections of the heart are up there, and the Holy Ghost takes of the things of Christ and shews them to us, and my responsibility is in everything to shew forth Christ.

The Lord give us to see, very distinctly and clearly, that we are put into an entirely new place. If the Spirit of God is dwelling in me, my place is not as a child of Adam at all: I am in Christ, and Christ is in me, and my responsibility is to walk not as man ought to walk, but as a child of God ought to walk. When we see the perfectness of grace in Christ, we shall soon see how far short we are. Are your hearts set upon Christ, so that your one, earnest, desire is to glorify Him? If the life of Christ is manifested in everything I do, the

world will soon find it out. God has left us the consciousness to walk in His favour as Christ Himself. Then the motive of anxious love to Him is to seek to glorify Him in everything we do: dead with Christ, risen with Christ, entirely associated with Himself, and a witness for Him here. (J. N. D.)

TRUTH IN SEASON.

WE must know what is new, and be in it with Christ, before we can judge what is old, and what we are out of.

Delivered from death, Rom. vii., we are delivered unto death, in 2 Cor. iv., "that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

All this must be reckoned by faith, and measured in our own consciences, to be realized in true experience before God; so as to say, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing."

The old, then, becomes consciously a positive hindrance; as only associating us with the world, and we say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

A dead man has nothing to do with the world, or the law.

The law was not wrong, nor to be done away, but the man is wrong, and he is set aside.

United to the Second Man in life and righteousness, God has created us anew; and we have a new nature, by means of which Christ becomes our object and pattern for a walk on earth.

Death would else have been our condemnation; Christ has used it to work out our redemption. It is gain to us now, for it is the only way by which we are made free from sin.

Risen with Christ out of death, according to the power of redemption, we are above the evil, and beyond the judgment of God; on account of it we belong to Christ and to God.

We are not men in the flesh, but are in the Spirit, and walk in newness of life, being married to Him that is risen from the dead.

We cannot come under a new authority and headship in Christ, without being dead to the other—"the old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

The nature and will of the flesh (as well as its lusts) is sin.

Introduced into this blessed liberty by life and death, we bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body;" and we are occupied with Christ; God helps us in this by the Holy Ghost.

If we separate holiness from our redemption, it immediately brings us under claims which we cannot meet.

All the commands and motives that God could give, never got love or holiness out of the flesh. Nothing avails for this but a new creature and the fulness of Christ.

Christian conduct, and every duty, flow from the place and relation in which we stand before God, as children with the Father; and is the fruit of Christ's life in us by the indwelling Spirit.

We have a nature and character that suit God, and are the reflection of what He is. "Be ye therefore imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." How blessed!



"WHEREFORE GOD ALSO HATH HIGHLY EXALTED HIM."

Awarded the lowest place, and "set at nought" by man, "God has highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that HE IS LORD." In estimating the glory of the "Man Christ Jesus," how different was man from God; how infinitely low was man's estimation,—how high was God's. Do we not learn, how utterly perverted has man's

appreciation of that which bears the stamp and sanction of God, become by sin? If we look at the path of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth, and see in Him all that was perfect as a man, true gentleness and meekness toward others, true love and grace likewise, blended with an uncompromising decision for the truth of God, a maintenance of principle when that principle brought Him into direct conflict with human prejudices and opinions, a "setting His face like a flint" in the support of all that was divine, a bold exposure of Pharisaic pride, self-righteousness, and self-exaltation; a confession of the truth, in short, which, though productive of His death (for—in a world of apostasy from God, death could be His only fate,—albeit in another sense it was the fruit of His love—for He "laid down His life") yet marked Him out as the perfect man, the beautiful embodiment of all that truly adorns humanity, the living personification of virtue and moral excellence. Should we not hang our heads with confusion of face and shame, when we remember that this blessed One was refused, rejected, and crucified? Alas! such is the blinding power of sin; such its demoralizing, degrading, unhumanizing effect, that, when "God was manifest in the flesh," they "returned hatred for His love;" they "hated Him without a cause;" they "took Him, and with wicked hands they crucified and slew Him."

Truly we may say,

"Where God's seal set the fairest,
They stamped their foulest brand,"

and not, as was once said, "if virtue were only personified, the world would worship at her shrine," but rather that she has thus appeared, and, because the eye of man had become evil, and his appreciation of virtue vitiated by sin, the world expelled her from its presence. Sad testimony, but not untrue, for, alas, the world knows not its own depraved condition. The heart of man is "deceitful above all things," and therefore, by deceit, persuades man that he is not "desperately wicked." Yet, what other proof of his desperate wickedness is needed than the death of this God-man?

"If I had not done among them the works which *none other man* did, they had not had sin," said the Lord Jesus, as though the sin of a Cain, of an antediluvian world, of a Babel, of a Sodom and Gomorrah, of a Tyre and Sidon, of a Pharaoh, of a Jeroboam, or of an Ahab, were not to be placed in the same scale, or to be measured in the same measure; as though every previous act of transgression, disobedience, and blasphemy were now completely eclipsed. "Now," says He, "they have no cloak for their sin." His rejection was the sin of sins—the crowning sin, yea, the damning sin! Bad as it was to "thrust aside" a Moses, "treat shamefully" a Jeremiah, or "slay" a Zechariah "between the temple and the altar," what shall we say of that act whereby the Son of God is disallowed and murdered? But let us trace His path, and notice how fair God's seal set upon Him, how God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost, how He, as man on earth, was yet

the supreme delight of Heaven. We read, at the time of His birth, of a multitude of the heavenly host, surrounding the angel by whom the glad tidings of a Saviour born that day in Bethlehem were announced to the Shepherds, praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good pleasure in men." Sweet, and rich, and wondrous were their praises; more wondrous far than when, on an earlier day, that same angel host chanted the birth of creation. More sweet were the praises of heaven on this wondrous night, more auspicious was the introduction of the Son of Man by this angel choir. Not less significant was the conduct of the Wise Men from the East when they, led by His star, came to worship the "King of the Jews," and when they found Him presented to Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Thus we see angels, and stars, and shepherds, and wise men, all interested in the advent of this wondrous Man.

Thirty years elapsed, and history is almost silent, but two facts can be gathered concerning Him from its page; one that "His Father's business" was the foremost thought of His soul, and that, too, whilst in no wise forgetful of the claims of His parents; and also, that His custom was to read the Scriptures in the Synagogue of Nazareth, where He had been brought up (see Luke ii. 49 and iv. 16). Meagre, though this detail may be, it is nevertheless grateful to the heart; it is enough to show His character, it may be but the barest outline, still the course of the stream is learned from the feather or straw on its

bosom, and these two simple yet exquisite traces of His early life make known to us the bent and purpose of His hidden days. "I must be about my Father's business," are words which let out the deep spring and seat of that life which was so shortly to display itself in a manner unknown hitherto, and to claim from human tongues the unreserved confession that He was the Son of God.

But at the close of that period, we find Him associating Himself with those of His nation who owned the testimony of the Baptist, and coming to be baptized of John in Jordan. John, conscious of His glory, sought the lower place, but was met by the memorable response of perfect obedience—"thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness; and he suffered him." What could be lowlier or lovelier! what condescension! what a gracious identification with the faithful of Israel! what perfect submission—and all was seen by God. "And straightway coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon Him, and there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." Glorious recognition of the obedient One; widely different estimate from that of man. On whom, it may be asked, had heaven ever thus smiled or placed its bright and living seal? But of this One, God could say, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." In this respect He was therefore peculiar. He engaged the attention of heaven, and drew therefrom its salutation. To none of

the children of men, had this extraordinary seal of approbation been awarded; but "God gave not the Spirit by measure to Him." And yet, extraordinary as such an event may be, this was not its only occasion; for when, on the Mount of Transfiguration, accompanied by Moses and Elias, and surrounded by the cloud of brightness, we find the same voice saluting Him, and using words almost similar—"This is my beloved Son, hear Him;" or, as reported by one of the favoured eye-witnesses, "He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased!" 2 Peter, i. 17. Such distinctions mark Him off as peculiar and alone. As a man on earth, He was heaven-honoured as none other. He stands in contrast with all, even as He could say, "The Son of man which is in heaven." It is not that men had never been the direct objects of special heavenly communications. We find God talking with Adam, and Noah, and Abraham, and others. We find Elijah carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire; and Stephen, in a much later day, seeing the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, but no voice of commendation sounded in his ears, even though there awaited him the honour of being the first Christian martyr. No, all is contrast. There was that in the case of the Son of Man, which distinguished Him from all, and rendered evident His claim and title to divinity.

"Miracles and wonders and signs" approved

Him—and by them, God bare Him witness. His own words commended Him, and He was the Truth. Moses wrote of Him: John ran before and introduced Him. Diseases fled at His touch or His word of command. Death gave way to life in His presence, and demons deserted their victims at His word. He was kind, considerate, and un-upbraiding; at the service of all, and graciously accessible to all; faithful, but not unkind, sovereign but not despotic; almighty, but almighty in blessing. True to God, and unbendingly faithful to His interests on earth, He suffered and became “obedient unto death,” for death lay necessarily in His path of obedience, and that, “the death of the cross,” and now “God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name.” It was His due. He never forfeited the glory that was natural to Him; and, as water ascends to its own level, so now God reinstates Him in His own proper glory, with the addition of that which He has acquired as the wonderful overcomer. Such was the burthen of His prayer in John xvii., “Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son;” and again, “I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify Me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” This prayer has been fully answered, and the blessed One has gone on high. He has been rejected on earth, but accepted in heaven; refused by man, received by God, even as He speaks from the glory, “I am set down with my Father on His throne.”

A passage in Heb. xii. bears, with beauteous effect, on this point. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, 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." Here, Jesus is presented to us as the man of faith, the author and accomplisher of the path of dependence on God and testimony for Him, in whom there was no failure, no mistake, no coming short of the will of God, as there had been in others who walked in the same path—the Enochs and Noahs and Abrahams, and the vast cloud of witnesses to the power and reality of faith; of these, though the world was not worthy of them, it could not be said they did not fail. But hence the eye is to turn from each of them to Jesus, and see One who began and completed that path without a single failure. And He, having endured the cross, despising the shame, is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. His race was run; His bright and unfaltering witness was borne, and now, as victor, He is welcomed to the throne of God. Blessed diversity of judgment. If the cross was meted to Him by wicked men, the throne of glory was awarded Him on high; and He deserved that throne. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that HE IS LORD, to the glory of God the Father."

J. W. S.

A FRAGMENT.

It is very striking to notice, when the eye is opened to see it, how the manner of Paul's conversion brought out of his soul the entire contrast of all that was in man, and what was in Christ. Every principle on which man could rest was gone; conscience had failed to be a guide; Paul thought he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. That was: his conscience led him, making him destroy Christ if he could; his righteousness, according to the law, wrought to the same thing; he could not have Christ, he was a Pharisee; his religiousness too made him bow to the authority of the chief priests. By conscience, law, and religiousness, he was against God. All the things which could act religiously upon the senses, which God had Himself appointed, and had been present Himself upon the earth to maintain, all had brought man to enmity against God. Paul had lived in it all, and found himself thereby only in activity against God. His religion as to the flesh was all smashed; it all went for nothing: of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law, a blameless Pharisee; all was gone! It had brought him into enmity against the Lord of glory. And, let me say here, that ritualism, by which in these days people are seeking to build up all this again, is the *denial* of Christ; before, it was only *ignorance* of Him.

(J. N. D.)

IS IT THUS WITH YOU ?

WE read in the first chapter of the Acts, that the Lord Jesus, when risen from the dead, commanded *through the Holy Spirit* the apostles whom He had chosen—not to depart from Jerusalem, but to “wait for the promise of the Father (which ye have heard of me)” for “ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come” [or, “of the Holy Spirit coming”] upon you.

He then was seen to ascend, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. Acts i., 2—10.

The coming down of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost is traced by Peter (Acts ii. 33) up to its source. His taking up of His abode in and among the company which the Lord Jesus had gathered was altogether a new thing, never known before. It made them and those of their company to become the habitation of GOD (through the Holy Spirit there, Eph. ii. 22) and was power for witnessing unto the Lord Jesus, from whom it came,—*unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Observe, it was the Holy Spirit Himself—a person in the Godhead, who came down (John xiv. 16) to earth from the Father and the Son in heaven, and took up His abode on earth (not in a tent, however ornamented, made of skins and curtains,—nor in a temple built of stone with hands of men but)—in and among living men on earth, whom the Lord Jesus loved and who loved Him; and He came to be the Paraclete (or

Guardian, translated *v.* 16 and 26 “*Comforter*”) down here when Christ became the Paraclete in heaven with the Father, 1 John iii. 1 (here translated “*Advocate.*”)

This company is looked upon, in after parts of Scripture, in different aspects. 1st. as *the habitation of God* ; 2ndly, as *the family adopted of the Father* and committed by Him to the Son to bring to glory ; and 3rdly, as *the spiritual body of Christ*—one Spirit, and so one with Himself—the Bride. But in each of these blessed aspects, the Holy Spirit has His own full and distinctively peculiar place. Quite true is it that men have been entrusted with a new revelation [in that called the New Testament] and a new place of obedient dependence upon the Holy Spirit in a new position, and men have failed in the responsibility again, as ever—forgotten both Holy Spirit and the truth which He came as witness of. But He has no more failed than God can fail ; no more failed than the Father on high has failed in His counsels and plans about the Son of His love ; and thus there is to faith a habitation of God down here still, and there is for hope the New Jerusalem to come. There are those that say I am a “*son (hui-os) of God by faith in Christ Jesus,*” (Gal. iii., 26.), and into whose hearts “*God has sent the Spirit of His Son, crying Abba, Father,*” (iv. 6); and if Abba’s heart be our present blessing, Abba’s house is our hope (John xiv. 2, 3), where Abba’s self and Abba’s Son will be, together, for our joy in the Spirit. So there are those now that *hold the Head* and know themselves, members in

particular, cared for by Him, to whom eternity is as time, and who nourishes and cherishes His body (Eph. v. 28—30 ; see also i. 22 to ii. 10), and means to present it to Himself as a glorious bride, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Remark in chapter i. how the Lord Himself, through the Spirit, gave commands (v. 2) ; we, too, now, ought to know—and in the glory to come we shall know what “by the Spirit all-prevading” means ; He was promised by the Father, as the Son Himself had told them (comp. Heb. ii.) ; He was come in an all-covering baptism (v. 5) ; as power for testimony to Jesus [for us unto the uttermost part of the earth (v. 8).

As the taking possession of the tabernacle and of the temple was in either case attended with most signal marks, so in chapter ii. the Holy Spirit's taking possession of the new sort of habitation (the old sort of temple itself was left standing with its rent veil) had its indications too : suddenly came a sound *from heaven* as of a rushing mighty wind,—the house where they were sitting filled with it ; cloven tongues as of fire upon each of them ; all of them filled with the Holy Spirit ; each spake in tongues as The Spirit gave them utterance (v. 4). When this got noised abroad, the multitude were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language (read v. 5-11). Eighteen localities are named whence they came. The confounding of the tongues at Babel's tower to stop wickedness, found its contrast here when the wonderful works of God in Christ had to be proclaimed.

Then, again, this was not the result of drunkenness—but of a promised pouring of “my Spirit upon *all* flesh” (v. 17, 18); connected with what went beyond Israel and set it aside in its then state. “*Whosoever* shall call” &c., went beyond Israel, as “*whosoever shall call* on the name of the Lord” did not describe Israel’s then state. Peter’s testimony is contained in one sermon of twenty-six verses (14-40). One sermon gained three thousand souls. Verses 42-47 describe the favoured company. Its marks were peculiar, but very beautiful before God and man.

And the Holy Spirit, who had come down, took into His own hands the reins of government and administration; the arrangement, settling, and carrying out of every part of what He meant to be done. The will was and is in God, not in man, though voluntarily did those that knew the Blessor go along with Him taking the lead, and Himself working out what He would. In chap. iv. 8, Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit, and has a bold and wise testimony to give (10-12 and 19, 20). They return to their own company — prayer ascends—the place is shaken, and all, filled with the Holy Spirit, spake the word of God with boldness (23-31); and then follows another beautiful account of the company. If any one will take the trouble to read through the Acts, and mark in the margin with an S all the verses in which the Spirit is named, such an one will be astonished to see how the presence of God the Holy Spirit, and His using men and working by men, is marked upon every part of it.

IS IT THUS WITH YOU ?

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It seems to me ~~that~~ the redemption of Israel out of Egypt was so arranged by Jehovah, that every part of it threw out His presence into light. If there was an Exodus, it proved that He was there ; if there was no being locked up at Pihahiroth, it was because He was there, whose word the Red Sea heard and obeyed. The pillar of fire and cloud marked the presence of Him who had water and manna to give. He present, and a way into Canaan was patent and made good by Israel. If He was dishonoured, forgotten, disobeyed, there was no possible tenure of blessings given. And afterwards His temple could not stand without Himself. God is all and in all, to faith—and man is nothing. If in true subjection, dependent and obedient, then blessed. If unbelievingly out of subjection, independent and disobedient—where and what is he ? What could the twelve apostles have done, or do, without a living Lord to look after them. If subject—dependent and obedient—they were as John—in the bosom ; if true but self-complacent and not self-judged, then they were as Peter ; if not real, but self-honouring, as Judas. But as to the good, the Lord was alone, and the all in all was in Him. And what can I do, if I forget the Holy Spirit come down from the Father and the Son in heaven, that I may have power to look up and, taught of God, see Jesus Lord of all at the right hand of God and the Father in heaven ; Himself first-born among many brethren, Himself head over all things to His company down here ; Himself, who made and upholds all things, making the throne on high to be

the mercy-seat, and all His springs of life to be known as His people's, and the light of the blessing resting *upon all them that believe* (Rom. iii. 22). Let Paul plant, let Apollos water; 'tis God alone that gives the increase to His own seed.

Has the Father given us another Paraclete "*that he may abide with us for ever:*" even the Spirit of truth, whom we know, and who is in us? (John xiv. 16, 17.) Is this a blessing now enjoyed by us (xv. 26, 27):—"But when the Paraclete is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me?" Most surely it is a blessing now existent. Does the Spirit of God dwell in us—even the Spirit of Christ; then let us, the body being dead because of sin, mortify its deeds. Led by the Spirit of God—we are sons of God, have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We have the testimony of the Spirit with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and then follows the blessed verse 17, and that other, 21, Rom. viii. And note it, in 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, believers collectively are the temple in which the (comp. 2 Cor. vi. 16) Spirit of God abides. And in vi. 19, the individual is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit wrought in creation, providence, government, also in eternal redemption (Luke ii. 35; Acts x. 38; Heb. ix. 14 &c.), and in eternal salvation as applied to us.

All our knowledge of God and of the things of God is through the Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 9-14).

IS IT THUS WITH YOU ?

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The Bible, too, He wrote it (2 Pet. i. 21).

He is the Spirit of truth, and testifies of Christ (John xv. 26).

We received Him by the hearing of faith (Gal. iii. 2, 5).

Our access to the Father is by the Spirit (Eph. ii. 18).

Our union with the Lord is by Him (1 Cor. vi. 17; xii. 13, 14).

We may be filled with the Spirit; Paul speaks (Phil. i. 12) of a supply of the Spirit, of standing fast in one Spirit (27), of common fellowship of the Spirit (ii. 1), of worship in the Spirit (iii. 3). See also Eph. i. 17, He is wisdom and revelation, and as strength in the inner man to those who seek Him (iii. 16). He warns us, too, not to quench Him (1 Thess. v. 19), nor grieve Him (Eph. iv. 30), and speaks of some having done despite to Him (Heb. x. 29).

It is a great thing (without being wise above what is written) to be wise according to what is written, and to have a solemn sense of the dignity of Him who ministers Christ to us, and can enable us through faith to do all things.

If the dignity of Him, the promise of the Father, who has come down to earth and ministers (as the Spirit of truth) Christ to us individually and collectively, and is the One charged with the administration of God's house down here, were more thought of—there would be more reverent awe, perhaps, in our assemblies,—more sense of our own nothingness in ourselves, and more courageous confidence of Christ's strength being made perfect in our weakness.

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One habitation—*one* heavenly family of God—*one* body (called also the Espoused, 2 Cor. xi., 2, and the Bride, Rev. xxii. 17. and the Wife, Rev. xix. 7, of the Lamb) until the Lord comes. *One* and but *one*, till all is finished and perfected.

Who could know the counsel, and the plan, and the way, and the energy, needful to form a company which would meet all this? None but God, and those to whom He reveals it. Who could undertake and be entrusted with the work of atonement (making the throne of God to be the mercy-seat) and of being, in that throne, the giver and sustainer of eternal life? None (says Scripture) but the Son, Jesus the Lord and Christ. And who (in spite of the world, and the flesh, and Satan) is in administration down here for God, even the Father,—and for the Christ, Son of His love? God Himself, even the Holy Spirit. He who came down at Pentecost, and will be in sole administration until the Lord Jesus takes to Himself that which is His and the Father's.

Would to God that we might all see this—and owning Him, might be true and real—dependent and obedient in all things and times.

G. V. W.

 "LOVE IS OF GOD," AND "GOD IS LOVE."

1 John iv., 7—21.

The great subject of this epistle is not the grace manifested towards us as sinners, dealing with us

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as such, and justifying us; but another side of Christianity, and that is, the life of Christ, “ That eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us,” that is *in us*; and then, “ which thing is true in Him and in you;” we live by this life of Christ. Then the apostle unfolds this life of Christ in two great principles—righteousness, practical righteousness, doing God’s will and commandments—and the other, loving the brethren: just what His own life was; so when we have this life, it bears the same fruit—perfect in Him of course—still, characteristically, it is that same life of obedience and love to the brethren.

The difference between Paul and John is, that Paul speaks of man being presented to God, justified and accepted in Christ; but John has a great deal more of revealing God to man. In v. 9, he does speak of the work done for us—not in us—for he goes to the way in which it has been manifested and done. In the Gospel of John you get, first, eternal life in the Person of the blessed Son of God down here—God Himself manifested; and then, in the Epistle, he goes on to the expression and reproduction of this life in us. Paul is much more upon justification and acceptance—the two things we want—eternal life and acceptance with God.

This fourth chapter takes up what God is towards us in love. In speaking of the life, it goes through the whole condition of man, from the time of his utter sinfulness since he was born, to the day of judgment; and then life, and how we are brought into the blessed knowledge of what it is. The fact of having life, does not in itself enable

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me to say, I am perfectly accepted in the Beloved: even supposing it is really there, it does not do for righteousness before God. The effect of being quickened and having life, is to make us understand that we want righteousness. We look on ourselves, and see that this will not do for God; and if it will not do, how are you going to be accepted of Him?

The first thing is, "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God;" v. 7, one of the traits of this new life, the nature only. An angel cannot understand what is passing in my mind; we must have a divine nature to know God, and if I have, I know God. An animal has the same nature as that of which it is born. There is the spirit of love in us—we are born of God, and know God, and therefore we know what love is. If I am only partaker of this divine nature, I see faults in myself, and know nothing of righteousness. When a person is quickened, he sees the difference between things, and consequently is uneasy and restless, and finds a root of evil in himself—flesh working in him—even when he has known forgiveness; for he has to learn what he *is*, as well as what he has *done*. Well, then the apostle turns to what is not his common subject. "In this was manifested the love of God *toward* us," v. 9. Not a bit of what is *in* us, but he turns round to shew what God has manifested Himself to be towards us: so he begins at man's utterly lost condition, and goes on to the day of judgment. "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." All my Adam-life

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gone and judged, and another life come in, that I might live by it. God sends Him into the world that we might live through Him, and I am looked at consequently, as *dead* in sins. If a man is dead, there is not a movement in him towards another; and what is more, if you try to awaken it, you cannot: there is nothing spontaneous, and nothing to be awakened—and that is a sinner's natural state. Nothing in them towards God; in fact, God has tried everything—promise, law, the prophets, His Son, and the Holy Ghost—and it is all no use. And now He sends His only begotten Son, and I get another kind of life, “that we might live through him,” because we were *dead*.

V. 10 is entirely another thing. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Now I have my *guilt* met, for we were guilty in our sins; He sends His Son to make propitiation for them. I was dead, and guilty, lying in my sins, and God has thought upon me, and has been willing to spend the best and most blessed thing in heaven, His own Son, that I might get life in this new way—life, when I was dead, and propitiation for my sins, that they may be all cleared away. I find Him beginning where I was, expecting nothing from me. The only time you find the Lord pronouncing a curse upon anything, was, when He came to look for fruit upon the fig-tree, and there was nothing but leaves, and He said it should never bear fruit—man is judged in his condition. Man, the thing cultivated of God, brought forth wild fruit. “Let it alone this year

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also." God, in Christ's ministry, so to speak, digging about it and dunging it, but at the close of His ministry, it withered away. That was man's condition; and, having judged the Adam-life, He sends Christ, that I might live through Him.

As regards my state, He has met my whole case in Christ; God has manifested His love. But my soul wants to *know* this love. Well, if I look at myself, I cannot. I may say, I do think there is something in me, for I love His saints and His Word, but it is sinful nature that makes me discomfited and in uncertainty, and there can be no settled peace. But here is God's love manifested towards me as guilty and dead; and the blessed Son of God came, that we might live through Him: there is nothing but evil in your heart, so He comes and brings life. Yes, I say, but I am defiled and guilty all this time. Oh, He says, I am come to be the propitiation for these sins. The blessed manifestation of God's love is, that I find what is in God's heart about me; that He has done what was needed for my state, and revealed it too. It is what is in God's heart that is my comfort, not hunting anything out in my own. I know that God has acted on His own love, and revealed this love to me, where I was in all my sins. There I get this manifestation of God's love; He knew everything that was in me, and He sent His son to put it away—He has acted from His own heart, unasked and unsought, and sent His Son. I insist on this word 'manifested,' because I have it demonstrated. How do I know what is in God's heart? Because He has given His Son—the very best thing He could give

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There we have the first thing in which His love is shewn out, both for life and propitiation: another life, which produces what is good in me, and not what is bad; thus it comes out in love to the brethren. “ Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

V. 12, “ No man hath seen God at any time.” How can I know a person I have never seen? What makes this passage more striking is John i., 18. What is the answer to it there? That the only begotten Son has declared Him. If a person wanted to know God really (divine teaching for it of course), there was Christ to reveal Him, manifesting Him in love. “ He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” “ The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.” In His place of Son, He would necessarily know God as Father, infinitely and perfectly. He who knows God in the closest affection, He has revealed Him, and He must of course tell you what He was as He knows Him. There you get the way He was presented to the world. Now mark the difference here. “ God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us”—not the love to the sinner, but the love enjoyed in the saint: it is another step on. When I see the manifestation in the midst of the world, if anybody had eyes to see, there was the Father to be seen—but here it is “ God dwelleth in us,” that is the way “ we know,” and “ His love is perfected in us.” Well, if I have God dwelling in me, I can see His love; the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts—what more can I ask? It is a wonderful truth, God dwelling in us.

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V. 13, "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." The Holy Ghost dwells in us, as Paul says to the Corinthians, even when they were going on badly, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost," how can you go and use it for sin?

V. 15, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." Of course He is not speaking of hypocrites; but if there is the real confession of Christ as the Son of God, God dwells in me, and I in Him, by His Spirit. There I get the love, not manifested to the sinner, but the direct, positive enjoyment of it by the saint. It is the presence of the Holy Ghost dwelling in the believer, which distinguishes and characterizes him. The working of this verse is most blessed. Supposing I find a timid soul, why, I say, God is dwelling in you—do you confess that Jesus is the Son of God? Of course I do, he says, it is my hope and joy. Then you have God dwelling in you. But see how it acts on the conscience, supposing it is a person who has known these things only in the conscience—I say, You have God dwelling in you, but how far have you thought of Him to-day? Perhaps not once; Well, is that the way you are treating God? You know the truth that God dwells in you, and yet you are not even taking the trouble to think of Him once the whole day! It rejoices the feeble soul, but on the other hand, it tests the conscience; for how have you been treating this wonderful Guest—how much have your hearts been upon Him—

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watching not to do anything to displease Him—but to glorify Him. How far short it puts the low idea of Christian life you are dragging through—not to scandalize the world!

That is the second way I get the love known—it is shed abroad in my heart as a saint. God has taken me up, and cleansed and adopted me, and now He comes to dwell in me: and that is the condition of every Christian, “*whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God.*” We cannot think too much of what characterizes the Christian, that the Holy Ghost dwells in him. V. 16, “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us:” and no wonder, if He is dwelling in us. If a person asks me, How do you *know* that God loves you? The proof is, that He has given His Son for me when I was a sinner. But if he asks me, How do you *enjoy* it? Oh, by the Holy Ghost which He has given me. It is a practical point with the Christian, because I have never to grieve this Spirit. He is not uncertain about the love—he knows very well he does not live up to it, though that is no excuse; still we do fail, and often; he knows he is not all he would wish to be—but he knows God is all he could wish *Him* to be for him. There I get this blessed effect, “We have known and believed the love that God hath to us”—we know and understand it, divinely, through the Holy Ghost, and there is not a doubt or a cloud. If we wish to know the measure of it (for it is His love, not mine to Him), the soul walks in the consciousness of this blessed, divine favour, and the measure is, that the Father has loved us as He loved Christ.

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V. 17 is a further step, which is often a hindrance to people. It goes on to the day of judgment—to the end. "Herein is love made perfect with us, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world." There I get the Christian condition. It is a great thing to connect experience with the absoluteness of grace. A person living on experiences is always doubting; the mistake is not in having the experience, but in looking at it. You must have the experience, for something must pass in our hearts about divine things; the harm is in looking at it. The effect of the Holy Ghost working in me is to make me look at Christ: He makes me in this experience to look at Christ as my only resource. He does not set me looking into my own heart, but He shews me that Christ is the answer to all the wants my experience gives me. Faith never leads me to look at my state, but it leads me, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, to look at Christ. Wherever there is divine faith in what I believe, there is no doubt at all. For instance, if I ask a person, Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Of course I do, he says, but that is what is making me so miserable, for I never care about Him as I ought—there is the experience you see. I may reason about it, but where there is faith in exercise, I set to my seal that God is true; and if I set to my seal that God is true, I am absolutely certain. The moment I think that God has said, "This is my beloved Son," and through grace I *believe* it, I am divinely certain. A doubt may come into my mind about something else—

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how can God have me when I have gone on in such a way—but I am not doubting that He is the Son of God. The word of God is brought into my soul as true, and I set to my seal that God is true, “ God that cannot lie.” The prodigal was perfectly certain that there was goodness in his father’s house, but he doubted whether he could have it. There was no doubt about the house, or about the goodness in the house, but when he thinks of the consequences of his sin, he begins to doubt. When he comes to his father, he does not say “ Make me as one of thy hired servants,” because he is perfectly certain of his father’s heart, for he is on his neck. If I say, Look what I am, I do not see how God can receive me—there comes in the doubt, but, I am certain about this other truth, that “ Jesus is the Son of God.”

Many a soul whose trust is in the blood of Christ, if he thinks of the judgment seat, is not quite sure where he is. You say, the Cross just suits you, but can you say you are a poor sinner, and the judgment seat just suits you? It is another thing, and brings up this—that when God is exercising judgment, it is a question whether I can stand in that day. If I have my sins upon me, of course I cannot, and there is uncertainty and cloud.

Well, God has thought of it for us: it is not *hope* in the day of judgment, but “ boldness.” It is always wrong to hope about the day of judgment, for this reason, that if God entered into judgment with us, it is certain condemnation. “ Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight

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shall no man living be justified." It is true that when God works in a soul, you never get a case where there is not some hope : if He brings the light of His truth into the soul, He is light and love, so there is some revelation of love. When the prodigal was perishing, it was the recollection of the love of his father's house—though he did not know whether he could have a part in it—that carried him to his father :—love that was sufficient to draw him to the very place he feared he had no right to. When God deals with the sinner, and makes him feel his sin, it is always the attraction of His love. With Peter in the boat, in Luke v., he says, " Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." What did he go to Him for then, if he tells Him to go away ? Because his heart was drawn. We all go through that state, for there is the attraction of the love of God, and the effect of the light.

But when I look on to the day of judgment, I cannot rest on that, for it is judgment—it is righteous dealing with sin, and not love. If I have not righteousness, I cannot stand. " There is none righteous, no, not one." There always will be some hope, in the soul really taught of God ; but I am perfectly certain that if God deals with me in my sins, it is all over with me. I know I am a child of wrath, and I am not looking to myself to answer for my sins. You could not judge Adam when innocent ; but since Adam departed from God and listened to Satan, he has turned God into a Judge who condemns him. There would be no judgment at all, if we had not departed from God. They thought Satan more kind and good than

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God, and turned God into a Judge by sinning, and therefore it must be condemnation. If I think in that way of judgment, I become of course unhappy. But supposing I am “ the righteousness of God ” in Christ ; how can I be afraid of judgment, if righteousness is the thing he is judging by ? “ There is no fear in love : but perfect love casteth out fear.” I can say now, that when I look up to the day of judgment, there is no time that I am so clear ; the ground is the cross.

But in what state shall I come before the judgment seat of Christ ? Christ will come and fetch me, to have me with Him. The next thing, He will change my vile body, and fashion it like unto His glorious body. When He shall appear, He will judge the quick and dead, but I shall be like Him. The moment I have the full effect of Christ’s work, I shall be perfectly like the Judge. What God has done is, first, to shew us that the One who is the Saviour is the one who is to be the Judge ; and besides that, I find I am in Christ—the righteousness He judges by, I am in Him. That is where we are for judgment. God has thought of me as a sinner, He has given His Son—given me life in Christ—put away my sins, and put me in Christ, and given me the Holy Ghost ; and now in the day of judgment, I am as Christ is ; I am like the Judge, even in my body. True, we shall all have to give account of ourselves, but we are in glory when we do.

Take another aspect of it. Paul has been eighteen hundred years in heaven with Christ—are you going to take him out of heaven to judge

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whether he ought to be there? Before God, "as he is, so are we in this world:" well, then of course I have boldness. Is there any good in myself? No, I have no good in me—I was totally lost, I had no hope, but God has redeemed me out of that place; Christ is my life and righteousness, and the Holy Ghost in me, makes me know it, so that I enjoy it; well, as Christ is so am I. So the apostle at once gives the consequence, "There is no fear in love," v. 18. The whole world is convicted of sin, because they have rejected Christ; then I cannot look for righteousness anywhere in the world; but God has set Christ at His own right hand, and that is where I look for it now. This love of God has settled the whole thing, from the time we were dead in sins to the day of judgment.

And now mark how blessedly the effect comes in in v. 19. "We love him, because he first loved us." It does not say, we ought to love God—of course we ought—for the Spirit of God is giving us this sense of love—God's love for sinners, and enjoyment of it as saints. What a blessed thing it is that God has loved us in this way! Well, then, I love God. Supposing a child were to say to me, I love my mother quite enough! I should say, You are a wicked child, you do not love her a bit. But supposing that child came to me and said, Oh, if you only knew my mother, all her patient kindness and unwearied ways, and I am so naughty and often grieve her—well, then, I say that child loves his mother. The sense by the Holy Ghost of all this perfect love from the time we were utter sinners to the day of judgment, tells me that I am to be

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loving Him. This saying that God dwells in us, gives me a measure and motive for walking, which nothing else ever could give me; as to whether I am behaving myself as if God were dwelling in me; and then I find myself thus surrounded infinitely in everything, by all that God is. I am nothing compared with the space, but I know I never can get out of it, dwelling in God who is love—He may have to chasten me; but I do not go and chasten all the little children in the street, but my child. I am in that favour which is better than life.

Do you just ask yourself, and see whether you can, in thus putting yourself before the judgment seat of Christ, be perfectly at ease? Are your hearts simply rejoicing and bright in the consciousness of the day of judgment? If there is any fear, we do not know the love of God fully. I am not afraid of God loving me too much. “If God be for us, who can be against us,” and He is for us in every detail of our life, too.

The Lord give us in exercised and humbled hearts (there cannot be too much exercise) to have the sense and consciousness of Divine love; the proof of it being in Christ, and the enjoyment by the Holy Ghost; and then to look up and see that He is coming to take us to be with Him. The Lord give us, as emptied of self, judged self, to find what it is to have Christ in us and we in Christ:—to do nothing to grieve the Spirit. If we thought of God dwelling in us, how careful and watchful we should be to do nothing to displease Him. (J. N. D.)

Notes of an Address.

THE BLOOD AND THE WATER.

“ But one of the soldiers, with a spear, pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bear record, and his record is true ; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe,” John xix., 34. This is the testimony of the Spirit of God, through the Apostle John, to that which accompanied the death of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and peculiar emphasis is laid on the facts narrated. “ Forthwith came there out blood and water.” There is no true Christian but has learned the value of the blood of Christ, though the measure of apprehension may be more or less ; but I doubt whether so many have apprehended the purport of that water, which at the same moment flowed from the wounded side of the Saviour. And yet the two are coupled together in the record, and the same testimony is borne to the poured out water, as to the shed blood. The Lord give to us understanding hearts, that we may not neglect one provision which He has made for our eternal blessing, or for our preparation in this present time, for that glory which is to come. Eph. v., 26, 27.

As to the blood of Christ, the believer knows it full well as the very rest and peace of his soul. Christ has made “ peace by the blood of his cross,” and as the eye of God rests upon this expression of the devotedness of His well-beloved Son, and on this incorruptible payment for the ransom of souls, so can the heart of God go out, not only

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towards Him whom He loves, because He laid down His life that He might take it again, but also towards each and all, who, setting to their seal that God is true, accept Christ as their Saviour and Lord, and His blood as that which has made reconciliation for their sins. Often as it has been repeated and pressed, we cannot forbear again alluding to the precious truth, that it is on God's estimate of the shed blood of Christ, that our redemption hangs. True it is that as the believer apprehends its value, so will his heart experience peace; but the truest confidence in the precious blood of Christ would avail the sinner nothing, if God had not accepted it, and accepted Him also who shed it, by raising Him from the dead, and giving Him glory. Blessed indeed is the soul that reposes by faith on the blood of that Lamb without blemish and without spot; on which also the eye of God rests, and regarding which He can say, with how much more significance than of the passover lamb of old: "When I see the Blood I will pass over you," Ex. xii., 13. The blood of Christ thus meets the conscience, which, once burdened by sin, is now, through faith in the Lord Jesus, purged and quieted in the presence of God. As we read in Heb. x., "Once purged, no more conscience of sin." The one offering of Christ has answered, on one side the claims of God, and on the other side that question of every heart, "How shall a man be just with God?" "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin?" As perfect and complete as is the work of Christ, so perfect is the conscience of the one who fully trusts it. His peace rests not in his own faith in, or sense of these things, but on Christ and His work, neither of which can ever, ever fail.

But while true believers are thus conscious of security, as sheltered by the blood of His sacrifice once offered, a true Christian is not the less sensible of the evil heart within, nor the defilement of the world without, from which, though separated so far as death and judgment are concerned, and delivered so far as faith apprehends the full purport of Christ's work (Gal. i., 4), he yet has still to pass through it and to overcome every step of his path here below. The one who professes not to need daily confession and cleansing, knows little indeed either of the true character of sin, or of the flesh, or of the work of Christ on our behalf. The one who professes to walk through this present world in unhindered communion with God, and without defilement, is evidently ignorant, both of true fellowship with the Father and the Son, and of the subtlety of the spirit of the world, and of that which defiles.

But we learn otherwise in the Word of God; and He who knows the need both of the sinner and the saint, has made full provision for that need in its every form and aspect, from the time when the conscience is first brought into His light, until the moment when the soul enters into His glory.

Under the law, this provision of God is shadowed forth under two figures—the Altar and the Laver. No one could draw near to the place where the glory of God dwelt, except he passed through both the one and the other. In the court of the tabernacle, the altar first, and then the laver, lay in a straight line between the door of the court and the door of the tabernacle, Ex. xl., 29, 30. In the court of the temple we find the same order—first the altar, then “the molten sea for the priests to wash in.” Not only at their consecration must the priests be sprinkled with the blood of the altar, never to be repeated (Ex. xxix.); but in every act of service and worship they must “wash their hands and their feet with water, that they die not.” Ex. xxx., 18—21. Here we learn in detail the value and order of the blood and of the water. “Without the shedding of blood is no remission.” “For it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul.” But without the washing of the water, no priest could draw near to the holy presence, except under pain of death. On this, in Heb. x., 22, is founded the exhortation to us, “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” This water, we learn from Scripture, is the Word of God. In Eph. v., 26, 27, we find accordingly that the present work of the Lord Jesus Christ towards the Church which He loves, and for which He gave Himself, is to “sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word.” The Lord Jesus “came (both) by

water and by blood; not by water only, but by water and blood, and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth," 1 John v., 6. He came not merely with the Word of God, as a teacher and prophet, though indeed He was both teacher and prophet, like unto none other. But He came also by blood. He came, as we have before said, in love to die, and by the shedding of His own blood, to make reconciliation for sinners and for their sins. But the water of purification is as needful in the order of God as the blood of atonement; for while the latter makes atonement for his soul, the former is needed for every step of the Christian's path for the cleansing of his way; as it is written: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to *thy word*," Ps. cxix., 9. How blessedly the Lord Jesus illustrates this truth, while He exercises this present service towards His people, we learn in the 13th chapter of John's Gospel, in the well-known scene where He washes His disciples' feet. His word is, "He that is washed (wholly, or bathed) needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The one offering of Christ, the one cleansing by the precious blood can never, need never be repeated. "He that is washed (wholly) is clean every whit" is Christ's own word. No such thought exists in Scripture as a re-sprinkling or re-application of the blood of Christ. Far different, however, is it with the water; the need of this is perpetual and ever recurring, and the "washing of water by the word" must be incessantly repeated if our hearts

are to know fellowship with the Holy Son of God, while we pass as pilgrims and strangers through this present evil world. Neither Aaron nor his sons could enter into the Tabernacle except they washed, "lest they die." So the Lord said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou has no part with me." You may be a true believer, you may have trusted in the blood of Christ for the pardon of your sins; but except your heart and mind are subject to His Word; and except you allow that Word to act upon you as He by His Spirit brings it to your thoughts and remembrance, you can have no part, no fellowship with Him, whose meat it was to do the Father's will who sent Him, and who could say even for Himself, though He were the Son: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," Matt. iv. 4.

The blood of Christ then makes provision for the sins, makes atonement for the souls, and purges the consciences of the people of God. The water of the Word of God provides for their direction, and for the correction of failure in their practical ways. The blood takes away the evil conscience; the water corrects, cleanses and removes outward defilements. Whilst His people are in this world, it is in their bodies that they either glorify or dishonour God. What we do, is much more important as testimony for or against the truth, than what we say. A Christian who faithfully, though silently, lives, according to God's word, is a better witness for Christ than the most eloquent preacher, whose life and ways are incon-

sistent and worldly. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." "If any man love me, he will keep my word." "Great peace have they that love thy law; nothing shall offend them."

There is, then, in this day of much liberty, both for the work of the Spirit of God, but also for the spirit of the world, great need to have our hearts duly instructed in the meaning and use of the water. Grace is freely preached. The salvation of the cross, and of the blood of Christ, through the grace of God, are sounded forth in the midst of the many other uncertain sounds and erroneous forms of doctrine which abound in the present day. But the Word of God, as that which alone can form the practical walk and ways of Christians, has not its proper place, even in the evangelical teaching of the day. Peace, therefore, without power; security, without separation from the world; a happy heart without a holy life; too much characterize the teaching and promises of a modern gospel. And if the lack is felt, as it is undoubtedly felt, by many sincere Christians; a "way of holiness" is presented, and by too many accepted, which, if it does not deny, yet goes far to ignore "the water of the word," as God's provision for the practical cleansing—the washing of the hands, and feet, and bodies of His people.

The Lord give us tender hearts and consciences, to receive His Word with meekness, as He, by His Spirit, brings it to our thoughts; that we may not close the ear to what He may have to say to us. And, whatever way He may say, may we answer "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

H. C. G. B.

CARES AND FEARS.

Luke xii. 22—34.

THERE are two great principles here that are dealt with by the Lord in a two-fold way; and which it will be very profitable for our souls to contemplate a little. I speak of what I believe few are strangers to, viz., care, and fear;—two of the commonest influences that are at work, to weigh down the hearts of the saints of God. You will find that the two are closely allied to each other; that is to say, whatever is the thing that causes you anxiety is that concerning which you are likely to have the most fear; whatever it is that settles upon your heart, and becomes a pressure or a weight, this produces fear in connection with it. I do not speak of care about that which is wrong, but I speak of it in the largest possible sense. There is a care which it is right to have—a godly, proper, prayerful concern; which if we were devoid of, we should be simply like sticks or stones.

I speak now of that which becomes so settled in the soul that it is between us and God; and there is a mighty difference between having God, and my Father's interest, between me and legitimate anxieties, if I may so speak, and having these anxieties between me and Him.

I do not know anything more destructive of true, real, spiritual growth in the soul, than having cares (*μεριμνα*) resting upon me. If I have God between me and them, then they only become

fresh links between me and God ; fresh opportunities for me to lean on Him ; new reasons for my turning to Him. It was somewhat in that sense that the Lord used that word, when He said, " Pray that ye enter not into temptation."

Trial is a thing that comes sooner or later to us all ; in one sense we are never truly proved till we have been under fire. The Lord's charge to His disciples was this, " Pray that ye enter not into temptation ;" that is, when the moment of trial comes, let it be an occasion for you to turn to God, instead of turning away from Him. We know well that is the moment when hundreds have turned away from Him ; it was the test that showed what was in them. It has been said that " testing is the harvest time of faith." The moment the test comes, you reap the harvest of dependence. This is the good of having God between me and lawful cares that would oppress me here. Do we each know what it is to have this for ourselves ?

Verse 30. " And your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Think of what that is ! He says, Do not you trouble yourself ; you do not need to let these things weigh down your heart. Oh what a resource ! " Your Father knoweth." He knows it all from beginning to end.

And yet while I delight to own the fact that He knows all, that He is conscious of the need of His child, yet let me point out a danger. I sometimes think, in our anxiety to meet our need with the supply there is in God, we are making our need the measure—I do not say of the supply, but of the affections of His heart.

There is a tendency in us to do so. Never let us forget this, that God has a father's heart; that there are feelings that are peculiar to Him as a father. He didn't want servants, He did want sons, it was His pleasure to have them; but I speak now of what is more intimate than sons—of children; there is a distinction between the terms *son* and *children*. Just for a moment to illustrate it, you have all seen and heard of acts of benevolence; how the mighty of the earth, moved with compassion, have taken some poor forlorn little creature, some little waif, and have brought it into their family; have educated it, and given it all it was in their power to supply. But all the power, and all the love that person had, could never make it a *child*. You might adopt him, and make him a son, for that does not of necessity suppose a birth-tie: but when we speak of children, we speak of that which must be by birth, and therefore it implies a much more intimate relationship to say that I am a child, than a son. I am both, blessed be God! And hence I can say, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God," and also, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Do you think God acts the part of a patron to us? Never; it might suit us, but it would not suit Him. What God does is this, He has children born of Him, into His own family, with the nature of children given them from birth, and towards whom He delights to do a Father's part.

Whilst I fully own how graciously He

knows and meets all our need ; yet I remember that there are motives and springs in Him, apart from every question of our need, but of which our need becomes the occasion of display.

It is amazing how few there are who walk in the knowledge of this relationship. I find there are comparatively few who live in the enjoyment of what God has brought them into. What a wonderful place it is ! And yet we actually see those who are brought into all this, walking about with the very livery of anxiety on their countenances. Why, one would think it was all over with them ; that there was no Father's hand behind the dark cloud, and no Father's loving care for them. And it is not a question of the way in which He meets our need, I am sure, whatever that may be ; that is not the measure of what is in His heart. And yet many people think it's a wonderful thing to be able to say " Oh I can trust the Lord, and I know I shall not want." It is a blessed thing to know we shall not want, no question of it ; but is that the highest thing God has for me ? What is the highest thing He can do for me ? My need or necessity cannot be the measure of it ; we cannot measure it ; the heart of God is its own measure. When I come to Him, I find the fulness of God. It is a wonderful thing to say you are born of God ; and that in grace He stands to you in the relationship of Father ; with all the feelings and affection of a Father's heart towards you. What am I to do then ? Put your hand in His and go on in patience.

What are cares ? They are choking things, that stunt the spiritual life in the soul ; am I to allow them, when there is all this love for me ?

It is the Lord's object to keep me up; these would drag me down. And what is to keep me up? Not the question of the supply, not the question of the time that intervenes between the need and the supply, not the question even of when He will come in for me; but the blessed fact that *He knows*; so that you can leave time, ways, means, everything with Him.

But now for an instant let us look at the next point. He meets the question of *care* by the fact of our Father's knowledge of us (ver. 32), He meets the question of *fear* by the fact that it is "the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom." It's a little flock, for God's people are very few in number compared with the multitude outside. "It's the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" that is, it's the Father's good pleasure to do a father's part. Is it not sweet to find that this is the very same word that is used of Christ, when the voice from heaven was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom is all my pleasure!" It's His good pleasure to act a Father's part to you, and to give you the kingdom; and the consciousness of that takes away the fear. So far, this affects us in that which is negative; but there is a positive side of truth. He says (ver. 33), "sell that ye have." He says, Let things here go. Beloved friends, are we up to that? Many would be glad to say "Thank God, I needn't have any fear:" but are you willing to let things go? What I mean is simply this, that the sense of the goodness of His nature, that He, in suiting those feelings of His, so gratifies His own heart, that I want no more, and so I can afford to let things go.

But if I were to lose everything? you say. Well, you would have the less to burden you. There isn't a thing on this earth that does not entail trouble. Even the possession of lawful things, all brings trouble, that is the character of them all.

Remember, I am not speaking of things which are wrong in themselves, but of what is perfectly lawful. Take, for instance, the God-given relationships of life, as that of father, mother, husband, wife, sister, brother, child. All I can say is, they are God-given relationships, and the man that despises them, despises that which is of God.

But look for instance, at a mother and her child, you see how she loves it, nurtures, cares for it; but is there any fear in her heart about it? Isn't she afraid she may lose it, that it will die? The best thing I see in this world, there is the moth and the thief to seize upon it. There is death, the thief that enters into every house, and no bars can keep him out. Well, if I have not any of these things, I have the less to promote anxiety and fear.

Or, to come down to what is a great deal lower than these—earthly possessions, the same thing holds good. Suppose you were to enlarge the circle of these blessings, to widen the area. Why, you would only have a wider target for death to shoot at.

How wonderful to have something that death cannot touch, something to detain my heart.

First of all, what is your treasure? I believe with all of us, there is a great deal too much tendency to make Christ the servant of our need.

I know He is that. I know He is the willing servant of our need; but too many are satisfied with that, and He is not the treasure of their soul. The question is, where is your treasure? for where that is, there will your heart be also; it's that which must control all the affections.

I feel we are all glad to have heaven [as] a sort of relief from the storms and trials of the way, but, alas, we know very little of it as our home, the home of our hearts.

We know it is a shelter from the things that distress us here; and when everything else is gone, then we turn our thoughts there. And that blessed One is ready to receive us, even though we value Him only as a shelter from the storm. He never refuses any who come to Him. But He wants the affections of our hearts to be set on Himself.

He will not deny us, though we only come when everything has failed here. But it's another thing to say "Whither thou goest I will go; where thou lodgest I will lodge. . . . where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." There should be an attractiveness about the person of Christ to our hearts, that will lead us above every thing, so that even when things are bright around us, we can say there is a brighter thing still that detains all our affections: and this would flow from it—in place of being visitors there, and dwellers here, we should be visitors here, and dwellers there.

You can never know what it is to be *for* God, unless you know what it is to be *from* Him.

The Lord give us to be able to say, I am of God' I am from Him, and I am for Him.

Ver. 36. Here is the second aspect of preparedness of heart; this refers to Christ's coming. There is the sense of His absence: I don't think any of us feel the want of Christ's presence as an affliction to our hearts. I may feel the terrible nature of the world through which we are passing, but do I feel that He is absent? I know He is here in one sense, that is true: but I am not speaking of that now, but of the sense that He is not here, and that it is only His presence that can fill up the void His absence creates. And this will lead us to watch and wait; to watch for His coming every moment. Is there not a lamentable deficiency about us in this respect?

"And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord," this is the proper demeanour of the Christian; so that the world might read in our very ways that we are strangers here—waiting for our absent Lord. The world does not understand this; it does not know doctrines; but the world can understand whether the people who hold these doctrines practise them or not.

Has the world seen this in us? I fear that we have given a poor testimony to it. I fear that the saints of God have not backed up the Gospel as they should. The Gospel is just as clear and distinct as it can possibly be; but here are people who profess to have believed it and own it; and yet there is not the practical testimony which ought to flow from it.

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It's a solemn thing to think that the poor world, that lies in the arms of the wicked one, can turn round and say—I *hear* all this that you tell me; but I do not see it carried out in practice; in other words, I do not see any who look like men “waiting for their Lord.”

The Lord give us exercised consciences and hearts: may His own Word find such a place in our souls, that we may arise and shake ourselves from the dust and soiling influences of the age, to meet and welcome Him who saith “Surely I come quickly.”

W. T. T.

THE WORD MADE FLESH.

John i. 1—34.

WHAT characterizes the gospel of John, beloved friends, is the bringing forward, at the beginning, of the personal glory of the Lord Jesus; and then at the end, the gift of the Spirit, the Comforter, whom He promised to send when gone.

In this part there are three distinct subjects. In the first place we have the divine nature of the Lord—what He is in Himself. Secondly, what He is in incarnation—the Word made flesh, as come into this world: and then, in the third place, you have the work that He does in this world. The first part is a little abstract. “In the

beginning was the Word." What gives its value to all is, that He was *God*. It is the Divine nature of the Lord, though still looking at Christ as the One who is revealed to us. This chapter begins before Genesis, for the third verse is the beginning of Genesis. When everything else began, He was there already: He never had a beginning: He made everything: all that had beginning of existence He was there to create. Nothing more distinctly marks the eternity of the Word than that He was there before everything. Then you get His personality, "The Word was with God;" and thirdly, not only was *with* God, but *was* God; and, lest we should have any confusion about it (v. 2), He *always* was God. The eternity of His existence, the distinctness of His nature, and Divinity of His Person—all just in that one word. When we are brought into the same glory as He is, His Person is always maintained safely—personally distinct. When Moses and Elias were in the same glory as Christ, the Father's voice comes out, and says "This is my Beloved Son." If you take Stephen, heaven is opened to him just the same—he is a son of God too; but Christ was not looking up into heaven at some object that was to make Him like it. Stephen was looking up to become like something—Christ was an object to heaven.

Having stated His Divine Person, we get Him in His connection with us, v. 4. "The light was the light of men." He was not the light of angels, but specifically and definitely the light of men. The delight of Christ being with the sons of men, He becomes a man. It was the Son Himself come

down here—the power of Divine life walking through this world, and specially for man, as He became a man. This One in whom life was, was the light of men in a special way. Here He is speaking of what He is.

The thoughts and counsels of God were just this, to have us conformed to the image of His Son, before ever the world was. Of course it is not so yet, but “As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” We shall be perfectly like Him in glory. “And he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.” The thought of God is this blessed thought, that Christ having taken us up, He is never satisfied till He sees of the fruit of the travail of His soul, in having us in the glory perfectly like and with Himself. We have got into the relationship, though we have not all the fruits of it—we are sons, though we have not yet a bit of the inheritance.

The light was perfectly adapted to man, but as regards this unbelieving world “The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” Now you cannot have light shining in darkness, for it is light and no darkness then; but then it was God in the world, and they would not own Him. That is where I get what man is. They who found out this, “to them gave He authority to become the sons of God;” no one could be that before. It is not that we have *power*, but the moment the Son comes into this world, this blessed relationship of son is brought out and revealed. He says this is what He has given us. We are brought into the

same place as Christ. He has, in His own Person on the earth, shown the place of a Son—a Man, too, who would not go out of the place of a servant—there He showed the perfect pattern of our place upon earth, and He has given us the title to take this place as sons. The blessed Lord is in Himself the expression and pattern of this place. We are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; we have the consciousness of it, and are really born too. “The darkness comprehended it not”—but as many as received Him, to them He gave the title to take their place as sons. Just think what a place that is, when the world is passing away; that He who was from the beginning, comes in to show us light and life. Here is a Man who is in this place as Son (not like the law, which says you *ought* to do this and that), and who can bring us into the same place.

When the poor leper said, “Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean,” He put forth His hand and touched him. He says: “I will not put you out of the camp; I will come in where all the defilement is.” He touched him as man, His Divine authority sends away the leprosy.

Then it goes on, “And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth *came* by Jesus Christ.” In this latter clause we get not merely what He was in His nature, but the fact that the Word was made flesh. It is put in contrast with “The law was given by Moses;” grace and truth *came* by Jesus Christ,” not only were there. We get this wonderful truth, that the Word was made

flesh and *dwelt* among us. He was here as really a man as any of us, only sinless.

The law did not tell man what God *was*, or what man *was*; but it came and told man what he *ought* to be. That was all the law did. It was a perfect rule of life as it came. What was the God they were to love with all their heart? You might take Him as the Israelites did, the One who brought them out of the land of Egypt; but there was no other revelation of God except terror. If you are going to have righteousness, law detects your sin and tells you you have done it—opens your eyes. When I come to what I get here, it is altogether opposite. It is God come as a man into the world of sinners. He comes veiled in humiliation. He so comes into the world of sinners in grace, that instead of saying “You must behave yourself rightly,” He comes Himself, not to judge, but to save. If I take the law, God never came out, and man could not get in. Now, what I get in the Person of Christ is that God *did* come out and man *is* gone in. When I know Christ I know man has gone into the holiest of all in virtue of Christ’s work. Grace comes abounding over all the sin, and truth comes too; not telling us what we ought to be, but what we are; and man does not like that. When I come and tell a man that *truth* came by Jesus Christ, he does not like it, for truth says, man is lost already. There was a Man down here after God’s own heart—perfect holiness and perfect love, and when He came, every one was the opposite. No men are like Him. You never

saw selfishness or self-seeking in Christ. I see perfect grace come out to poor sinners because they could not go in; and, on the other hand, perfect truth told about them and about Him too. It was no sending out a message to them, but He *came* to them. Here He was, walking up and down in this ruined world, seeking the confidence of man.

I believe the first thing that ruined Eve was that she lost confidence in God and trusted the devil. Then she goes her own way, and the lusts come in—self-will and sin. Christ comes into the world that we might be like Him, and more than that, God comes in and walks through this world in perfect holiness, that men might have confidence in Him. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself”—not judging it. For example: the woman that was a sinner, in Luke vii. and the woman of Samaria. If they were wretched and miserable, afraid to trust anyone, here is a heart that they could trust, when they could trust no other, and that was the heart of God. He says to poor wretched creatures, “You may trust *Me*.”

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared him.” People say, “*was* in the bosom of the Father;” but the fact is, He never left it in His divine nature. “*Is* in the bosom of the Father;”—that is, that He, who is the centre and sole object of the Father’s delight, comes, that *we* may understand what a Father’s delight in a Son is. I say, Where can I

learn what God is—what His thoughts and feelings are? *There* is the One who is the perfect concentration of all God's thoughts. The Son tells what the Father is to Him. It is the only way of knowing it. Therefore, He says, in John xvii.: "That the world may know that Thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Then, "I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." He brings us into it: not as the world gives, for it gives away only what it can spare. The way that Christ gives is bringing us into what he enjoys Himself. "Peace I leave with you. *My* peace I give unto you." "That they might have *my* joy fulfilled in themselves." "The glory which thou gavest *me* I have given them." "I have given unto them the words that thou gavest *me*;" and then, "That the love wherewith thou hast loved *me* may be in them." He makes us sons, and is Himself the expression and model of what a son is. He declares what the Father is to Him, and brings us into the enjoyment. He has revealed God in grace to *sinners*, and the Father in love to *sons*. He tells His Father's name, as He is enjoying it then. He says He is not going to leave us to ourselves; He leads us now in our weakness by His Spirit. How can I know what God is? If you are a poor sinner, the way you can know what He is is by looking at Christ, seeing how He received poor sinners. Then, on the other hand, having the title of sons, what is He to a son? I say, you look at Christ, the only

begotten Son. He will make you know what a father is to a son who is thus loved.

The true character of repentance is not like Judas going and hanging himself. Love having come in, with the abhorrence of sin, there is perfect confidence in Christ, like the poor woman putting her tears upon Him. The conscience must be reached, to know God. If grace comes, truth comes too, and the conscience is reached. Not one without the other; but there must be confidence. People say, "If I perish I will perish at the foot of the cross!" Is *that* what you call confidence? There must be the light of God coming into the conscience, and then confidence is produced. There is never full confidence though, till we come to the "best robe," and then there is no more about *us*.

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." There are the two parts of Christ's work (the full result will never be, till the new heavens and new earth); "Behold the Lamb of God," the Person and work. God provides Himself with a Lamb, God's Lamb, for us no doubt. He who knows what righteousness is, and consequently what sin is, He provides a Lamb and a Victim for Himself. "The Lamb of God"—He came to be made sin, the One without spot to God. It is not merely that my sins are put away, but I get One, who, having been made sin, has perfectly glorified God about it all. "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him . . . shall straightway glorify Him." He does not wait for the glory of the kingdom. Sin has been dealt

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with once and for ever. It is the end of the world, as regards man's history. "Now is the judgment of this world," God's work was done in it. The very wickedness that rejected Christ was the very thing that brought about man's salvation: it was the means for saving even the people who did it! The only part we had in the work that saves us was our sins. Man's history was over; then God's Lamb comes in—was made sin; and the whole righteousness of God, and His hatred of sin, comes out against One perfectly able to bear it, and all God's love to the poor sinner. There I get the work of the blessed Lamb of God.

I had a world of innocence; I have a world of sin, but a sacrifice; then I get a world of righteousness, that never can change. My rest is upon the work on the cross. "Behold the Lamb of God" runs on to the new heavens and earth. It is perpetual, and never can change. The work of His Lamb is always there; in fact there is no time with Him. "It shall convince the *world* of sin," not wicked people in it. The Spirit of God comes down and says from God, "Where is my Son?" And the answer is, "We spat in his face and crucified him." There I have the work of Christ. The second thing is that He is baptized with the Holy Ghost; and there I have the present consciousness and effect of what He has done, though as yet I have not all the fruits of it. It is a ministry of righteousness, because Christ is my righteousness in the presence of God: and a ministry of grace because the Comforter is come down. He is the earnest of the inheritance, not the ear-

nest of love, for the love of God is shed abroad in my heart.

Duties always flow from a relationship we are already in. Are you a child of God? Then conduct yourself as a child of God. We have the distinct source of this—we have the Object—we have the bread of God come down from heaven. The law never gave an object: the gospel does; it is Christ, and as I look at Him, I am changed into the same image.

And now, beloved friends, is that where your hearts are? Has your eye been so occupied with that blessed One, that He is your Object? And then I add, is your conscience all clear? He appears in the presence of God for those who believe, but He has not got your sins up there. Have you the consciousness of that, setting to your seal that God is true? If it be so, are your hearts able to say with Paul—not “I have attained,” but “This one thing I do?” Is that what fills your heart? We shall be sure to find out our weakness; but “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Is Christ the one that feeds your heart and that leads your heart?

God has come down that we might know the whole story for ourselves in Christ. Love coming to us, and righteousness going to God. What we have to seek in everything is to glorify God—a thousand circumstances in life, but only one Object. The question is, whether we are living Christ in the ordinary circumstances of life—in honest toil and labour, in the calling in which we are (though if we cannot abide in the calling with God, we must

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leave it). Is it the one object of our lives to shew forth Christ, to manifest Him in our mortal bodies, to realize more of Him by the power of the Spirit of God—is that where we are? And with thankfulness of heart that He became that Lamb of God, and has given us the Spirit to dwell in us.

The Lord give you to know the grace that has sought us, the love that has bought us, and the glory that awaits us!

(J. N. D.)

(Notes of a lecture.)

“THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT.”

There was a truth which the disciples of the Lord were very slow to believe—in fact it would appear that they never did accredit it until they beheld it enacted before their eyes. I mean the truth of His death and resurrection. No doubt the Old Testament abounded in teaching, both doctrinal and typical, on this great foundation-truth. It is to be found in Moses, the Psalms, and Prophets. Yet when beside them as their Benefactor, Instructor, and Guide, the disciples could not realize that He was to be taken from them in such a way. Their thoughts and expectations clung to an earthly kingdom, wherein He should reign and they should share His glory. For this there was, indeed, full Scriptural warrant. The very fact of His being the Messiah, put all

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doubt thereof aside. Every Jew looked for the Kingdom of David's Son—and that too with fullest reason. Yet they never grasped the truth, which in patient love He had sought to press upon them, over and over again, that "the Son of Man must be killed, and be raised again the third day." When first stated, "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee." Matt. xvi. Nor do we find any change in their thoughts. Indeed, we read, near the close of His three years of ministry, that the idea of immediate earthly glory engaged them still. "Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left, in Thy kingdom." So again, at the supper-table itself, in the very night of His betrayal, "there was also a strife among them which of them should be the greatest." Look where we may, saving the case of Mary anointing Him for His burial, we fail to see that the disciples really apprehended the truth of His death and resurrection. It does not appear to have been understood by them. They were so charmed at the thought of His and their earthly glory, that the foundation of that glory, His death and resurrection, was overlooked by them. That they ought to have understood it, is another question—indeed, that they did not, was a grief to the Lord. They believed in Him beyond doubt, and that the Father

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had revealed the glory of His person to them is also clear; but that they did not accept the truth of His death, until they saw it verified before their eyes, is likewise evident. But faith in His person and faith in His work are somewhat different. Both are of God, yet there may be faith in the person, without a clear knowledge of the value of His work. But, whilst, in the purpose of God, all blessing was based on Him who was Son of God, and secured through His work, yet, as to their intelligence, the disciples understood very little, if anything, of the personal glory of Him who stood in their midst.

True, He had presented Himself in His Messianic glory—for He was the Virgin's Son—Immanuel, but He was rejected. "He came unto His own and His own received Him not," nay they boldly said, "We have no king but Cæsar." They dissolved, in their wilful contempt, the national hope of Israel; they chose Barabbas, and crucified Jesus, saying, "His blood be on us and on our children." And hence the glory of His earthly kingdom was deferred for another occasion. But, in the meantime, ere that bright millennial morn shall break upon long-imprisoned creation, a higher glory—and not earth-born—fills its place. The glory of David's throne, splendid though it be, is limited—but not so the glory of the cross. How magnificent is the vista that opens at Calvary. How rich, and imperishable, and heavenly are the glories that burst forth from that wondrous scene! They are illimitable and eternal. Jesus refused the crown; accepts the cross. He

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dies, is buried, and on the third day rises again ; then after forty days He enters into His glory—ascending thereto from earth. Now "we see Jesus. . . . crowned with glory and honour." The eye of faith delights to follow Him and see Him as the once slain Lamb, the object of heavenly praise and worship. Beautiful is the sight—fair the crowns that decorate His brow ; sweet and welcome the rest into which He has entered.

But what about the disciples and their anticipated earthly glory? Were and are they forgotten? What place do they occupy? Ah, no—forgetfulness and indifference form no part of eternal love—and therefore Jesus, "having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them to the end." But just as His prospects of earthly glory were graciously waived by Him, so must those of His disciples be waived. Nay, be elevated to fellowship with Christ in His sufferings on earth, and association with Him in all His future glory. Hence "if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." What an elevation of glory ; how infinitely higher ; and what an honour meanwhile to share His earthly sufferings!

That which became the Master, becomes the followers—His path and footsteps are now to be theirs. His history is but the record of theirs. His death changed practically their hopes and conduct. If He were expelled from the earth, they could find no home there, and if He had found a welcome above, so, through grace, should

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they—nay, it should be the present home of their spirits—the sphere of their blessing. “In the world,” said He, “ye shall have tribulation;” not merely the tribulation common to a poor groaning creation, but that which flows from fellowship with a rejected Christ—and that which will therefore characterize the entire path of the true disciple. And hence He said, “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.” Such is the position and portion of the true Christian in this world—nor need he look for better fare than his Master’s. Sure as He has gone to Heaven, so surely is there no other source of blessing, goal, or destiny for the disciple. The cross has closed the door as to the one, and opened it as to the other. What a calling! Oh! to think that we are joint-heirs with Christ; that the far-reaching glories, not of earth only, but also of heaven, are all ours in Him! Well may our back be turned on the tinsel and gloss of that which this world can offer—well may we live as those who are crucified to the world, and the world to us.

See with what power this truth held these very disciples, soon as ever they found their Master ascended. Trace their history in the Acts of the Apostles. Harken to Peter calling on the young converts of Pentecost to “save themselves from this untoward generation,” and notice how that, immediately afterward, “all that believed were together and had all things common.” Or, again, how that “of the rest, durst no man join himself to them.” Or, again, how that Stephen, in the spirit of his Master, laid down his life

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whilst maintaining the truth, and bearing bold witness to it. Think of James, the brother of John, being killed with the sword. Recollect the imprisonments which befel Peter and Paul, and how that they were counted as the dirt and off-scouring of all things—the butt and object of human malevolence! No doubt these were eminent servants of the Lord, and because of their testimony they incurred all this shame and hatred. Yet does this not establish the principle and confirm the truth, that, in the world, tribulation is the Church's companion?

A passage in the writings of Paul makes this fact clear—"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more; therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new, and all things are of God." (2 Cor. v. 16.) To "Christ after the flesh"—that is, Christ as Messiah, appertained earthly distinctions and glories, but now that He died, and is risen again, and is "the beginning of the creation of God," all such relations and the knowledge of Christ in them, gave place in the soul of the apostle to a new set of relations and Christ in *these*; "therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things are passed away." What a sphere of living interest! and here all things are of God. Oh! how far behind is this poor world left; how remote, how insignificant it appears to be! One passage more—"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed

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upon us, that we should be called the sons of God ; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” 1 Jno. iii. 1. That which is of God is strange, foreign, unknown in the world. Such was the Son of God. “The world knew Him not,” and so, too, must it be with the heavenly family. The child of God should be, and really is, a thorough riddle to the world. What in the world’s judgment can exceed the folly of one who deliberately relinquishes the world in all its overtures, its riches, its fame, its luxury, its ten thousand enchantments, for present suffering, and tribulation, and animosity, with the distant prospect of heaven ! But, of a truth, the folly is all on the other side ; and, besides, the prospect of heaven is not so distant, nor are the sufferings of Christ destitute of their present sweetness—for “*as the sufferings of Christ abound in us so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*” 2 Cor. i. Nevertheless “the world knoweth us not.” Like our Master, we are here as strangers—passing across the stage, and reflecting His beauty, whilst awaiting the archangelic shout, and trump of God, which will take us hence to the Father’s house above.

“ Lord, since we sing as pilgrims,
 Oh ! give us pilgrim’s ways ;
 Low thoughts of self, befitting
 Proclaimers of Thy praise.
 Oh ! make us each more holy,
 In spirit pure and meek,
 More like to HEAVENLY CITIZENS,
 As more of heaven we speak.”

J. W. S.

SYCHAR.

Weary He trod this desert way,
A lonely Man and sad,
The Stream through all that earthly day,
That made the thirsty glad ;
Yet few there were who cared to know
That Heaven's own Spring was here below.

He whom the heavenly host proclaim,
And "Holy, Holy," cry,
Descends to be, 'mid scorn and shame,
Led forth by man to die ;
Thus Love Divine alone can meet,
Outcast from earth, earth's sin-stained feet.

Despised and sad, from this world's streams,
Her thirst still unallayed ;
Lonely and scorned, her hopes and dreams
Have one by one decayed—
She comes, to meet with Him, Who will,
Unask'd, the empty vessel, fill.

He thirsts beneath that noon-day sun,
Yet He the worlds had framed ;
His voice, ere yet time's course begun,
Each star in order named ;
A humble Man, He now draws nigh,
Thirsting, her thirst to satisfy.

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He thirsts—she thirsts—ah, only He
 Can bid *her* thirst depart,
 And, wondrous truth, 'tis such as she,
 Who cheer *His* loving heart.
 She longs to find some freshening rill ;
He longs the empty heart to fill.

But ere He gives, He'll search the well,
 From whence her streams have flowed,
 With love no tongue nor pen can tell,
 That fills the heart of God :
 Her life of drought by Him made known,
 Tells her she stands with *God* alone.

Fit hearts to meet, they part no more :
 His hunger, thirst, have passed :
 Her thirst for earth's poor streams is o'er,
 The vessel's *filled* at last ;
 The life-spring flows, the work is done,
 Earth's outcast now with Christ is one.

And soon He'll bear to glory's day
 The purchase of His blood,
 For whom He trod this desert way
 Down from the throne of God :
 Yea, lower still, to wrath ! to win
 His jewel from the depths of sin.

“THAT I MAY WIN CHRIST.”

THE Son of God has walked here as a man, and as my heart gets acquainted with Him, as I see the perfection of His life, the depth of His interests and love, in the holy manner of all His ways, and the supreme beauty of His movements in everything, my heart turns with delight to Him, boasts in Him as the *One Perfect Man* before God, hastens to refuse everything of the man and the scene here where He was refused, and knows no joy, values no possession but Himself. All else is dross. To have Him as the gain, is the one only thought and interest. The one thought is to possess Him, and, for this, self with everything is surrendered. I abandon everything of time; I leave myself and the earth, to possess Him, who, in Himself, captivates and commands the affections of my heart. There is the sense of deficiency and need in myself, and the certainty of having found in Another that which I require. I find that everything I need or could value is in Him—that He is superior to everything in myself, and that He imparts to me of *Himself*. I suffer in order to be with Him, losing myself for Him; my heart, glad of the exchange, endures all things, counting all things but loss that He may be my gain. There is not giving up of *possession* merely, but a giving up of *oneself*; the heart delighting to be with Him; and though it be only through suffering, it prefers the path of suffering *with Him* to any other. It is really fellowship with His sufferings, because there is no other path here.

(Culled from “*The Voice*.”)

PEACE, GRACE, AND GLORY.

Rom. v. 1-11.

THE statements in this chapter are founded on the last verses of the previous one. God is calling back our hearts to have confidence in Himself, confidence which man had lost in the garden of Eden. Eve trusted Satan, and thought that God had kept back the thing which would make her happy. No matter how wicked, or how far a person may be from God, he may trust Him. A person that would be ashamed to shew his face to anyone in the world, may go to God and trust Him. The gospel wins back the heart to God, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." What God has done in Christ, is, that before He comes to be a Judge, He came to be a Saviour. He has anticipated the day of judgment, to win our hearts back to Himself, in Christ. If we neglect this salvation, we are doubly guilty. Before ever the day of judgment comes, God has sent His Son, that we might know His perfect grace, and know it in a work which was the most terrible judgment of sin possible.

Having gone through their sinfulness as Gentiles and Jews, in the first three chapters; and in chapter iv, death and resurrection; in the first eleven verses of chapter v, he applies it. He speaks of the abundant and rich grace of God; and then in v. 11, you may joy in God; not merely in the salvation, but in God Himself; I may delight in my Father. It is all peace as regards

the past ; favour and grace as regards the present ; and glory in the future.

The gospel is not, that some of our sins are hidden, but they are all out, and I have peace about them because Christ was delivered for them. We may have forgotten many things that we have done, but the Lord knows everything, and He has given His Son for me ; there I get peace made by the blood of His Cross.

Peace is a strong word. I may have joy, and some trouble along with it, but with peace I have no trouble at all. Christ has met God all alone on the cross, and, in drinking that terrible cup, He has made peace for us. I see that Christ came down here for my sins, and the holiness and righteousness of God dealt with Him about them on the cross, so I get peace with God. Sins are the things that make us guilty. The fact of the existence of the flesh does not give me a bad conscience ; it does so only when I have let it act. I am *justified* in respect of guilt ; with regard to defilement, I am *cleansed* ; I have offended, and am *forgiven*. If I am born of God, I see what my sins are ; for when we get into the light, we see how dirty we are. Holiness comes in along with justification, but it is not the subject of this chapter. The moment I am born of God, the holy desires are there ; and then comes in this beautiful chapter ; and I am not merely justified, but I have power. I am before God, not according to my sins, but according to the value of Christ's blood. Nobody *put* it into God's heart to send His Son— Ah, I say, then I find perfect love in God's heart.

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I have got into God's own perfect favour, that present grace wherein we stand. He loves me as He loves Jesus. God never changes. It is not only that the grace is unchanging, but that I as a present thing am standing in it, and if I look up to God, I have in my soul the consciousness of infinite favour. I know, in thinking of the cross of Christ, that it was God's infinite love which passeth knowledge, that gave Him to die for us. I know God's heart a great deal better than I know my own, for I cannot trust *my* heart and feelings a moment; but having God revealed to me I know who *He* is. I cannot reckon on myself; but when I have learnt this love of God, I say, Well, I know He is not a poor creature like me, for I know who He is. In that work on the cross, I had no part but my sins; nothing but the hatred that killed Christ, and the guilt He bore. He was perfect love, and therefore I am on my face in the dust at the sins He should have had to bear, but He was perfect love. It is not only that the sins are cleared, but I also get the sense of divine favour in my soul; it is my present standing with God. How could poor worms like us talk of being in the glory of God, if God had not brought it about. It is a wonderful thing. Where God has cleared away all the sins, He gives the glory too.

I feel strongly the importance of this present "grace wherein we stand;" it forms the condition of my soul now; I am standing in this favour of God. When I look up to God, and I see nothing but the light of His countenance, the only thought I have is, perfect love and favour. "That the

love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them." We are first put into our place; and then it goes on, You are standing there in favour.

Well, what am I going to get? The glory of God—"Rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

"And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." May be, there is more evil in my heart than I have yet discovered, "He withdraweth not his eye from the righteous." He is always looking at me, perhaps to correct me and help me. Job was getting into a subtle kind of self-righteousness. With Job, it is God who begins the battle, not Satan. God corrects and disciplines him, and sends all these things to help him; until, instead of saying, "When the eye saw *me*, it blessed me," he says, "Now mine eye seeth **THEE**, wherefore I abhor myself." "Ah," God says, "now you know yourself, and that is all I wanted to teach you; now I can bless you." That is the end of the discipline. Having this perfect love in the heart, we have the key to all these tribulations.

"Patience worketh experience." If I get my will broken, I know myself better, and I know God better. The effect of all this is to break my will, and to purify me of things that I wanted to get rid of. I get broken and exercised, and at the same time know the grace and love and faithfulness of God.

Then I get back to Hope. I have the key in the perfect love, to all that comes upon me, and I say, In that, God has been thinking of me to do me good. I have the certainty of God's love, for He gave His Son for me; and if I were to ask

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God to give me a proof of His love, He would say, He must give me a less proof than before, for He has already given me the greatest. The proof of the love is, that He has given His Son. The Holy Ghost is power; He is given us, so that there is the revelation of this love; I am in true liberty. In virtue of the blood of Christ, the Holy Ghost comes, and dwells in me. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" How can you go and use your body for sin, when it is the temple of the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost makes me know I am a child. I get the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost; He seals us too, and is the earnest of the inheritance.

Tribulation works patience, because it breaks my will. I kick against the tribulation if I do not see the key to it. A naughty child, put in the corner, knows very well that his father would not put him there if he did not need it. So with us, the Lord puts us in the corner, and there we must stay till He lets us out. I get the experience of God's faithful love, for I am sure He would not put me there if I did not need it. "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous." He is constantly and unceasingly watching for their good. In Job xxxiii, it is inward things that have to be corrected; it is correcting a disposition, to withdraw man from his purpose. In Job xxxvi, it is actual failure, discipline for positive faults. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth." The Lord has laid His hand upon me, and I must bow. It may not be for a positive transgression, but

perhaps a disposition to be corrected. He has something for me to learn; there is something wrong, so He puts His hand on me in discipline. The Holy Ghost being given me, I have the key to it all, in the love of God, and I believe in this love. There are many things to correct in me, which hinder me feeling the love. I know it better, the more I am disciplined and exercised; but I have learnt it in God's having given His Son.

We have the threefold blessing; peace, favour, and glory; then tribulations. How do I know He loves me? "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." He gave His Son for me. If I have the Holy Ghost I am enjoying the love (though that is no proof); but I know He loves me because He gave His Son for me when I was alienated. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *His* love is emphatic here. God loved these ungodly sinners, who were in one sense a horror to Him. He gave the best thing in heaven for this vile thing on earth. So we joy in God. I have first got to know the blessings, then the patience and goodness of God, and then I say, "Well, but what a God I have!" And that is everlasting blessedness. So I joy in God Himself. I have got to know God in this. Just think what a Father I have! My joy is in Himself, and though we have it in an earthen vessel, yet we have it still. Along the road to the glory, He never withdraws His eyes from me. What a wonderful God I have! I do not glory in myself, I glory in the tribula-

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tion, because it is a proof to me that God is thinking of me.

“We which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake.” It was a great deal to say, I always got the troubles for Jesus’ sake. We get them for our own sake, often. In the thorn in the flesh that Paul had, it was for Christ’s sake and his own as well. The highest kind of tribulation is the tribulation for Christ; only we need other kinds. The principle of sin working in us, often troubles people much. The remedy is, I am crucified with Christ; I reckon myself dead. I am alive to God in Christ, not in Adam; and as regards this old man, I say, “I do not own you.” Not only Christ is my life, but I am crucified with Him. I am the same person living by the life of Christ, not by my own life. As a child of Adam I own myself totally lost. God comes and gives me a new life in Christ. All Christ’s death is available for me; so I reckon myself crucified with Christ. I not only have a new life, but I reckon the old one dead. I say to the flesh, You have been judged on the cross, I have nothing more to say to you. Then I ought to be “always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,” always living in this way. I am not in the flesh before God; I am in Christ, and I know it by the Holy Ghost. Col. iii. 3 is God’s statement about death. Rom. v, we believe it, reckon it true. 2 Cor. iv, we carry it out in practice.

(J. N. D.)
Notes of a Lecture.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE ordinances of the Old Testament and those of the New are clearly contrasted in Scripture. The latter, under grace, are characterized by pure privilege; the former, under law, were legal. These were a rule imposed by authority upon the first man; and hence they kill—"the letter killeth." Those when rightly understood and appreciated are characterized by the power of God in grace. With reference to the former the Apostle's language is unmistakable. "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments in ordinances." (Eph. ii. 15.) Again, "Having effaced the handwriting of ordinances which stood out against us, which was contrary to us." (Col. ii. 14.) And again, "If ye have died with Christ from the elements of the world why as (if) alive in the world do ye subject yourselves to ordinances?" (Col. ii. 20.) The Apostle is equally clear in reference to the latter, not as a rule imposed, which flesh would not object to, but pure privilege. "Now I praise you that in all things ye are mindful of me, and that as I have directed you, ye keep the directions." (1 Cor. xi. 2) "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him recognise the things that I write to you, that it is the commandment of (the) Lord." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.) This is no law imposed upon the old man, but authority for the

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new to gratify its own tastes and desires, guiding it in the liberty in which it thrives. The will of God and the new nature are bosom friends; they run together, and both were perfectly expressed in Christ. There is no right path in this world but in doing God's will. Christ always used the word of God to guide Him in His walk; and the same word, which has already made you a partaker of the Divine nature, gives you this liberty and guidance to walk according to its dictates.

There are two New Testament ordinances or symbols, both of which are figures of the death of Christ. The first, Baptism, of which we cannot now speak particularly. Suffice it to say, it is used throughout the Acts as a professed recognition of the rights of Christ through death; or as an introductory rite into a place upon earth by burial — “buried with him by baptism unto death.” Burial is the declaration of having passed off this scene. We are baptized, or buried to His death; from this we come out to bear about in the body the putting to death of the Lord Jesus. In a word, baptism introduces into a place of profession on earth, not into heaven; it is the ostensible exit out of Egypt, where Satan rules, into a place where the authority of the risen Man is owned. This is the Red Sea aspect of baptism, as used throughout the Acts of the Apostles. The Jordan aspect is another thing, and used by Paul to lead into further truth those who had been already baptized.

The second, the Lord's Supper, is the expres-

sion of communion with Him in His death. In the 10th of 1 Corinthians it expresses what we are ; in the 11th what we do.

Hence the New Testament ordinances define a place into which people are brought, and what people do when brought into the place. They mark a system of profession upon earth where privileges are to be had. Scripture, however, very clearly marks the distinction between the possession and true enjoyment of those blessings, on the one hand, and merely being in a place where they are to be found, on the other. This is equally true of Jewish and Christian systems. Romans iii. 1, 2, and ix. 4, 5 acquaint us with the advantages of the former ; and with reference to the latter, 1st Cor. x, tells us a man may be baptized and a partaker of "spiritual drink" and lost at last ; 1st Cor. xiii, that a man may have all gift to speak and prophecy, knowledge, &c., &c., and yet be as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal ; and Hebrews vi, that a man may be in the place where the Holy Ghost is—be in a sense a partaker, not a personal possessor—and yet be an apostate in the end. The word translated "partaker" in this passage is a peculiar Greek word, which means, one may be in a place and have opportunity to avail himself of all that the Holy Ghost gives, if so disposed, without being personally indwelt by the Spirit of God.

But, of a true believer, indwelt by the Holy Ghost, the scripture affirms "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." There is authority to treat the first man as dead and out of sight,

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and to walk according to the "perfect law of liberty," of which James speaks; made partakers of the divine nature by the Word, which expresses what God is and what God wills, and therefore gives liberty to gratify the inclinations of a nature already imparted by Him.

The ordinances of the New Testament mark an association of people who profess to have passed from off this scene as children of the first man, and to have entered it again as disciples of the Man who was murdered by the world; and who, having died out of it, has sent them back into it in order to walk even as He walked. They are privileges; they give perfect liberty; they are no legal commands.

If a husband, going abroad, leaves his portrait with his wife, and asks her to look at it in his absence, will she look at the likeness as a command of her husband, or to gratify her own affections for him? And do not the Lord's dear saints gratify their affections for Him as they surround the table spread for them at such a cost, and remember Him in His death, using His authority for their liberty?

To me, if there is one thing more wonderful than another, in grace, it is the blessed Lord re-instituting, as it were, His supper from the glory which He now fills. It would have been enough, and sufficient authority to us, for its observance, for Him to have instituted it when He superseded the passover with it, as in Luke xxii, but He, in such grace, must needs go over the details again from the very glory itself,

as we get recorded in 1 Cor. xi. 23, &c., where Paul says "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he break it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner, &c., &c." It must have been given to the Apostle amongst "those things" referred to in Acts xxvi. 16. For in the days previous to Stephen's murder, the tenderest nurse that ever nursed the saints of God was still their persecutor.

We will look at Luke xxii. 14—18.

It was a wonderful meeting; *no one was late*. The hour was come, and every one in his place. Oh, that dear saints would only remember that at the appointed hour the Lord is there!

As an obedient Jew, the Lord eats the passover on the evening of the 14th, the preparation day. The same day the true Passover Lamb was slain.

How touching! how thrilling! to hear such an One say, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer," and to remember Him taking the cup and giving thanks at such a moment!

He does not however drink it. He says, "Take this and divide it among yourselves." According to Numbers xv, "When ye be come into the land," a burnt offering and a sacrifice &c. were to have the accompaniments of a meat-offering with oil and wine in equal proportions. Wine was for a drink-offering, life out of death; and oil, type

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of the Holy Ghost; these shewing that His life, His ways, His death, fully corresponding to the Holy Ghost within, afforded adequate delights to all the capacities and appreciations of the heart of that Father who gave such an One for such as we, with a view to bring us into fellowship with His own joy, about the place and relationship which the work has entitled us to, and secured to us for eternity. The antitype of the oil was there, for He was not only born of the Holy Ghost, but God had anointed Him with the Holy Ghost, and with power; but the antitype of the wine, life out of death, was not yet under God's eye.

It was necessary that the burnt-offering and the meat-offering should be under God's eye before the accompaniments, the oil and the wine, would have been in place; the one expressing His devotedness unto death, the other *who* it was that thus gave Himself for His Father's glory. The drink-offering would not have been according to Divine order unless the symbols of a whole Christ, with His finished work, were under the eye of God and man. "Wine which cheereth God and man" (Judges ix. 13). He does not therefore take the cup; but He does give it to His disciples in token of what He was about to do.

Having thus kept the passover, which closes with the 18th verse, He supersedes it with His own supper, as recorded in verses 19 and 20. This was intended to look back and commemorate an accomplished fact; that looked forward to be displaced by the antitype. They both meet at the cross. But observe, the Lord does not partake

of His own supper. He does not need redemption purchased by blood. His was an unforfeitable life, not, as has been falsely said, liable to death, although He had "power to lay it down," as well as "power to take it again"; and this is just the difference between Divine and satanic doctrine. He gives it to His disciples previous to the accomplishment of that which it was intended to commemorate. With the symbol of His own body in His hand, and before He breaks it, that they should eat it, He lifts up His heart in thanksgiving to His Father who had given Him, His own beloved Son, to go steadily and intelligently to that awful cross, thinking of and caring for His poor failing disciples every step of His journey.

Who but a Divine Person could have given thanks at such a moment! What a perfect revelation of that which the Divine Being is! All the fulness was pleased to dwell in Him. Yet was He ever the perfectly dependent Man, but never less than the One who had humbled Himself to become such. He thus gives the broken bread and poured-out wine, symbols of His bruised body and shed blood, to His disciples, telling them to partake of it, previous to the work being accomplished. Afterwards, having completed a work which puts man in the glory of God, in His own person—measure of our fitness to be there too—He re-institutes this wondrous feast from the glory which He has acquired for Himself and for us; and He calls us to know His desire and to do His bidding through the Apostle's heart and pen. "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, &c." (1 Cor. xi. 23).

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Thus we have in print, before our eyes, the Lord's thoughts, not only when with us on earth but from the glory in heaven, about the way He would have us use this most blessed feast, which brings to our remembrance the deepest expression of God's love, the richest display of His blessed heart in all its fulness, and the most perfect exhibition of obedience which took the place, before His eyes, of our sin in all its blackness. What love! What a God He is who justifies us according to His own value of that blood, which is the proof too, of what a length you and I were capable of going!

The passover, as we were saying, represented in a former dispensation what the Lord's supper does in the present one; only that the former was prospective whilst the latter is retrospective, both meeting at the cross. We will now examine three distinct points from which the passover was kept, the principles of which, unfolded in figure, are intensely applicable, testing us as to which of these standpoints we occupy.

They are Egypt, the wilderness, and the land. Exodus xii. Numbers ix. and Joshua v.

1. The first describes the condition of a soul under shelter of the blood, safe as God's value of the blood could make him, but not yet saved. The word 'salvation' is never mentioned until the Red Sea, symbol of Christ's death, was about to be placed by God between the Israelites and Pharaoh with his hosts, type of the enemy's full power.

In Exodus xii, they were commanded to take their places under the sprinkled blood of an

unblemished slain lamb, the flesh of which was to be eaten, roast with fire, symbol of judgment which the victim had undergone, expressed figuratively here—in reality on the cross.

They were thus secured from God as a judge. “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord, “for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” God had said “when *I* see the blood.” It was His estimate of the blood, not theirs, which stayed the judicial work of the destroying angel.

But death had not yet stood between them and the foe; consequently in the 14th chapter, with the enemy pursuing them, and the Red Sea in their front, they are sore afraid, and cry out in terror. “Then Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” “The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” But here we have God coming in as a saviour, instead of having to be kept out by blood as a judge. Now I ask, Are there not many saints in this day, still keeping the passover in Egypt; who, resting under the shelter of the blood, are comparatively happy, but without peace; who are kept safe, but do not know that salvation means a great deal more; that it means complete deliverance, not merely victory over an enemy, but that the enemy, “the horse and his rider,” are thrown into the sea; in short, so saved as never to have the least dread of the enemy in that capacity again?

2. Now turn to the second of these stand-points. We find in Numbers ix, that the passover was kept between the Red Sea and Jordan. This

marks the condition of a soul, that has seen the whole power of the enemy broken by Him who took part of flesh and blood, that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage." The saint looks back at Christ's death as that which has given God the place of a just God, whilst justifying the believer from all his sins. The Red Sea has been crossed—Christ's death for us—and it now stands between the saint and the world with its fashions, its practices, its progress, its prospects, its hollow-hearted pleasures like the crackling of thorns under a pot, as well as its fearful doom. Remember these all go together. It is the same death that has delivered you from one as from all the others. "Who gave himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world." And what God hath joined together let not man put asunder.

The Red Sea is Christ's death for you, and marks *what* you have been delivered from. The Jordan, which we now come to, is your death with Christ, and tells you *where* you have been brought. How many there are who celebrate the Lord's Supper from the former standpoint, and know nothing of the latter, as to the joy of what Jordan teaches, in the experience of their own souls! Mark well, however, it is no attainment on your part that God would occupy you with, but with *what* He has already done for Himself and for you through the cross of the Beloved Son.

3. We will now read Joshua v, the third

standpoint from which the passover is kept, faking in, as it does in the experience of the soul, the symbolic teaching of the other two. Here we are in the land, which to us means union with Christ by the Holy Ghost, so that we have intelligence by the Spirit to understand the Divine teaching in the symbols already under our notice, the *full* import of which we had no eyes to see clearly until after crossing Jordan. Previous to this the question of sin had to be raised; not sins, but the nature that produced them. Now let me say, there is as much difference between the nature that produces the sins and the sins which the nature produces, as there is between a crab-tree, and the crabs that grow upon the tree. You may dispose of the crabs without touching the tree, and there it remains to produce as many sour apples as ever, if not more. Something else, therefore, has to come in besides blood-sprinkling, as in Egypt to keep God out as a judge, or the Red Sea, Christ's death for you, which puts God in the place of a justifier from sins. Something else, I repeat, has to come in now: "for ye have not passed this way heretofore" (Joshua iii. 4). Competency of creature effort is of no avail here. Christ's bloodshedding does not meet the difficulty: nor is the death of Christ for me sufficient to allay the alarms of conscience, when one finds that even after having believed, the flesh is incorrigible; not only as bad, but if possible worse than ever; for it is now in the presence of greater good. And this something else is not Christ's death for me, but my death with Christ. "As the truth is in

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Jesus" means "the having put off the old man" and "the having put on the new." Or, to use the symbol, the crab-tree has been cut down, and an entirely new nature, a divine nature, introduced, or grafted in, which will bear blossoms and apples of a different kind. Even the blossoms of the first tree must go, although they look to the human eye so pretty, prettier than those of the other. They represent the amiabilities of the old Adam merely, which expect and receive admiration: and unless these were allowed and cultivated by a saint, no sour apples would ever be produced; for the former must precede the latter. But all must be cut down; yes, all that which seeks to accredit the first man, and honour for him, must go. "How can ye believe which receive honour one of another," which honour suits the heart of man, better than "that honour which comes from God only."

Now these all gone, and you in the conscious enjoyment of the crab-tree having been grafted, or, in scriptural words, that you have been made partaker of the Divine nature, Christ having become your life, you can say intelligently of His death, that it is as much behind you as it is behind Him; that it is as much yours as it is His; for all that He did in suffering for sin under Divine judgment belongs to you, because He, who bore the wrath of God, has become your life after having done it, so that you are as much entitled to say, "I am crucified with Christ," as He is entitled to say He was crucified.

Saul of Tarsus up to the 9th of Acts never could

say so, much less you, as Calvinists falsely assert, seeing you were an unconverted gentile "without Christ, having no hope and without God in the world." There was no such thing as "the having put off the old man" for Saul of Tarsus, for in such case there would have been no man left, no man at all. But Paul, having got Christ for his life, and knowing it, could say, "I am crucified with Christ." And you, too, as truly and scripturally as Paul, should say, "I am crucified with Christ." His death is just as much mine as His, for He who delivers from all that death implies and has left it behind, has become my life. Observe, you are never told to die, but to believe a fact that already exists for God's eye and your faith, which answers to the circumcision of Joshua v, after having crossed the Jordan, and then there is active power by the Holy Ghost. Now you are privileged to keep the passover from this most blessed standpoint, taking into your soul's experience, in the intelligence of the Holy Ghost, (1) the symbolic teaching of its institution in Egypt, (2) of the Red Sea, and (3) of the Jordan already crossed.

First. With their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand, which means hearts tucked up from the belongings of Egypt, and in dependence upon the One who had called them out to the journey, they were to eat the flesh of the lamb that had been roast with fire, symbol of God's wrath in judgment which Christ has passed through. Unleavened bread and bitter herbs were the accom-

paniments ; the former signifying separation from evil, which is the very first principle of unity, the latter, forgiven sins. There is no view of sins so bitter as that of sins that have been forgiven.

When you find out that *your* sins caused Christ *His* agonies, repentance has changed its legal character into the deepest and most unselfish sorrow, a sorrow occasioned more from what Christ suffered because of your sins than anything connected with yourself, save that it was *you* who produced His sufferings. You sorrow more for the agonies you cost Him than you do for yourself. It is the deepest kind of sorrow ; but it puts you closer than ever to His blessed heart, and enables you more perfectly to hate self with all its efforts for reputation and importance.

Second. In the Red Sea you behold the whole power of the enemy broken ; for Christ did not come to modify or qualify God's original sentence against sin, which gave Satan his power against Christ as Redeemer. God did not deprive the enemy of his power. That would have been the annulling of His own sentence. And Christ came to verify that sentence of God against sin. He came to meet it ; He came to suffer it ; and He came to break the whole power of the enemy in doing it. He took part of flesh and blood " that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage." And God's way of accrediting what Jesus has done is by justifying you. His justification of you measures His value of it.

Third. You are on the resurrection banks of Jordan, in the intelligent possession of another nature; not only the sins, but the nature that produced them, having been disposed of by judgment. The twelve stones were set up in the midst of Jordan, (which means judgment), by Joshua alone. (Joshua v. 9). You had no more to do with putting the first man out of sight by judgment than you had to do with helping God to create the heavens. The one were far easier than the other. Then circumcision takes place. Mortify, or put to death the members, (Col. iii. 5.) Observe well, you are never told to crucify "sin in the flesh." God has done that. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." But you are told to apply the cross to every motion of the first man's will.

And now the passover is kept from this standpoint. This is the condition of soul in which you have intelligence to welcome and appreciate the blessed words, "Do this in remembrance of me." You have now reached Christ Himself, to have communion with Him in His death. You remember Him in His death; you think of Him (you do not *remember* Him) where He is. You have communion with Him where He is; you worship Him where He is: but you remember Him where He was, and where He is no longer.

Suppose you did me a favour in bygone days which draws me to your heart and gives me confidence in your love; and afterwards you come to dwell with me because you like me to be in

your company. The favour you had done me has conducted me up to your heart ; and now I do not remember you as with me, but I do remember you as at the time of doing me the favour. So it is with regard to our blessed Lord. We remember Him when He was on the tree : but we think of and worship Him on the throne, and, as we occupy our proper stand-point, the remembrance of the cross is enhanced to our value by the place into which it has introduced Him for us, and us in identity of terms with Himself. Thus the Lord's supper brings the cross in its fulness before our gaze ; and we are only in a condition to value it, and worship without a cloud, as we have first used it, not only as that which has put away our crimson sins, but also disposed by judgment of the one that committed them.

People say, We shall be surprised when we get into the glory. I reply, You have never yet been surprised at the cross as you ought to have been. In one sense the glory of the cross is greater than the glory of heaven ; the one is the effect of the other. You will share the glory of heaven ; but as for the glory of the cross, no created intelligence could have shared that. None could have sustained its weight but the Man, God's fellow, who never at any time was less than the One who had humbled Himself to become a man—to become a servant. That which will make us at home with Him in heaven is that which has made us at home with Him already. God's word and His Son's work put us in His presence without a quiver of conscience ; and these go together. The one is of as

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much value here as it will be there; and the other is as true now as it will be then. But for the deepest proof of Divine love, for the richest exhibition of the heart of God, you will have to look back, in eternity, from the glory to the cross.

Oh, how little we know about it! May the Lord teach us more and more what the breaking of bread means! May He fill our little tiny hearts, as we come together on the first day of the week to do His bidding, so that, in fellowship with Him about the cross, they may run over in worship, and no thanks to us! Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, gives relief, without effort, to worship; our whole soul's vision being filled, as we see "no man save Jesus only."

H. H. M.

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JOHN X.

THIS beautiful Scripture brings before us, first, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; next His actings in grace. It is a great thing to know who He is, and what He is, who laid down His life for the sheep, and has put them for security in His hand. This, then, is what we learn in the commencement of John x.; Christ simply declares Himself here to be the true Messiah of Israel, the One who should come. He it was who entered by the door into the sheepfold—that is, He came by Divine appointment and sanction to be the Shepherd of

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Israel, who were the people of God's pasture, and the sheep of His hand. He did not climb up some other way, as all the false shepherds did; they were at best but thieves and robbers, claiming unlawfully that to which they had no right. Not so Christ. He came in by the door, submitting to every rule and ordinance appointed by the owner of the flock — the Jehovah of Israel. Beloved reader, how blessed to think of Him, the eternal Son of God as He was, yet He comes down and humbles Himself to become a man, and as a man submits Himself *perfectly!* But Israel would not have Him; they slighted, despised, and rejected Him. So He leaves. He goes outside the fold of Israel, the enclosure which was peculiar to them. This is what is meant by, "He goeth *before them*" — as rejected and despised of His own people, He Himself goes first, and then it is said, He puts forth His own sheep, and they follow Him, for they know His voice. This was exactly the case of the blind man in the 9th chapter, who was cast out, and had been found by Jesus. What a blessed Shepherd by whom to be led and fed! How good to be under His care, outside all men's religion and the whole array of those ordinances which belonged to Israel!

Having thus set Himself forth in this way—*His person* the only ground of connection with God—He then opens out most blessedly what it is that replaces the old Jewish thing, Himself the foundation and accomplisher of it.

First—There is *salvation*. "By me, if any

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man enter in, he shall be saved.”—He now presents Himself as the door. He, and He alone, is the door; to enter in by that door was to be *saved*. He had laid down His life, costly and precious as it was. His blood was shed. It was His own voluntary act to shed His blood, lay down His life; no one had taken it from Him. As to necessity, there was none on His side, save indeed that blessed love of His, which would remove every barrier to its full expression.

Again, think of Him in contrast with an hireling. The hour of danger or difficulty would find the latter thinking of himself; Jesus thinks of His sheep. If He then interposes, if He lays down His life, sheds His blood, the first thing that meets us at the door is, *salvation*. “By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”

Again, there is also *liberty*. “He shall go in and out.” Slavery and bondage is the birth-right of every child of Adam. He is born into the world a lost slave. The moment he has to do with Christ, he is met with salvation and liberty—he is liberated, he is set free; and there is also *food*—“shall find pasture.” Oh for ability to describe the richness of the food! *Saved, liberated*, brought into a region where want is unknown—“I shall not want.” Not only this, but *filled, satisfied*; and hence it is, “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.” And observe, it is, “*if any man enter in.*” It is not only now the children of Abraham, the nation of Israel; the door of grace in Himself is wide

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open to all. Will you say, reader, if you know what it is to be blessed in this way under this gracious Shepherd Lord? Have *you* had to do with Him? It must be with Him; for it is, "*by Me*, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." Oh, what a contrast to all our purely natural thoughts of God and His Christ! What a contrast to all that was to be found in the *law or ordinances*! Neither the one nor the other could meet the first need to a poor outcast, either of Jew or Gentile. The law *required*, not *saved*—the law brought in death, not *life*—but, "By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved;" and, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," is *grace* in its fulness.

Once more: we have here also *eternal security*. The life which Christ gives is eternal, everlasting; but not this only, for of His sheep He says, "*they shall never perish*." But then, where will He put them to secure them against enemies from without. He makes them as strong *outside* as *inside*. No weakness within could endanger, for it was "eternal life" He gave; and no enemy outside could harm them, for He has the sheep in *His hand*. The hand that was nailed to the cross is the secure shelter and rest for all the sheep. Oh, what contrasts are awakened in the soul as we read that word "*My hand*"—"*My Father's hand*! Not the walls and barriers, the laws and ordinances of Israel of old, the fold; but His hand, His Father's hand. The thought of their security

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is linked with the eternal power of God, for the sheep are in His Father's hand. "I and my Father are one." Could anything be more wonderful than the infinite grace, boundless love, and Almighty power which are all in Christ, in His own person exclusively; and yet wide enough, most surely; for it is, "by Me, *if any man* enter in; and Christ is here all, and in contrast with all. It is no longer the ancient sheepfold of Israel, with its walls and ordinances, but the person of the Christ, the Good Shepherd, the living Lord, who died; and it is Himself in contrast with the *thief*, the *robber*, and the *hireling*—they seeking to enrich themselves, or to escape danger, at the expense of the sheep; He, in that blessed peculiar love of His, giving His life for the sheep. It is no longer Judaism, but salvation, liberty, food, and eternal security—it is no longer the darkness of death, but the light of life. Oh, reader, have you had personally to do with Christ? Have you by Him, the door, entered in? Have you turned away from yourself, your sins, and your sorrows, as well as your goodness, and gone to Jesus? Has He not made good a claim on your heart?

The Lord, by His Spirit, set Him in all the attractiveness of His grace so before us, that we may by Him enter in, and thus know the richness and fulness of that salvation, liberty, food, and security which are in Him and by Him.

W. T. T.

**“SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE
ABOVE.”**

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COL. iii., 2.

When Israel had passed through the Red Sea on dry ground, and the waters had returned again to their own place, to the destruction and utter confusion of their enemies, they found themselves in this position: as to the past, separated for ever from Egypt, the land of bondage and judgment, though abounding with all that ministered to the necessities and desires of the natural man; for the present, in the wilderness, a dry and thirsty land, affording nothing for their sustenance; as to the future, journeying on to Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey, the land of God's delight, to which it was His purpose to bring the people of His inheritance. There being nothing in the wilderness itself which could give satisfaction, they could not, as the people of God, be contented with the place, though they might well be contented with God's provision for them in it. If, therefore, not contented with the place they were in, they must of necessity do one of two things; either press on to Canaan, the land in which every promise of God to them would be fulfilled, or in heart turn back to Egypt, the land of carnal plenty. Settle down in the wilderness they could not.

Though not their rest, the wilderness was, however, the place of proof and testimony; for though the desert produced nothing for the sustenance

and refreshment of man, the presence of God was with His people, that they might know His sufficiency, and learn Him as their resource. So He gave them water from the rock, and "fed them with manna which they knew not, neither did their fathers know; that He might make them know, that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord, doth man live," Deut. viii. 3. Here then they stood, cut off from Egypt by the waters of the Red Sea, with God, in the wilderness, to learn dependence on His hand, moving forward to the land of promise, to which He was pledged to bring them, and concerning which He had given them repeated testimonies of its riches and its delights.

Morally, their state should have corresponded with this position. Forgetting Egypt, and pressing on to Canaan, their hearts should at once have been rejoicing in their deliverance, their Deliverer, and the prospect of their inheritance. "Now all these things happened unto them for types, and they are written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages are come."

The Christian's position is one indeed as real, and infinitely more perfect, than that of Israel of old. The death of the Lord Jesus Christ is to him in very fact what the Red Sea was to Israel, and more, it is Jordam also, for the christian is by faith, already in Canaan, raised, and made to sit together with Christ in heavenly places, though this is not our home. Christ's death has separated the believer from the world and from its

judgments, from sin and from its results. By faith the believer sees the death of Christ between himself and the judgment of God against sin and against sinners; that judgment which so soon is to come upon the world. In company with Christ, he passes by faith through death, even as the people followed, and were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, untouched themselves by its dark waters, which overwhelmed their enemies and the enemies of God, who seek to face death without the company of Christ. From the resurrection side of death he looks back, as Israel looked back from the wilderness shore of the Red Sea; and the world from which he has been delivered is out of sight, while his enemies lie dead upon the sea shore. As Israel of old, God's people can now join in the song, "I will sing unto Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." Or in their own feebler words, though with true expression of the blessedness of their position, they can say—

"Sin, death, and hell are vanquish'd
By Thee, the Church's Head;
And lo! we share Thy triumphs,
Thou First-born from the dead."

Blessed, indeed, are those who, by faith in Jesus, and in His death and resurrection, have thus passed from death to life, from darkness to light, from bondage to liberty, from the power of Satan and the world, into the kingdom of the Son of God's love.

But while this is, indeed, the present portion of those whom God has brought to Himself, by His own right hand and stretched-out arm, while sojourners on earth, it is not the fulfilment of God's counsels on their behalf. They have, even as Israel had, a prospect, and the present mercies which they taste of, perfect as they are for the place, are no more to be compared with the glory of the inheritance, than the provision of the wilderness could compare with the abundance of the land of Canaan.

It is a bad sign when the heart of a saint is not going on to the inheritance, for, as it is most certain that it cannot be contented with the world in its wilderness aspect, it must, as we have already said, in default of advance towards Canaan, turn back to the world in its Egypt character. The wilderness satisfies neither the old nature nor the new. The first found its sphere of enjoyment in Egypt. The second will be satisfied only when we awake in Christ's likeness. It is true that God supplies all His people's present wants, ministering Christ, as manna, by His Spirit for the nourishment of the new creation, and in His providence and mercy meeting all their temporal requirements, according to His knowledge of their necessity. He makes all grace abound towards them, giving them all sufficiency in all things. He supplies all their need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. But also He looks for a contented heart in them; one that can say, "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." Nevertheless the wilderness is the

place of faith and patience, not of realization ; it is the place for learning and labour, not for fruition and rest. The spirit is given, the earnest of the inheritance, but it is not the thing itself, and the good things prepared, are revealed by the Spirit to encourage and cheer the hearts of God's people on their journey heavenward, and the fruition is not here, but in the glory to come. To be contented, therefore, with such a place is impossible, and it will always be found that if the heart of the saint is not earnest in anticipation of that which is before, it will be reverting to the things that are behind ; to the world with its pleasures and vanities, and the comparative facilities which it affords for the ease and the satisfaction of the flesh.

The 2nd and 3rd of Colossians show us some of the present relations of the believer ; “ dead with Christ ;” not “ living in the world ;” “ buried with him by baptism into death ;” “ risen with Christ ;” the “ life hid with Christ in God ;” “ when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.” As Israel had done with Egypt, and belonged to Canaan, so the Christian now has done with the world, and belongs to heaven, where his citizenship is, tho' he has not yet reached it.

While Israel had to experience a literal wilderness, a place producing neither food nor water, so the Christian has to know the world as a moral wilderness, a place which in itself, and from its own resources, produces neither nourishment nor refreshment for the spiritual man. The manna—

bread from heaven—angel's food, the water from the smitten rock, were products foreign to the place of the people's sojourning. Christ and His word are alone given, and are alone sufficient for their every spiritual need. What makes the world a wilderness to the Christian is, that, apart from that which comes to him directly from God, his soul finds nothing to feed upon, while the things of the world, in which he once found his pleasure, he sees only as connected with the scene of Christ's rejection in the past and present, and of His judgment in the future. Therefore he cannot, dare not, set his mind on the things which are on the earth, the place of Christ's death, but upon the things that are above, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

If our hearts were more interested in the inheritance, and more thoroughly judged the present scene in its true character, "the things above" would, we doubt not, take more real and practical shape in our minds. Nothing could be more definite than the list of earthly blessings wherewith God promised to bless Israel in the land of promise; a land which the Lord Himself delighted in, and on which His eyes ever rested; where He would dwell with, and walk with them, and would be their God, and they should be His people. A land flowing with milk and honey. A land of olive-yards, and vine-yards; of rivers and fountains of water; of gold and silver, iron and lead; where every man should sit under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree; where neither enemy nor evil are occurrent; where they should eat bread to the full.

Surely the good things which God hath prepared for those who love Him, and which are revealed to us by the Spirit, who searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God, are not less carefully enumerated, and are not less real to faith than the earthly blessings recorded on behalf of Israel.

Hebrews xii tells us of some of the things to which we have been brought, of the communion and companies to which we have been introduced: to God the judge of all; to Jesus, the mediator of the new testament; to angels; to the Church of the first-born; to the spirits of just men made perfect. All these are included in "the things that are above."

Revelation xxi. and xxii. give us some insight to that place which the glory of God doth lighten, and of which the Lamb is the light; in which is the throne of God and of the Lamb; where His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their foreheads.

Everything that is suited to God; His presence and dwelling place; everything that is suited to man, not merely as in his best estate naturally, but to renewed, redeemed, and re-created man, with every sense and faculty adapted to the highest apprehension." Worship, communion, knowledge, all the best gifts of God, but touched and tasted here in part; there to be lived on, and lived in for ever.

If our hearts are seeking the things that are above, we can gather up something of their reality. Christ is there—our life,—and there for us. Even

now, "as he is, so are we in this world," but more, "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him for we shall see Him as He is." And then, God and the Lamb. the display of His glory; the unfolding of His counsels; the explanation of the past, the enjoyment of the present, and the anticipation of a future of never ending joy, intelligence, and yet of rest. No guesses then, but certainties, for "then shall we know even as we are known."

The Lord so set our minds on things above, that, following on with true diligence of heart, each day may add to the catalogue of our discoveries; and thus, not resting in any present attainments, nor even in present mercies, we may go on from strength to strength, rejoicing "in the hope of the glory of God," the path shining more and more unto the perfect day.

H. C. G. B.

RAISED AND SEATED TOGETHER WITH CHRIST.

EPHESIANS. II.

There are two subjects in this chapter, one of which I had specially in view. The first is that God has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Still He has a habitation down here through the Spirit, which is the second thing. There is a

house built in which God through the Holy Ghost dwells down here. It is the first part I have on my mind.

There are two great points in God's ways and dealings with man; one is the responsibility of the first Adam, and the second is His purpose in the last Adam. God purposes certain things about us. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, and, again, predestinated unto the adoption of children. God had in view certain things, which He was going to accomplish in the second Adam. It was all before the foundation of the world, and the cross is the meeting-place of these two things. The cross proved that we were ruined and lost, and it also laid the foundation for putting us into the same glory as the Son of God. The epistle to the Romans takes up the first of these points, except two or three verses at the end of chapter viii., while that to the Ephesians is entirely taken up with the second. It looks at sinners first; but it looks at them in an entirely different way to Romans. It is a different thing to look at me as a sinner and responsible for my sins, with Christ Himself answering for them, to God putting me into the same glory as His Son. This last is treated of in Ephesians. We get also a different dealing with the condition of man. In Romans we are looked at as *alive* in sins, and there is a long account of the wickedness of Jews and Gentiles, and the whole world is proved to be guilty before God, and then it deals with our condition and state. The second part of Romans takes up the

tree as being bad, not only the fruit it produces. The cross has met all that. Not only has He died for my sins, but I died with Christ, for faith. Death is the only end of the flesh or the evil nature. Romans takes up man as a sinner ; first, as to his conduct, and secondly as to his state ; for one, justification, and for the other, deliverance, and that is by death. " 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." It has been condemned in the cross of the Lord Jesus, and reckoning myself dead is a positive gain. Colossians treats of both. I reckon myself dead now, because Christ has died. It is the same figure as the Jordan, and the Red Sea, too, in a certain aspect.

When I come to Ephesians I am looked at as dead in sins, not alive in them. There is nothing to do with responsibility or justification—it is a *new* creation. Before the death of Christ it was God not merely saying that man was a sinner, but there were dealings of God with man—the flood, the law, the prophets, and lastly His Son ; and the end of it was, not that God turned man out of Paradise, but that man turned the Son of God out of this world. Man is lost ; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. That is what Christianity came in with. The world is thinking of meeting the day of judgment, but I do not think of that, for I am a poor lost sinner, and I get salvation. When people want to make something of man, it is important to get hold of

this—what the testimony of the Word of God is. We often find foundations insecurely laid in a man's soul, and that comes from the want of a thorough conviction of sin. They have no sense of the impossibility of God and sin coming together.

Well, God had gone through all this process, and at last said, "I have one Son, I will send Him." But when He came they said, "This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours." It was in the end of the world that He appeared—in the consummation of the ages. We are not come to the end of the world yet, but God has tested and tried man thoroughly and completely, and as the Lord Jesus says, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out." It is not yet executed, but God has tested man thoroughly. The thing in which the enmity of man's heart was manifested against God was the very thing in which God wrought the redemption which saves a man. The cross was the meeting-point of the sin of man with the perfect love of God. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The world said, "We will not have God at any terms," and they cast Him out and slew Him. *That* is what we all are. Man has to find out what he has *done* and what he *is*.

When that blessed and glorious work was done upon the cross, then God could bring out all His purposes and thoughts. Not merely the church,

but if you look at 2 Tim. i. 9., it is perfectly stated there. "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." God brought in the first Adam and tested him, and when all that was gone through, and Christ was rejected, God was glorified in that, and the foundation was laid for bringing man into glory; and then it comes out that the purpose was before the foundation of the world—so also in Titus. The soul goes through it individually, but we have the whole historical truth of it at the death of Christ. What I learn now is, that it is not whether I can meet the day of judgment, but that I am lost already. I prefer any vanity of dress or money to Christ. The world we live in has rejected God come in grace.

Then I come to the second point, what the purpose of God about us is—that we should be in the same glory as His Son. I was 'alive' in sins if I look at my side of it, but 'dead' in my sins if I look towards God. In this epistle, where it is "dead in sins" (I speak now of the operation that brings us into a new condition), Christ is looked at as dead. "What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." Here Christ is looked at as a man, in order to bring us with Him according to the mighty power which God wrought in Christ. "And *you* hath he

quickenened, who were dead in trespasses and sins," the blessed truth of that is, that where we were lying in sin and disobedience, Christ came, in love to us and in obedience, so He gives Himself up to death where I was lying, having put away my sins. Well, then, God takes this One who had gone down into this place for us, and raises Him from the dead and sets Him in the glory of God. We do not see ourselves yet gathered to Him in the glory, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." And now that very same power has wrought in bringing us into His place, by faith. Christ was actually dead, and I was dead in my sins, and God comes and raises us both up together. How came *He* to be down there in death? Ah! He came there about my sins. In virtue of what Christ has done, God takes a man that was dead in his sins, and puts him in Christ—in the very same place where Christ is, and by the same power that raised up Christ from the dead.

We "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"—that is the condition we were all in, Jews and Gentiles. We naturally belonged to it. Then he goes on, "But God, who is rich in mercy," &c. I see this poor, wretched child of wrath, and I find God above all this, and rich in mercy. I am taken from myself and cast upon God's doings, and that is where we get real peace. The prodigal son thought he would say to his father, "Make me as one of thy hired servants;" but he had not met his father then, for if he had,

he would have known how his father would have treated him. It was all showing what the father was for the son: he must have the best robe, and the shoes, and the ring. The whole condition of the son was the effect of what the father was for him.

When I was by nature a child of wrath, He "hath quickened us together with Christ." Christ having done what made it righteous for God to do it, God comes and takes us up there, "And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He puts Christ as a man at the right hand of God, and by the same power He puts me into Christ. My place now is the effect of the sovereign goodness and mercy of God, who took me when I was dead in trespasses and sins, and put me right into Christ where He is—wonderful place surely! Then the angels say, "Well, that is grace. That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Whether it is the thief upon the cross, Mary Magdalene, or one of us, we are put in the same place as He is. We are not in the heavenly places *with* Christ yet, but we are *in* Christ. The power that put Christ, from death, into the glory of God, has put me in Christ in the same place.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." You get the works afterwards. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto* good works." Created in Christ Jesus, not in Adam now, I am

created over again. The same power that wrought to put Christ into glory, has now wrought to put me into Christ. The Holy Ghost dwelling in me, gives me the knowledge that I am in Christ. God dwelling with us never was true of man, except in virtue of redemption—it never was true of Adam or Abraham, but the instant that Israel was redeemed out of Egypt, then He dwelt among them—there by the cloud over the tabernacle. Now in virtue of redemption God can come and dwell. The Christian is sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and individually he is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Being livingly united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, gives me the knowledge that I am in heavenly places in Christ, and therefore our citizenship is in heaven. Christ as Son of Man has perfectly glorified God; and what is the just reward of glorifying God? That He is set at the right hand of God. We “rejoice in hope of the glory of God”; what could make poor worms such as we are, think of that? It is because of what Christ has done. Just as we were like the first Adam, so shall we be like Christ in glory. He became a man on purpose to bring us, through His death, into the same glory with Himself.

Do you believe that, beloved friends, as regards yourselves? Do you believe that God is going to show to angels, in the ages to come, the riches of His grace in the place which He has given you? It is important for us to see, that, as regards title to the place and having the Holy Ghost who gives us the knowledge of being in Christ, it is a *present*

thing. The glory is not a present thing, but we *are* to know that we are in Christ, and that as He is, so are we in this world. That is our place with God, so that we have boldness for the day of judgment, delight in the day of Christ. I could not dream of works of mine to get there—of my works giving me a place in the glory of God! Man is in the glory of God in virtue of what *He* has done who has entered as my forerunner. We are called there in justice to the worth of Christ's work.

Now see where the works are; they come in as the fruits of this. God has works which fit this place. "Good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them? The works are ordained as much as the place. What does the apostle say when he exhorts them? "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children." You are made partakers of the divine nature, and now go and walk in the way suited to that. Do not let me see anything but Christ in you. Christ appears in the presence of God for us, so that there is perfect acceptance for us according to the value of His work, and now you appear before the world for Christ. I am the epistle of Christ known and read of all men—entire association with Christ, in the power of the Holy Ghost. It is not that we have to get a place, but, as put into that place, my business is to show forth Christ in everything. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If we have no oil in our vessels it will not do to meet Him. There is nothing

more important than the thought of the expectation of the Lord's coming; it is the character of the Christian. Are you really waiting for Christ, as men that wait for their lord? It is the condition I am to be found in. How far can we really say, I know my place in Christ, who is a Man in the glory of God, and therefore I am waiting for Him to come and take me actually there?

Supposing I am in heavenly places in Christ, then our conversation is in heaven—earthly objects are gone. It is where we are set as God's workmanship. He has set us there in His sovereign grace, and what I most earnestly desire is, that our hearts should have the consciousness of it, and, in having this purpose of God set before us, that we should be living in a Christian state or place. The place that God has given us is a place in Christ Himself. And now the life of Jesus is to be manifested in our bodies.

It is important that we should get hold of what is Christianity, in these perilous times. "The truth as it is in Jesus," is, that I have done with Adam, and am *in Christ*. I have put off the old man and put on the new. Man tries to improve the old, it cannot be done. You cannot set about and make the old man do for God, because God has supplanted him. He has judged the old man at the cross, and He has brought in Christ.

J. N. D.

(Notes of a Lecture.)

“REST.....REST.”

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Matt. xi. 28-30.

THERE is something very remarkable in the *place* in which we find these well-known verses, and there is a great contrast between what the blessed Lord proposes to the soul in them and His own circumstances at that moment. Indeed it is this, I feel certain, that clothes them with the beauty that surrounds them. The Lord called around Himself His twelve disciples, and instructed them in view of all that lay before them in their path. This occupies chapter x. As soon as He had finished, He Himself departed to *teach* and *preach*, for He was, while on earth, not only the faithful servant of Jehovah, but the unwearied servant of men, ministering to all the needy around Him.

John the Baptist, Christ's messenger, who was in prison, heard of His works; and, forgetting that it was not the day of *Christ's power* as yet, but the day of *His grace*, he allows a doubt to cross his heart. Can this be the Messiah of Israel after all? “Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” The Lord, in sending His answer, refers John to the *works*, which were those which only the Messiah could do; but it must have been a grief to the heart of Christ to find the confidence of His forerunner and messenger thus shaken.

Next, the state of the nation of Israel, His own people, passed before His heart and grieved Him. He compares them to “children sitting in the

market, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, ‘We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.’” Israel would not have the ministry of either John the Baptist or Christ—they cast the one into prison, and in the end they crucified Christ. John the Baptist came and preached law, and they refused him; Christ came and preached grace, and they cast Him out. What a picture of the heart of man!

Then there were places on earth which witnessed Christ’s mighty works—places where His glory shone out in a remarkable way—Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum. His thoughts turn with sadness to such, as He announces the woe which rests on abused and despised privilege; the heaven-exalted Capernaum should become the hell-doomed city. Reader, I entreat you to ponder such deeply solemn words as these, uttered by the sorrowing Saviour, in regard to slighted opportunities and despised long-suffering. Never was there a period like this in the history of Christ as a man on earth, when His labour seemed so in vain—doubted by John, refused by Israel, despised in the scenes of His mightiest works. Yet at this moment, it is, *He* rises in the perfection of a man whose meat it was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and He says, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man

knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.” And then it is, having let us, as it were, into the secret of His resources, He comes out with His returns, in the well-known precious words which have fallen as healing balm upon many a troubled heart since, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will rest you.” It is now no longer a question of responsibility to accept or receive ; it is free sovereign grace that acts from itself and for itself, finding the weary and burdened that it may rest them. Oh, how blessed all this is ! Say, my reader, does it meet you ? He who spoke those words knew what man was, what the world was, what the most privileged were. He knew that in a scene in which God was not, where His name had been dishonoured and His grace refused, there was weariness enough and burdens enough, but rest there was none. He Himself stands here as the only One in whom there is a place for the sole of the foot to rest on ; and, looking out over all time since, and poor breaking hearts in it, He says, “Come to me.” The invitation is world-wide ; those to whom it is addressed are found everywhere—“Ye that labour and are heavy laden.” He knew what that was, and He alone could meet it. Reader, does it not suit you ? You cannot deny it—however you may despise or refuse, you cannot say it does not suit you. I would here seek to meet one who says, “Well, what you say is very true ; but I am greatly troubled by another little word of Christ

which often comes up before me, viz., ‘All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;’ and I begin to think within myself, am I given of the Father to Christ? and so my burdens and labour of soul are increased.” Reader, is this your state? If so, the way out of your difficulty is simple, and the end of your sorrow of heart is near at hand; for do you not see that here there is no *condition or qualification*—it is simply, “Come unto me,” and going to Jesus is the proof of the Father’s *giving and drawing*. It is to Himself I go, for He says, “Come.” He does not say *how* He will give me rest. He presents Himself, and the rest for my poor sin-stricken soul and sin-burdened conscience is in connection with Himself. He never said “Come” until He Himself had come first from heaven to earth, that He might be in this sense “the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” Reader, are you seeking rest? “Come unto me, and I will rest you.”

The second rest is a further and needed thing too. It is connected with subjection and submission, with taking Christ’s yoke upon us—it is rest after rest. Dear reader, most earnestly do I desire it for you. If you have never had the first, you are, like Noah’s dove, *out of the ark*, in a scene of judgment, without a spot for the sole of your foot to rest on. Safety, rest, peace, and plenty, were inside the ark; destruction, death, restlessness, and, sorrow outside. The two great marks of a perfect man, are manifested by the blessed Lord in connection with the second rest, viz., *submission and subjection*. “I thank thee

O Father, Lord of heaven and earth" is perfect submission; "even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight" is perfect subjection. Observe this second rest is connected with taking Christ's yoke and learning of Him; here the yoke is taken not for *service* but for *rest*.

It is, beloved reader, a question either of submission or self-will; where there is subjection to the Father's will, there is a path of quietness and peace. Christ was meek and lowly in heart, satisfied to be in the lowest place at the will of His God; and nothing can possibly molest or overthrow one who is there.

"We wonder at Thy lowly mind,
And fain would like Thee be,
And all our rest and pleasure find,
In learning, Lord, of Thee."

W. T. T.

"GOD WAS IN CHRIST."

2 Corinthians v.

There are two great aspects of the Gospel in this chapter, first, That to which we are called, and for which we are made fit; second, The testimony God has brought out of sin in us, and Christ's work meeting it. It is good to apprehend what the calling of God is, in order to know what is needed to be in it. There is no reconciliation of the old thing as such, but complete reconciliation *in* the new man. The judgment of man is

pronounced, "now is the judgment of this world." God's dealings with man in the flesh are *over*, the flesh is set aside for ever. In the new state of things brought in by Christ in resurrection, "all things are of God." As to the body we are not in it yet, therefore it is good to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord." The moment we get hold of our calling "to His kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. ii. 12), we are brought into the presence of God. He is also enabling the soul to apprehend the glory. It sees that a work entirely of God must be done in order that man may enter glory. Could you put yourself into Christ's glory? "He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God." The presence of God revealed to the soul, gives true thorough conviction of sin. It does not mind what man thinks, because it knows what God thinks. Sin is a shameful thing, but the presence of God produces thoughts that are beyond *shame*. The moment the soul is before God, it hates, judges sin, cannot think of hiding it, would rather be in truth before God—"there is truth in the inward parts;" shame before man leads to the concealment of sin. God's true light manifests everything, but when the heart is set right, it takes God's side against sin—there is forgiveness; all is right when looking at what we are in the presence of God. We are called to "God's kingdom and glory" to be conformed to the image of His Son. We have a life—Divine glory belongs to that life. It is *God* that justifies. He says that is right in my eyes, God Himself pronounces. That is what

I want, this full blessed justification connects itself with glory—“Whom he justified them He also glorified.” “We wait for the *hope of righteousness.*” (Gal. v. 5.) This is what God is calling us into in Christ. That which is announced in the Gospel is Christ as man is in divine glory. It is “the Gospel of the glory of Christ.” That has been done which has put man into the glory of God. This new thing is man, the centre of all the glory of God. It will be accomplished of course in Christ by-and-by, “that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth”—or as it is expressed in Revelation, “the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.” It is to this glory of Christ we are called. It shines in upon the soul. Are you fit for this glory? If not what are you fit for? You can't stay here on earth for ever. Where are you going? If not into the light it must be into the darkness, that is opposite to it. There is no medium. We have this in the parable of the king's son—Jesus had spoken of seeking fruit before; now He is speaking of grace that seeks nothing, it is a feast prepared. Those bidden are from the highways and hedges, and no matter what they were before, but they *must* have the wedding garment. The prodigal must have the best robe to enter the house—he must be suited to the house. Have you, my readear, got that. We see what the calling is, can you say “I have got what is fit for the glory I am going into?”

You may be getting it, the Lord leading you into it, but without it what are you fit for? You must either be outside or with the wedding garment *inside*. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Did He not suit Himself to all to win their hearts? He came with the invitation to turn back to God; but no—they would not: for his love He got hatred—terrible witness of man's entire ruin—he is *dead*; alive indeed for himself and for his fellow men, but there is no movement of his heart toward God. "He came to his own and his own received him not." Yet in Christ there is perfect love—*no* reproach. Paul saw the terribleness of the judgment and set about to persuade men. The love of Christ is still pressing upon men the truth that we are dead: the link between man and God is broken and cannot be formed again. Does the cross say "Christ had set the world right?" One died for all," unspeakable love, "then were all dead." Has your soul been brought to the conviction "that in me that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing?"

Could you say you would not have put Christ to death? Could you say "He would not have died for me, He might have helped me, and purified me?" If not, then you must say "I am dead, lost, I have no link in heart with God! The old creation is a judged condemned thing—you as children of Adam belong to it, the question is, whether you get out of it? Man has emancipated himself from God; what infidelity does, is, to justify and proclaim the fact: set up and cultivate man's will. Cain began this world without God. He

went and built a city and called it by his son's name. They had instruments of music and artificers there—all to make the world a pleasant place without God; and that is what man is doing still—he says it is with the faculties God has given—true: But what is the moral state of man's heart? is he not away from God? Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost." I do not ask whether you recognize yourself as *wicked*, but whether you see yourself to be *lost—dead*? By nature we reject Christ, all our thoughts cluster round self. We prefer pleasure—everything in the world, our own will to Christ. This is the condition of all naturally, was the condition of every one of us, but the One who was not dead, who was acceptable to God, the only One who could be, who was made sin for us. He stood in our place. He the Holy Blessed One was made sin. The quickening power of God shows us sin, but we see the whole thing closed on the cross. I see what flesh is, it crucified Christ—but I am not in it any longer, I belong to the new creation; I am in Christ, who is my righteousness, and gives me the title to enter in. We find the calling into God's kingdom and glory. We see the veil rent, and Christ is within as man, and in getting there, He has put away all that we were in the flesh. We have to contend with the flesh daily as an enemy, but as to our standing before God it is ended. In Christ we have entered into the new place—"you hath He reconciled." (Col. i. 21;) there is not a thing left between me and God. We are brought into the glory of God. We wait for it indeed as to our bodies, and He has given

us the earnest of the Spirit. We have the reconciliation—reconciliation to what? to God. He did it according to what God is, and we must judge sin according to what God is. When do we know it? now by faith; but we cannot receive it, till we have judged darkness to be darkness. God says, "where is My Son?" The world must plead guilty of His death; it saw no beauty in Christ, and now prefers pleasure, dress, money, science, anything to Him. I may have to learn a great deal, to go through much conflict, but if I belong to Christ, I am reconciled to God. "The love of Christ constraineth us"—is the ground of all our walk. You may have been living to *yourself*; it may have been very decently, none of what the world calls great sins, but there are plenty of decent enemies of God, and will *reputation* stand in the judgment? A Christian cannot live to himself in *purpose*, but are you living to yourself in *practice*? You may say you are occupied in innocent things, but nothing can be innocent away from God. Have you judged yourself as belonging to a world that has rejected Christ? We have to leave it in detail—the flesh continually showing itself in unexpected ways. But God has condemned sin in the flesh. He forgives *sins*, but the *state* He has condemned, not forgiven. Have you known Him made sin, and yourself the righteousness of God in Him? Can you say, I am reconciled to God, brought back to Him? Can you say, I am glad to know all about my sin, "search me O Lord, and try my heart?"

J. N. D.

NO ! NO !

John vi. 37.

It is said that the celebrated Bishop Butler was very uneasy when dying, and in moments of special uneasiness and restlessness, thus expressed himself: "Though I have tried to avoid sin and to please God to the utmost of my power, yet from being conscious of my constant weakness, I am afraid to die." "My lord," said his chaplain, "you forget that Jesus Christ is a Saviour." "True," replied the Bishop, "but how shall I know that He is a Saviour for me?" The chaplain replied, "It is written, 'Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* (*οὐ μὴ*) cast out.'" "True," said the Bishop, "and I have read that Scripture a thousand times, but I never felt its full value till this moment. Stop there, for now I die happy." It is blessed to see how Scripture bears testimony to the person of Christ, and the completeness of His work. Its testimony is to the Christ who is in the glory of God, having by His death settled the question of sin. It is a never-to-be-forgotten moment in the soul's history, when for the first time the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ; from that same blessed face, once, more marred than any man's, and His form more than the sons of men, the whole glory of God shines! And I, a poor weak thing in myself, see it; and like to look at it, saying, "Let me see every ray of that glory, for it is in the face of Him who bore my sin upon the cross."

W. T. T.

THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST AND SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE.

THERE are two points which are on my mind to say a word about. First, the way in which the Lord's own presence orders the path and gives character to testimony. Secondly, the way in which personal attachment to the Lord Jesus Christ gives intelligence in everything. The way to get spiritual intelligence as to all the things of God, is to have Christ as everything to the heart.

I turn to the Old Testament with regard to the first point, for there you get a striking history of the total failure of man. Stephen alludes to it in Acts vii., proving that man, dealt with by the law as responsible, was an entire failure, and at the cross man was fully rejected. Man is lost, but the process he goes through is to find it out. To get a clear apprehension of divine things, we must see that we are lost, and if that is the case, we are not in a state of probation. We may get the knowledge of sin by the law, but the thing a man must be brought to the knowledge of, is, that he is *lost!* "If one died for all, then were all *dead.*" This is a very solemn position to recognize ourselves in, but it is not the first thing we learn: we learn first what we have *done.* If you ask persons if they are sinners, they say, We are *all* sinners: but if you say, Have you sinned enough to be *lost?* they say, Oh dear no, I hope not. In the death of Christ, man rejected the grace that had come in to him, and the One who had all the promises.

The Gentiles were lawless, and the Jews broke the law; but when Christ came, there was a despising of mercy.

The condition of man from Adam, was that of sinners outside the garden. When God had given the law, it was broken—and when there was “none righteous, no not one,” God comes into the world in love, and man turns Him out (though, of course, He fulfilled His own purposes at the same time). *That* was more than sinning against Him, it was positive hatred. First you get lawlessness, lust and selfwill—then lawbreaking—and then the positive rejection of God come in grace. The history of man is thus closed, and God begins on His own footing. It is not now what *you* have done, but as was said to Israel, “What hath *God* wrought?” The only possible relationship with God, depends now on what God has wrought.

First, the people make a golden calf—giving up God: that is always the first thing man does. When God sets up something good, man spoils it. Take Adam in the garden of Eden—take Noah; no sooner out of the ark, than he gets drunk—then the law, it is scarcely given before it is broken. Aaron too, he never puts on the garments of glory and beauty after the day of consecration. So with Solomon, no sooner established in the kingdom, than he brings in idolatry—the same with Nebuchadnezzar, the first great gentile power. But it is a distinct thing when God comes in grace, for they despise it altogether. Government began on the part of God with Noah, Gen. ix. 5, 6, and went on till His Son came—they rejected Him,

and then all was over. There was a little supplement in the beginning of Acts; but when Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, testifies to a glorified Christ, they reject a glorified Christ, as they had rejected Christ in incarnation.

But you get everything in which man failed set up again in Christ—failure in the first man, and God glorified in the second, where He had been dishonoured in the first.

At the golden calf, the trial of man was really over. "Yea, he took up the tabernacle of Moloch," Stephen quotes from Amos. That was the root that produced such horrible fruit afterwards. One finds in Moses what grace did. The Lord says to Moses, "*Thou* hast found grace in my sight, I know thee by name." And Moses says, "Consider that this nation is thy people," he pleads for them. There you get the fruits of grace, in contrast with the effects of sin. Moses is a beautiful picture of grace, but not as Christ was. God says to Moses that He will destroy the people in a moment, and they were to put off their ornaments, that He might know what to do. But Moses says, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; *for it is a stiff-necked people.*" That is just what we have to do. Why must I insist on having God with me? Because, unless I have Him with me in His grace, I shall never get through the wilderness, with this terrible flesh about me. I give as a reason, *Because I am so bad*; and through grace He can have me with Him, in spite of all my infirmities. I say, In my flesh dwells no good thing; if you

do not go with me, I shall never get through the wilderness.

It is in separation that God deals in grace with Moses, in connection with his going outside the camp—the camp was deserted, but God was outside. The tabernacle had not really been set up then: so now, the building of God is not finished. There was nothing established on earth when He said “I will build my church”; but He *did* establish a church on earth, responsible in its place, which has failed altogether—that is why we speak of ruin. The Lord says, “I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;” they never will against what *He* builds. In 1 Cor. iii. Paul puts the church under the responsibility of builders; but man fails in that, as he does in everything. Paul says to the elders of Ephesus, “After my departing, even of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things.” He says, As soon as I am gone you will see how it will all be; and we have seen. Not a stone that Christ builds but will be safe in glory. The history of the so-called church, is a history of iniquity—if you read the history of the heathen, you will not find such a history as that of the church.

The thing that Moses does, is to take the tabernacle and put it outside the camp. What was the effect of this? The *Lord* was in it; He came down to the door and talked to Moses, as a man speaketh unto his friend. He comes down in the cloud; *we* have something better, for we go into the cloud. God refers to this speaking face-to-face,

as a special favour shewn to Moses. When there had been this separation, Moses got such communion as he never had in the camp. When he was up in the mountain, and God tells him that Israel has made a golden calf, and says, I will consume *them*, but will make of *thee* a great nation; Moses says, No, Thy glory is concerned in that. Why? Because he identified God's people with God's glory; and when he comes down from the mount, he identifies God's glory with God's people, and says, "Slay every man his brother"—you get the very same principle in both cases. If I see God's people in evil, I say, You must be dealt with by the rod. Moses sets up the tabernacle outside the camp, and God owns it. There was no holy of holies then—it was a meeting place with the Lord. "And it came to pass, that every one which sought the LORD went out unto the tabernacle." They sought *the* LORD, that is what governed the whole. The golden calf was in the camp; the Lord was in the tabernacle, which was not then set up in its completeness.

You will see what the communications were with Moses at this time, Ex. xxxiii. 13. "Show me now thy way, that I may know thee." There you get knowledge. Then "That I may find grace in thy sight"—not that he had not found grace, but he wanted to know it every moment. "Consider that this nation is thy people." He never forgets God's people, though God would not call them His people. God's presence is the next thing. Moses must know God's way and have His presence, ver. 16. They had sought the Lord when

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the tabernacle was set up outside the camp, but Moses now wants His manifest presence. Here I find that God's presence was the centre that governed the whole, that stamped the character of the whole thing, and if you have not that, you have *nothing*. It was when the sin was manifested in the camp, that Moses insists on the Lord's presence. It was God's way and God's presence that were to separate them from all the people on the earth. Moses gets bolder in faith, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." But he could not see His glory, there was no atonement then—the cloud was not His glory. We have here two principles—one, the total failure of what God had set up, then we get the Lord's presence and the Lord's rest.

Two characters are brought out here, Moses and Joshua. Joshua did not leave the tabernacle, that is where the difference is between them. Joshua is the figure of Christ spiritually at the head of His people. We must be as near the Lord as Moses was, and the effect of nearness to Christ is love to all the people of God, even if they go wrong; but, at the same time, if I am near Christ I cannot *go with* any who are going wrong. It is only so far as we know how to separate the precious from the vile, that the Lord says we shall be as His mouth, but we must be close to Christ to be enabled to do it according to His mind. I am speaking now of broad principles.

The first point I desired to shew you, was, how the Lord's presence governed everything; now I will shew you some instances of personal attach-

ment to Christ being the origin of intelligence. I was greatly struck with Mary Magdalene's history in John xx. The disciples go to their own homes, but there was no home for Mary without her Lord, and she stands there weeping. Though she turns and sees Jesus, at first she thinks He is the gardener. Her attachment to Him leaves her all alone with Him; it will lead to communion with others, but there *must* be the soul alone with the Lord. The other women came early in the morning, but *she* came while it was yet dark. The disciples had gone home, but that would not do for Mary; she had not got Christ, and her heart could get nothing, if it did not get Him, and she is the first to whom He reveals Himself, and makes her the messenger of intelligence, for the disciples as yet knew not the Scriptures. To her He says, "Touch me not." He did not mind the other women touching Him, but He says to her, "That is not for you yet, "But go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." This is the first time He calls them *brethren*. Mary got the truth from Himself; He tells it to the disciples, but it is *by Mary* He tells it. There I get the secret of divine knowledge, and so you will always find it. She was wrong in one sense, in seeking the living among the dead, but there was this thorough attachment to Christ, and the consequence is that she gets the first revelation of Christ. She was the vessel of knowledge because she was attached to Christ.

Take the woman who was a sinner, in Luke vii.,

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there was thorough attachment to Christ, and what was the consequence of this poor wretched creature's love? There was light—the knowledge of complete salvation, whilst the self-righteous Simon, delighting in his own heart, was in perfect darkness—does not think God's Son even a prophet! But the woman loved much, and the Lord turns to her and says, "Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." One sees forgiveness, salvation, and peace, connected with that poor creature's attachment to Christ. Her heart had been won to confidence, and she gets salvation revealed.

Take another instance. There was Martha and there was Mary. Martha was cumbered about much serving, but Mary was sitting at the Lord's feet, hearing His word: just what He wanted. And what is the consequence of this learning? That she knew His mind. When Lazarus is dead, Martha goes out in the haste of her temper to meet the Lord, but soon returns to call Mary, saying "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." Martha had the consciousness that she was not equal to this intercourse with Christ, so she goes and calls her sister. With Martha, there was no entering into the mind of Christ, but when He sees Mary weeping, He is moved deeply and groans in spirit. So when He comes to Bethany, it was this same Mary who poured the ointment on His head—her *heart* did it. The disciples think it a mistake, but He says, "Let her alone"—she knows all about it. It was not that she could have told prophetically what was the mean-

ing of it, but her heart had got the instinct; she anointed Him for His burying.

Now look at the disciples in John xiii. *Peter* could not ask Christ the question about His betrayal. Why? Because he was not on His breast. John did not place himself on Christ's bosom to get knowledge, but in being there he got it. As the apostle Paul expresses it, "We have the mind of Christ." John was in the place where he could get Christ's ear—know Christ's secrets. But now all God's wisdom and power are in Christ, and to have the understanding of them, we must *have* Christ; it is when to our hearts He is practically *all*, that we get into His secrets. Then you are in the right place, and the right thing is done as He would have it done. I shall never get "Shew me now thy way," unless I have Christ—unless He is *everything* to me. Whether the habits we indulge in, or the things in which we are walking, are grieving to Christ, or whether they are like Christ, we have to look to; because when we come to the end, there will be no life but what we have lived for Christ. The life that we live, answers to the Christ that we find when it is over. We would not like to be found not doing our duty, but faith makes present those unseen things, so that we live upon them, and we live Christ and can say, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

The Lord give us to find Him everything, beloved friends; He is far more full of love to us than we are to Him. May He lead our hearts closer to Himself, that we may get the secrets of

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His grace and wisdom, and then go forth in the Spirit, to live a life of practical sanctification to Christ, without losing the judgment of self!

J. N. D.

(Notes of an Address.)

CRUCIFIXION AND MORTIFICATION.

“WHATSOEVER God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” What rest there is in this! It is the perfection of God and His work, which is the very essence of the Gospel, and which gives such solidity to the heart of the believer in Christ.

“By one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” “Now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.” “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” He came, indeed, to do the “will of God; by the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.” It is a perfect atonement, for it avails for the “sin of the world.” It is a finished work, for it can never, nor need ever, be repeated.

Christ crucified for sinners is the foundation of the Gospel message: it is also the foundation of the sinner's peace. His work is indeed the very work of God. One mind and purpose were in the Father and the Son in counsel; one heart in the carrying out the work of redemption; and it is

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“for ever.” “There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” The heart that trusts Christ’s finished work, trusts that which, for time and for eternity, has met its deepest need.

But not only does the cross represent the death of Christ for the sinner when he believes, it also necessarily represents the penalty due to the sinner himself. If death and judgment be the sinner’s due, whether that penalty be borne by himself or by his substitute, it is still his penalty that is paid; and as the penalty is death, it is virtually his own death. Christ died not for His own (for He was without sin) but for the sins of others. In believing, then, we acknowledge that death is the “due reward of our deeds,” the “wages of (our) sin,” and we see the blessed Lord in love dying that very death for us upon the cross. When faith grasps this fuller view of substitution—of the atoning work of Christ—it can say indeed with Paul, “Our old man *was* crucified with him,” Romans vi, 6; and again, “*I* am crucified with Christ,” Gal. ii, 20. *His* cross thus becomes *mine*, *His* death *mine*. By faith I identify myself with Him there, and rest in the certainty that the judgment of God which passed upon Him there, has for ever passed away from me. “*I* am crucified with Christ.” Can this act be repeated? Never. Christ can never be crucified again. “In that he died, he died unto sin *once*.” The work of atonement has once and for ever been accomplished by Him, and God has once and for ever “laid on him the iniquities of us all.” “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree,”

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Thus we find that the Word of God contemplates the believer's crucifixion with Christ as a completed and never-to-be-repeated act. He died *once*, and we were then and there and for ever identified with Him; and so it is said, "I am crucified with Christ." "They that are Christ's *have* crucified the flesh." "By whom the world *is* crucified unto me, and I unto the world." "Our old man *was* crucified with him." Deeply important is it for the peace and establishment of our souls to grasp these conclusive statements of God's Word. The believer is never told to crucify himself or his flesh; it is always accounted to have been accomplished. "Whatsoever GOD doeth, it shall be *for ever*."

But we may be asked, "Is not sin still to be found within us; are not the flesh and its workings to be subdued, and is there not a continual and necessary conflict to be maintained?" Yes, most assuredly, is the reply: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Sin still exists, practically and experimentally, in our bodies, and in our members, and will do so as long as as we are in this tabernacle; but it is to be, and can be, judged and subdued; and for this very reason, that we can already say we are "crucified with Christ." Because, by faith, we reckon ourselves dead with Him, and so "dead unto sin," we are called on to "*mortify* our members which are upon the earth," but not to *crucify* them.

In the sight of God, and in our own account by faith, we are crucified *with* Christ—never without

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Him. His crucifixion was ours. If we endured for ourselves what He on the cross endured for us, it would be eternal condemnation to us. But as to the "mortal body" and "members which are upon the earth," they are not said to be crucified. The old mortal body and its members, prone to evil, are yet present, and the working of sin in them has to be subdued.

"Mortification" is the process by which they are to be controlled. "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Romans viii, 13. "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." To mortify is to *put to death*. We cannot put to death what is already dead. Mortification, then, is a perpetual killing, if one may so say, of the members and of their deeds, and this process goes on until the believer puts off his mortal body.

The believer can say—Because my old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I might not serve sin, because God in His infinite grace has reckoned the death of Christ to my account, and I am in His sight as one who *has* died to sin—has died with Christ; because also through faith in Him,—whose through grace I am,—I have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; because of these precious and peace-giving truths, I will with gladness and determination mortify every motion of sin in these members of my body which are yet upon the earth. By the power of the Spirit who dwells in me through God's grace, and who enables me to judge between flesh and

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spirit, between good and evil, between the precious and the vile, I will bring the cross of Christ (whereon He died for me) to bear upon everything with which I come in contact, and on all the motives and desires of my heart and of my mind, and "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," will treat as worthy only of death all the workings of the flesh in my members, whether in thought, or word, or deed.

May God grant, then, to our readers to grasp the difference between "crucifixion,"—Christ's finished work for us, the blessed and peace-giving truth of identification with Him on the cross, who hath loved us, and given Himself for us,—and "mortification," the daily and hourly subduing, by the only divinely-appointed or possible means, of the workings of sin in the members. For, beloved friends, by death, and death alone, can the old man escape judgment; and this is by crucifixion. By death alone can sin in the members be overcome and subdued; and this is by mortification. "Knowing this, that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your

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members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."—Rom. vi, 9—14.

H. C. G. B.

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A soul that is without exercise is also without spiritual life. The very essence of life is exercise—nor can there exist such a thing as inactive life. Yet there are special characters of spiritual exercise belonging to different states of soul, and to different apprehensions of the truth. This, however, is certain, that when the truth is understood, the soul is at liberty. "The truth shall make you free." "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." Bondage is out of the question. Indeed, the spirit of bondage has been displaced by one of adoption, and the cry of "Abba Father."

Still there may be a meagre or partial grasp of the truth—a knowledge not only of natural depravity and also of guilt, but likewise in measure of the Lord as Saviour. The soul can "see men as trees walking"—is convinced of the willingness and power of the Lord to save—is assured of not being cast out—and rests on the "precious blood of Christ" as the only foundation of peace with God.

But along with this there is deep and valuable exercise—an exercise which may lead to a confirming and solidifying of the faith which already is at work in the soul. At times heavy clouds of uncertainty sweep across the sky—and a “horror of great darkness” occupies the scene which but a moment before had been brightly lit up by the sunshine of faith and hope. And oh! the gloom of that darkness—how blank, how dismal, how utterly hopeless does the entire horizon appear! The poor distracted soul is shut up to all the moral desolation of the “Castle of Giant Despair.” No man careth for it, nor can assist it. The hard bondage of Egypt would be infinitely preferable. Unbelief has entered and spread its shroud over all. There is doubt and fear and abundant mis-giving. The drear lament of despondency is sung—

“Where is the blessedness I had
 When first I knew the Lord?
 Where is my soul’s refreshing view,
 Of Jesus and His word?”

All is apparently gone—the joy, the sweet peace, the bursting love, the refreshment of the word, the comfort, the hope, are all fled. And the soul, discovering the complete ruin, cries out in agony—“Oh! wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

Terrible exercise, but valuable, and productive of a peace more settled and abiding, when the full truth is known, than when the soul apprehends that truth, in a manner as divine, though more

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superficial. The tree will strike its roots according to the rigour of the blast—and the calm of the morning will be all the sweeter after the storm of the night. Hence the value of this exercise—nor is there any real cause of despair. This exercise is the proof of life—painful, no doubt, but true—for just as a corpse is beyond the reach of physical suffering, so is a soul, devoid of spiritual life, destitute of this character of exercise. Rheumatism proclaims the existence of life; and doubt and fear tell of the work of God in the soul.

In one sense, therefore, this state of doubt and fear is to be commended—yet only in so far as it gives evidence to the germ of life and the beginning of the Spirit's work within. But such a state does not attach to the Christian—though he is no Christian at all who has never passed through it. The Christian proper is one who enjoys deliverance and who knows the value of redemption. His conscience is purged by the blood of Christ, and his heart is therefore “purged from an evil conscience.”

Now in the renewed soul there are two causes of doubt and fear—the first, ignorance of the plan of salvation, the second, failure of walk. The first is generally found in those who have just emerged from the slumber of death and unbelief, and the second in those, who, it may be, have known the truth, but have allowed sin, in some shape, to dull their appreciation of the finished work of Christ and thus to dim their spiritual eye-sight. They have “grieved the

Holy Spirit of God whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption," and hence their lack of peace and joy.

As to the first, let it be fully understood that the one only, but divinely sufficient, ground of acceptance is the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That ground has been given by God; and the righteousness of faith is imputed unto those who "believe on him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." In this blessed testimony we see not only that which met our guilt—the delivering up unto death of our precious substitute, as also the closing up of the history of man before God, but that by virtue of which we are accounted righteous—His resurrection from the dead, and our consequent acceptance through and in Him.

Clearly human merit, of any kind or description—either before conversion or after—either of work or feeling, has no voice here, any more than human demerit, however fearful, any hindering power. The spring of all is grace—free, full, unbounded grace, which asks nought from its object, nor turns him away. God deals with man on the sole ground of his being completely without merit or title; and so "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"—"to seek and to save that which was lost." Grace deals with such, and, when the soul has learned its lost condition, it accepts, most thankfully, the free salvation provided.

What room is there for doubt here? None.

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The conditions are too plain and too appropriate to admit of the smallest question. And are they God's conditions, and may the perplexed and troubled soul rely upon them? Surely. How peace-giving is the testimony of the word of God! How deep the peace when the truth of the all-cleansing power of the blood is known! God desires no other ground, and, beloved reader, if your soul has been in such darkness as that described above, be persuaded to rest on what is written concerning that ground. The saving work is wrought outside of you altogether, and the Holy Ghost ever refers you to that work, on which to rely for salvation. It is enough for God; say, is it enough for you? Shall not the payment, to use a poor human illustration, that meets the claims of the creditor, satisfy the fears of the debtor? And God has raised His Son, in proof of the complete satisfaction of all divine claims in the blood of the Cross.

Can you not join in such a hymn as the following:—

“ Rise, my soul, behold 'tis Jesus!
 Jesus fills thy wond'ring eyes.
 See Him now in glory seated
 Where thy sins no more can rise.”

Or can you not believe what is written that “there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus”—that “their sins are forgiven them for his name's sake,”—and that they are “accepted in the beloved?” As a believer you could not be safer than grace has

made you—be your thoughts, fears, and feelings what they may.

But, some will say, did not the Apostles themselves suffer from doubt and fear? Certainly not as to their salvation. Of himself Paul wrote that “without were fightings and within were fears”—2 Cor. vii. 5. He was troubled on every side, his flesh had no rest; but, notice, this is all and exclusively in connection with his labours in the gospel. In these labours he was daily in jeopardy of his life, and his fears and fightings were all in reference to them. Again, he tells us that he “kept under his body, and brought it under subjection; lest, after having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway.” 1 Cor. ix. Now as the verse stands, there appear to be grounds of fear, but the context reveals that the very opposite is the case. And, however the need of studying the context of any given passage, to isolate may be to misinterpret; and in this case most palpably so. And so the Apostle states distinctly, “I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest” &c. Now what could breathe more certainty, what could show more purpose of heart, what could declare more intelligence than this context? The road was known to him, and he did not therefore run with uncertainty; he fought with effect and his strokes left an indelible impression. His ways of self-denial and tremendous objectivity of life made it plain that he at heart was a true man, whatever they may have been, who, at Corinth,

were preachers of a more attractive kind, but who failed, at the same time, to check their passions. Hence, using himself as a figure, he says, "Lest after having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." A man may thus preach to others and yet continually be lost. Only notice, that preaching, and not salvation is in question.

Clearly therefore it cannot be argued from this passage that the Apostle doubted his salvation, but he shows what comports therewith, a body led captive. Let one more instance from 2 Pet., ii. 22 suffice: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." This true proverb needs little explanation. The dog returned to that which was natural to him—he had not been taken out of nature; and so, too, the sow had only been washed, had never changed her natural character, and therefore returned to her wallowing. So it happens with those who only "know the way of righteousness," and having known it, "turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." They speedily revert to their true element, and prove that their acquaintance with the truth was only outward; their affections had remained untouched. But how solemn to know that such a profession should be made, and that a man may be so like the thing, and after all only a hypocrite!

This, however, is the manward side, and the abundant need of warning, of exhortation, of example, and of rebuke, is therefore manifest—but on the Godward side, when His blessed counsels and pur-

poses of love unfold themselves, then all is definite and certain. Thus "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified," Rom. viii. And here we have no break in "eternity's golden chain." God knows the end from the beginning, and the soul, in order to rest, must gather up and feed upon those rich expressions of His will. As to the purpose of God, all is eternally certain—albeit as to the walk of the believer, all is dependent on his faith. Yet is he responsible for nothing but the most absolute dependence on God's unfailing grace. Hence we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

As to the second cause of doubt in the believer—failure of practical holiness—it is a mercy that peace of heart is broken when sin has been committed. It shows the tenderness of the Spirit within, how that the throne of affection belonging to Christ has been usurped by the world or the flesh—and its rightful Monarch displaced; how that the faithful word of warning has been slighted or the secret prayer forgotten. And then fear and doubt pour their dark tide of unbelief into the soul and leave it wrecked and wretched. Indeed any other result would be fearful. The consequences of sin must be made known and the conscience troubled, to the end that communion may be maintained unbroken. Hence "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." By this means restoration

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is obtained, and the soul, when honest, learns a new lesson of grace, which makes sin only the more loathsome.

But, when the conscience is good and the Holy Ghost ungrieved, Christianity supposes fullest certainty and the entire absence of doubt in the matter of salvation. "Therefore we are always confident" said the apostle, and why? for, "He that hath wrought us for this self-same thing (*i.e.*, the glory) is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit," 2 Cor. v. "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii., nor can there be imperfection in that which God does.

True, "we are saved in hope, and are waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body," but of this result there is no fear. As sure as the soul of the believer is saved now, so surely will his body be when the Lord comes to raise His saints who are sleeping, or change those who are waking—when the groan of the present shall cease and

"When the eye at last beholdeth
What the heart hath loved so long."

But meanwhile the step may be firm and the heart joyful. These are scenes of grace—scenes therefore of joy and of vigour. May our hearts be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus!"

J. W. S.

A NEW WELL.—SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE.

A circumstance, which aptly illustrates the great truth of Christianity, happened not long since in a small village on the west coast of Scotland. The sewerage of the place needed improvement and cleansing; and in the progress of the work one of the principal wells in the town, from which pure water had been supplied to families in the vicinity, became polluted by contact with the sewer. As soon as the cause of the disaster was discovered, remedial measures were set a-going, in the hope of restoring the now foul spring to its original purity. Every effort which skill and ingenuity could suggest was taken into consideration, but to no purpose. It was thought possible to clean and wash out the old well as far as it could be seen, but this was abandoned as useless. It was next suggested that if the old building of the well, sand, stones, &c., were removed and a new well built instead thereof, the desired object would be attained. Many conflicting opinions prevailed as to the possibility of success. Should this plan be put into execution? Some were for, others against; but at last it was resolved to call in a man whose occupation had been that of a constructor of wells, and whose experience justified the expectation that his counsel would lead to a proper decision. Nor did he disappoint this hope, for when called and questioned, his

reply was, unequivocally, "It is not possible to procure pure and sweet water from a spring polluted as this is by sewerage, either by cleansing it out as far as you can see, or by removing the old building and constructing a new one. You must build a *new well*, with *new stones*, *new sand*, and in an *entirely new place*." I happened to walk in as these facts were being told, and when I heard them, it struck me what a picture of Christianity that is! and it also struck me how little known or understood Christianity is! And now, do you not see, dear reader, how true all this is, that man in his natural state, is the polluted *well*—defiled in his *spring*, his *nature* corrupt? What is to be done? God's heart is overflowing in its love for guilty man, while man's heart is overflowing with hatred to or indifference towards the blessed God. What is to be done? God must set that filthy well—man—aside. There is nought else for it. The spring is polluted at its *source*, man is irreparable. So God sends His own blessed Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into this world, the scene of the dishonour done to Himself, as well as the witness of man's ruin and degradation, and *here*, where man had utterly failed to glorify God, He, that blessed One, that beautiful and perfect man, perfectly glorified God. "I have glorified Thee *on the earth*," and thus exhibited what a *dependent and subject* man ought to be; and not only this, but as He walked this world, He manifested God His Father, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father." What a wonderful thought, "the only begotten Son, who

is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," is the One who comes into this poor world, which was at a distance from God, to tell out the secrets of that bosom towards poor man in it; and inasmuch as judgment is resting on man by reason of sin, and that he is, moreover, walking this world an enemy of God, God's Son bears the judgment, gives up His own life "as a ransom for all," and at the same time presents His own personal excellency to God. Man's history is now closed, the old well is declared, as to its *standing* and *state*, to be irremediable; but this is not all, for He who in grace thus gave Himself, "is raised from the dead by the glory of the Father," and becomes now in Himself, thus risen, the new standing for the new well. Therefore is it written, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, and all things are of God."

Oh, what wonderful words these last six are, "and all things are of God;" the position is of God, the building on it of God, the builder, God. Even as in the case of the well, the old position, mortar, stones, and sand were all set aside as good for nothing, so in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, man built up as a sinner, as a child of Adam, is entirely judged and set aside, not only his sins put away, but that which did them, his nature, is condemned, and in the Lord Jesus Christ risen from the dead, the new era or second volume of our history is opened, and on the title page of this volume is inscribed—"All things are of God."

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May the Lord the Spirit open hearts to see the great salvation of God, how He has settled the question of the old well with its corrupt spring, and what a magnificent well He has opened in His Son risen from the dead, the second man, the last Adam, who has ended in His death the first man, and is now risen head of the New Creation!

W. T. T.

“ WHAT HAVE I TO DO ANY MORE WITH
IDOLS? I HAVE HEARD HIM AND
OBSERVED HIM.”

Hosea xiv. 8.

Hast thou heard Him, seen Him, known Him,
Is not thine a captured heart?
“Chief among ten thousand” own Him,
Joyful choose the better part.

Idols once they won thee, charmed thee,
Lovely things of time and sense;
Gilded thus does sin disarm thee,
Honey'd lest thou turn thee thence.

What has stript the seeming beauty
From the idols of the earth?
Not the sense of right or duty,
But the sight of peerless worth.

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Not the crushing of those idols,
With its bitter void and smart ;
But the beaming of His beauty,
The unveiling of His heart.

Who extinguishes their taper,
Till they hail the rising sun ?
Who discards the garb of winter,
Till the summer has begun ?

'Tis that look that melted Peter,
'Tis that face that Stephen saw,
'Tis that heart that wept with Mary,
Can alone from idols draw—

Draw and win and *fill completely*,
Till the cup o'erflow the brim ;
What have we to do with idols,
Who have companied with Him ?



CONVICTION AND CONFIDENCE.

LEV. xiii. 38-46 ; xiv. 1-7.

NOTHING can be more wonderful than that a poor sinner should be able to confide in perfect peace, here on earth, in the midst of his leprosy and misery, in the very One who is on the throne of God in the heavens. Wondrous grace, that such a One up there in glory should have a heart full of pity for guilty, daring rebels! Just conceive, if possible, for a moment, what such tidings would be to a poor, friendless, hopeless, homeless rebel, whose sins and sorrows had reached to such a height that nothing but despair was left; for him to hear that any one thinks of him, or cares for him, is good news so wonderful that he almost fears it is too good to be true. A Saviour in glory, who died for rebels on the earth, are contrasts indeed, and yet such is the testimony of God at this moment—a testimony to be repeated wherever there is a sinner, a guilty, lost one, on the face of the whole earth.

In writing a little concerning the Scriptures above quoted, my object is to point out, as simply as I can, the *place* the Word of God has in con-

victing and *assuring* the soul. I greatly desire to press upon the conscience the all-important fact, that the discovery of our misery, or of the only One who has heart and power to meet us in it, are in no way consequent upon our feeling or sense, but upon the unchanging Word of the living God. I have heard the question asked, "Do you *feel* you are a sinner?" Yet I humbly submit it is not the *first* question. It would be felt, no doubt, if the testimony of God about man as a child of Adam were believed. We may be well assured that the testimony of God is as clear and distinct as can be. By nature man is a leper before God—without Christ, without hope, without God in the world; an unclean rebel, with a mind and will set against God. Hear His Word, "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit, the poison of asps is under their lips; whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; their feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. iii. 10-18.)

Nothing could be more decisive or convicting. It is the great antitype of the leper, who is con-

victed and shut out of the camp of Israel by the word of the priest. It was not a question of his feeling his leprosy; the question was, what the priest had said—what was his word who knew the fatal plague spot? The leper in Israel, with rent clothes, his head bare, a covering upon his upper lip, crying “Unclean, unclean!” must go outside the camp; that is, he must take the position the priest of Israel by his word placed him in. What a solemn picture of the condition of man as a child of Adam now! God has shut every man’s mouth, has pronounced man unclean, unfit for his presence; but along with this (of which no adequate picture could be given), that same blessed God assures man that there are in Himself springs of compassion and mercy, of which He has the heart to make guilty, polluted, loathsome lepers, the object. This, God has *announced* to sinners, has *demonstrated* in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and *bestows* now wherever there is the faith that casts itself on Him. How wonderful to know that I have a Saviour in glory! A Saviour who came to earth and died for me, rose again from the dead, having, in death, closed my history as a leper before God; and because of who he was, as well as having righteously met all the claims of the throne of God, took His seat on high in glory, from whence He lets His voice be heard and His light seen, from whence all that I need comes, and to

which glory it is the *purpose* of His heart to bring me. It is the word of God that convicts me of my condition, as seen and judged by Him in righteousness, and it is the same word that bids me take comfort, because He who shuts my mouth, if I may so say, opens His to tell me of the grace and mercy that is in Himself for me, as well as the full provision He has made through the agonies and the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ, to take such as us out of the state in which, by nature, we are, at a distance from Him, and to bring us unto Himself. What a message to be put in trust with to poor man in this world, declaring to him in his leprosy and ruin, a love so wonderful, that it rests satisfied with nothing short of his complete deliverance from condemnation and death, and his full satisfaction in the place where God would have him, justified from all things, accepted in the Beloved, and united by the Holy Ghost to Christ in heaven. Oh! how wonderful this is, God's own joy, accomplished in and through His own Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Once again, let me press it upon my reader, all this is on the testimony of God, borne in the word of God to man's ruin and God's love; the picture of the former being the leper in Israel placed outside the camp by the word of the priest.

I turn now to look at the second Scripture, and there we shall find the same in principle. The

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leper being cleansed is once again to be brought back ; but how ? “Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds, *alive and clean*, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop. And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water ; as for the living bird he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water ; and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall *pronounce* him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field. (Verses 4-7.)

In the above verses, which describe the cleansing of the leper, we have a striking picture of the principle on which God now justifies the ungodly, namely, on the ground of the death of Christ, by which sin is condemned and righteousness established, and the resurrection of Christ, which proclaims God's satisfaction and our justification.

The bird killed in an earthen vessel, over running water, is, in picture, Christ crucified, and the living bird let loose, Christ risen and glorified, and all this the result of that which was in God's heart respecting poor sinners on earth, helpless and hopeless in their ruin. What a comfort to be able to show all this to poor sinners as God's *testimony*, that the word which silences him on

his side opens the door of hope on God's side. Wonderful message! yet more wonderful messenger, He, the beloved Son, who came from heaven to make it all good in His death and resurrection for us.

One point more, and I close. We have seen, I trust, that it is *God's testimony* to man's ruin, not man's feelings or thoughts about his ruin, that is the question; and that God has likewise given testimony to all that was *in His heart* in the gift, death, resurrection, and glory, of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. There is another point of testimony to which I would direct attention: how did the leper *know* he was cleansed? On the same authority as that which convicted him of leprosy. As at first he was pronounced unclean by the priest, so now being cleansed, he is "*pronounced clean.*" As at first, on the word of the priest, he took his place *outside*, so now, on the word of the priest, he takes his place *inside*; in both cases it was the *word of the priest*. How important, how blessed is this! Many a soul perplexes itself from want of simply taking God at His word, which is the true source and spring of all known enjoyment, as it is written, "The God of hope fill you with all joy, and peace in *believing.*" And on the other hand, many a soul is blinded and deceived, judging the state they are in by their own apprehension of it, or their own feeling about themselves; they con-

sequently fail to see the complete ruin they are in, and the wonderful provision God has in perfect suitability to Himself made in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to meet them where they are.

Another point of great beauty is the fact, that from the same spot whence *trouble* came, *comfort* likewise comes; and this is seen constantly in scripture. If we look at Isaiah vi. we find it—the glory of Jehovah's presence *convicts* Isaiah; the throne with all its holiness and majesty penetrates the depths of the prophet's conscience, and he is as the leper in Israel; the light of the throne is too much for him, he is compelled to write the sentence of death on himself, and that he does so the following words sufficiently attest —“ Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.” It is very solemn to see that the presence of God and the Word of God have like power over the conscience and the heart. In the New Testament, viz., Heb. iv. 12-13, both are spoken of as if one.

Now, observe, when the prophet's trouble was, as it were, at its height, comfort is ministered to him from the very same place whence that which produced his unhappiness flowed: “Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth,

and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." The rapidity with which the comfort flows is worthy of note, it is like His heart whose mission it was in person, and now by the Holy Ghost, "to bind up the broken-hearted." It is like Him of whom it is said, "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

How very blessed it is to see that from this moment the prophet dates his commission; his ear was open when his heart was healed!

"I *heard* the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me."

It is a wondrous sight this; the heart healed, the ear opened, and the feet swift to run in Jehovah's service—"I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou hast enlarged my heart." Again, we shall find the very same thing in the New Testament; turn to Luke v., and who can deny it was a leading moment in Peter's history and life? What else can that moment be to any of us, in which the sense of what we are is present to us in His light who makes manifest the secrets of the heart? Such was this scene in Luke v. The beloved Son had met Satan in the wilderness, and driven him away by the obedience and dependence of a perfect man, in chap. iv.; and here, in chap. v., He is as perfectly God on the lake of Gennesaret as He was perfectly man in

the wilderness ; by His power He commands the treasures of the deep into Peter's net, and at the same moment commanded the light of His own glory to shine around Peter's soul ; and in His presence what could Peter say but " I am a sinful man, O Lord ? " And mark it well, as in Isaiah vi., so here in Luke v., " Fear not," comes from His lips whose glory produced that state which nothing but His " Fear not " could meet. Blessed, blessed Lord, perfect everywhere !

" Lord Jesus, to tell of Thy love,
 Our souls shall for ever delight ;
 And sing of Thy glory above
 In praises by day and by night !
 Wherever we follow Thee Lord,
 Admiring, adoring, we see
 That love which was stronger than death
 Flow out without limit and free ! "

And mark it well, how all is here forsaken and left to follow Him who that day won Peter's heart for Himself, and though Peter grievously failed after this, and was restored again, yet a link was forged between him and the blessed Lord on the Lake of Gennesaret which nothing ever could break. May our hearts be sensible of His convicting power, that we only confide in Him.—
 Amen. W. T. T.

SEARCHED AND KNOWN.

PSALM CXXXIX.

THE way integrity of heart is produced is by grace, and by grace alone. In the beginning the Psalmist trusts God. At the close of the Psalm, after he is brought to know God, after he looked at himself as made by God, his whole desire is to be searched out.

There is nothing that produces integrity of heart but sovereign grace, reigning through righteousness. There are people not awakened at all, careless people, away from God, can boast of their delight to gratify their passions: it is folly as well as wickedness. It is the simple folly of the human heart to go on with an eternity before it, looking to get good out of things here, not liking to *think* what is before it, because *knowing* what is at the end of it—judgment, because there is guilt. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; walk in the ways of thine heart, &c.; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” This is where the careless young man that hates the light is; he is gay like a drunken man. He does not know the care of wretchedness; well, he is drunken, morally drunken.

They say, “If you think of God it will make you melancholy.” Why should the thought of God make you melancholy? Because you have a bad conscience. If I saw a child that is melan-

choly always in the presence of his father and mother, I would say there is something going on there very bad. What kind of heaven would it be if the presence of God made it melancholy?

“All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do,” is described in a strong way in this Psalm v. 4-12. “Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?” What do souls want to go for? There is a soul before God and afraid of Him. It is a terrible thing, and terrible because it is true. How am I to get out of the sight of God? What a dreadful state, but a great deal better than the state I described before, because I should hope souls would get out of this. What would heaven be to such? “Thou art there.” Well, that is enough for one in that state not to desire to be there.

We *know* we are in His presence, because our conscience tells us. We may deny it; but when the conscience is at all awakened, it knows it is. It knows that it has to do with God, with One that has knowledge of right and wrong; and I have got a sense of right and wrong, and God has taken care I should. When man was turned out of paradise he got a sense of right and wrong, it may be very vague, in the mind; but when the truth comes, there is distinctness about it; and I know then what I am, and what all things are, “naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” There is not a man in

this city that would not be happier now if he could know that he would be happy for eternity.

Here the soul speaks of how it cannot stand in God's presence, and yet cannot get out of it. If God does work, there must be some little sense of goodness, because He is goodness—love, if you please. There is some *hope* in the soul where this is so.

Now, what man always attempts is to make excuse. It does not succeed with you about your children when they do it, and yet you try to impose it on God. The human heart, where it does not get to a thoroughly broken-down state, is always excusing itself. You will find it in the Christian who has fallen and is not really humbled about it: he tries to make excuses even to himself. The excuse was Eve's condemnation. There is no good in an excuse, because it admits the evil. It leads into falseness if we try to excuse ourselves. Did you ever find a child in the habit of excusing itself, that did not get into telling lies? Never! We deal with God as no one would let his child deal with him. We try to deceive God, but we cannot; we never did. You will get plenty of religion in the world, provided it is not *God*. They may have it from dread: it cannot be rooted out of the heart of man that there is a Being above him, though it may be perverted. There is no truth in the inward parts till we get the conscience thoroughly judged.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart.” Do you think that a person could say that if he knew it was as a judge? I could not do it if I thought I was going to be condemned. You may get carelessness, forgetting God, and you may find an honest heart that hates God’s presence, and cannot get out of it; or the religious heart that is always making excuses for itself. What idea have you of God if you make excuses? Why, you could not put off a sensible man with them.

Well, what gives integrity of heart? Suppose a physician comes to heal you, would not you tell him *all* your symptoms. This produces integrity of heart, and nothing else. “Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.” No iniquity! no guile! I do not want to excuse what is all put away. Suppose I am in debt. I do not like any one to see my books; I do not like to look at them myself, and there is no integrity. But when forgiven the debts, I like to look at them and see how much is forgiven. I may blame myself, of course, for getting into debt; but a forgiven debt I do not want to hide. The poor woman in the city had got confidence in His love; the love of God manifested in Christ *attracted* her heart to Him.

The burden of unconfessed sin is a terrible burden upon the heart. A secret is hard to keep, but a sin is dreadful to keep. One is always

afraid of its coming out, and yet we know God knows it all. There is a comfort in being honest in the inward parts. And did the Lord ever reproach a poor sinner who owned his sin? Never! Though they had been insulting Him the day before, He tells them He came to seek them. Oh what a comfort to find I can perfectly trust Him! The heart rankling under the burden—and now to be able to bring it all out to One we can perfectly trust! The thief says, “we indeed justly.” He tells it out because he can trust the Lord. I can go to Him and get my conscience perfectly relieved. I tell it out, and find nothing but *love*. He comes and presents Himself to us and says, “You may trust Me.” You say, “No! I have sinned too much.” “That is the very reason to come; you cannot escape judgment—so I have come in grace.” I get the two names of God revealed (v. 12); and when everything is fully revealed, I meet perfect love. God is light: in Him is no darkness at all. Well, here I am in the light, and in the light just as I am; how came that about? Why, that He is *love*. What the Gospel does is not to allow a single sin to stand in the presence of God, but to have it taken away in grace—and that gives integrity of heart.

There I am weeping (Luke vii. 38). It is an immense relief, but it is not peace. But then comes another fact. You all know that He died for sins to put them all away. The person of the

Lord Jesus Christ brought down to man, in grace lifted up upon the cross, has wrought propitiation for our sins. When I know He has come in grace I can say, "Oh, but He has borne MY sins upon the tree;" it has nothing to do with any work *in* our hearts. As I have often said, the importance of it is, there is nothing of mine mixed up with it, only my sins; and He finished the work according to the perfection of God, when there was not a single thought about it in my heart. I find that it was when I was an enemy the work was done for me. Whenever a person believes in God all the fulness of the work belongs to him. The heart that is utterly bad does not like to submit to the righteousness of God—to a work done entirely outside ourselves, it is too humbling. We mix up in our hearts the work *for* us with the work *in* us. Good feelings we ought to have; as a result we ought to walk in them. God will have right feeling *for* Christ, but no right feeling *along* with Christ.

You say, My heart is not happy about my debts being paid. Well, the reason is you don't believe it: when you do, you will be happy. If you do not believe what God says you cannot be happy. Feelings are right, for they are the work of the Spirit *in* us: but that is not the work *for* us. We must have Christ and His work, and nothing else whatever. "The worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins." The

dread of consequences is not the motive of the Christian's walk. You cannot know the love of God and not love Him. A real love to God is a sense of His love in the soul. Love is shown in the child's sense of the parents' love to it. The moment I have my conscience cleansed for ever—for ever, because the blood is always under God's eye—I find Christ, who has put them away. Then I take God's side against myself.

V. 23-4.—“Search me, O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me.” I can say to God, I want your eye to search my heart. There is the integrity of the saint. The integrity of the sinner is letting out all before God; the integrity of the saint is “O God, search me.” He does not say, “and see if there is any way of goodness in me.” That he found in God. He does not want to find any goodness in himself: God does, for He has put Christ in him. The more spiritual we grow, the more we find out what we are.

And now, beloved friends, can you honestly say, “Search me, O God?” Are your hearts honestly so before God? Have you so seen the love of God as manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ that you, as sinners, can open your heart to Him? He *does* see it. It will come out in judgment, if it does not come out in your conscience now. The very thing God is exercising us ALL about is thinking “no eye shall see me.” A man cares for his character before man, who

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does not care about what God thinks. A man who would not cheat men is cheating God continually. We cannot, in reality; He knows it all.

Now, do you trust Him enough to tell all out to Him? As Christians, are you able to say, "See if there be any wicked way in me?" I am not afraid of His imputing it, but are you afraid of His taking it away? You may be afraid to say it because He may cure you of it. There are some Christians that keep their own will in a little cabinet, locked up. They pray and get answers up to that; but that is locked, and they never get on. Such a man is preparing something for himself—decay of soul, if not chastening. Whenever self works in any thing Christ is not all: whatever hinders Christ is a wicked way. I am not now speaking of what is positively evil.

If you begin to think of your heart, are you glad that God should bring up what is in your heart, and say, That is the way I look at it? Could you say you would like God to give you *His thoughts* of it all? The Lord give us so to be under the eye that is never withdrawn from the righteous, as to be capable of enjoying Him without hindrance; every Christian in the bottom of His heart does wish it, but practically, if you knowingly keep a part in that way, you are sowing something for yourself that love must chasten. When I can see blessedness in the day of judgment,

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then I can say, Remove from me everything that hinders.

There is no integrity of heart without a perfect knowledge of grace. The heart cannot be with desire before God, unless the work of Christ is known. The Lord give us to have truth in the inward parts—and that we *can* have, because He visits us in perfect grace—that we may grow unhindered as a garden of the Lord's planting.

J. N. D.

(Notes of an Address.)

THE LIGHT AND THE BLOOD.

THAT God is light is a truth more universally recognised, in some sense, than perhaps any other truth of God. We do not mean that it is known or intelligently confessed as God's truth, but we mean that every man's conscience is aware of it, and every man's ways evidence the conviction he has within. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." It is because of this that the wicked hate Him, and natural religion seeks to conciliate Him. A natural man cannot think about God without also thinking about his own sins. Of this we are convinced, that though men may speak of, and in measure recognise God

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in goodness, in power, in mercy, yet this thought must intrude, if even it be not uppermost, that if God be all this, yet sin is in them, and they are sinners. The extent of this sense of sinfulness varies greatly from the careless recognition of the fact, to the deep consciousness of it as wrought in a soul by the Spirit of God. But we repeat, no one in his natural condition, no one apart from Christ known and trusted in by faith, can think of God calmly and quietly for many moments without also the thought of sin or sins arising in the mind.

“God is light!” But this great and solemn fact, which makes the sinner’s heart and conscience quail, is the foundation of the deepest blessing to the believer’s heart and mind. But light manifests, for “whatsoever doth make manifest is light.” As in natural so in spiritual things; in the dark nothing is rightly discerned. In a dark room there is no difference between a chair and a table, between a black man and a white. The difference *exists* but it is *not seen*. So in the spiritual darkness of nature, “the natural man knoweth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Good and evil, the things of God and the things of this world, all are blended and confused. The evil is there, but apart from the grace of God it is not judged. Bring the light of the sun into the dark room and everything is discovered. Bring the light of God’s truth into

the soul and everything is spiritually discerned, for "God is light."

It is a terrible moment when the light of God first shines into a sinner's heart, and shows him what he is, and upon the sinner's ways, and shows him what they truly are in God's sight. "In Him is no darkness at all." In His light all is light, and darkness is reprov'd. Man himself is seen and known through and through—not as he has been accustomed to regard himself, in self-complacency, or as his fellows may have regarded him, in ignorance, may be, of the workings of his wicked heart, even as of their own. And who could abide that light, its intense, all-searching power, but for the provision which grace has made in the blood? The blood of Christ is God's provision for, and it is also the peace and the plea of, the sinner's conscience when brought into the light of God. Blessed and perfect, because divine, provision, through faith, in which the sinner is justified and the conscience is at rest.

The light manifests the sin, the darkness, of the sinner. The blood puts away the sin, and sets the sinner at peace in the light. The light, even of God Himself, can manifest nothing which the precious blood cannot put away, "for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." "The life is in the blood," and "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." How perfect the harmony thus existing in all the

provisions of divine grace! "God is light," and would have men to be in the light in communion with Himself.

It was not God who hid Himself from Adam, but Adam from God. So now, He hides not Himself from sinners, but poor sinful man, fearful of the light, and ignorant of the blood, withdraws himself from God.

Beloved reader, if the light has not yet shined in your heart, "to give the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," "we pray, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." For "God hath made Christ to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Shrink not from the light; let its beams pour into your heart and conscience, for that word of light which tells you of God's holiness, and of your own sin, tells you also of the blood of the Lamb without blemish and without spot—the blood of that blessed Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, and Son of Man, which was shed for you and for me, to save us from sin and the world now, and from the wrath to come, and to fit us for that place in glory where the same Lord Jesus Christ now dwells; "having abolished death, and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel," from whence also He will soon descend to take His believing people to Himself, that where He is there they may be also. "And as

it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." H. C. G. B.

DOING TRUTH.

MATT. xv. 10-28.

IN this beautiful Scripture the Lord unfolds to us in a striking way what is in the heart of man, in contrast with what is in His own heart. There is nothing but badness in the one, and nothing but goodness in the other.

Men in general, like the Pharisees here, are occupied about what is *outside*; the washing of hands before eating bread, the washing of cups, the traditions of the elders have the first place in their thoughts. With what amazing power must these words of the Lord Jesus have fallen on their ears—"Hear and understand: not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. For out of *the heart* proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies—*these are the things which defile a man*; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man." What a picture of man's heart!

the seat of all wickedness and folly ; the cage of every unclean bird ; a filthy, polluted swamp, out of which issue the streams of sorrow and death ! My reader, there is your heart ! Have you owned it, bowed to it, submitted yourself to the judgment of God so expressed ? so much so, that to you it is a comfort past description to turn away from yourself to Him—that Blessed One, whose heart, full of goodness, is towards you, and whose word to you is—“I cannot trust you ; you may trust Me.” Have you ? It is not a little remarkable that immediately after *exposing* the heart of man, the Lord left the place of boasted privilege for the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, which were outside the region of earthly blessing, and the people in covenant relationship with God. And here in the defiled place, as it were, He *manifests* the heart of God as fully as previously in the place of outward privilege He had *exposed* the heart of man. The boasted goodness of the land of Israel could not change the heart of man, and the known wretchedness and contempt connected with Tyre and Sidon could not take away from what was in the heart of God. A woman of Canaan, belonging to a cursed race, a descendant of Ham, in her distress cries after Him—“Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David ! my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.” He who was tenderness itself answers her not a word. What can it be ? Is there no pity in Him ?

His disciples, in the *selfishness* of their nature, say to Him—"Send her away"—*i.e.*, "give her what she wants;" "she crieth after us;" she is a trouble to us; or, it is distressing to hear her. He who alone was the Servant of the various needs of men, was also Jehovah's Servant; and as she *without right* claims from Him as Son of David, He replies—"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

She will not give Him up, though. He is silent to her; and again she comes, worshipping Him, and saying, "Lord, help me!" What will He say to this? As Jehovah's Servant, He will not only own the rights of Jehovah, but will have all do likewise. Hence He replies, "It is not meet to take the children's bread (*i.e.*, what belongs to Israel) and to cast it to dogs" (*i.e.*, to Gentiles). What will she say to this? Is she content to be blessed as a dog, as an unclean, outside one? She replies, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." She is satisfied to be a *dog*, and she is satisfied to receive a *crumb*. He had it in His heart to bless her according to His heart. Is that not like Him? His *best* and nothing less is all that is in His heart for her. Gently and graciously, yet truly, did He lead her on, step by step, first away from false ground that she had taken in the wildness of her distress (for as Son of David she had no claim upon Him), and then

He brings her on to the full acknowledgment that even a dog in the house of such a Master was not forgotten; and that to be such to Him, and to receive from such an one as Himself a crumb even, was all her poor heart longed for. Wonderful grace! Wonderful Lord in whom it was, producing in her, a needy descendent of Ham, the degraded one, such confidence, such trust!

There are two points of great beauty here. First, observe how suitable it is to the heart of Jesus, as well as to the truth of God's nature, that a needy one should be before Him, not only in the sense of need, but with the sense of having *no claim* upon Him. It is a wonderful moment for a poor heart when it stands before Jesus, in the full assurance that no one can meet it save Him, and yet with the equally full acknowledgment that it has *no claim* whatever on His mercy. Where this position is taken, there His eye discerns what He Himself designates as "*great faith.*" Now, in what consisted her faith? Was it some *great feeling in her* which found its solace in Him? Not for a moment; but it was the *goodness in Him* which created *confidence* in her. It is very blessed to see her in the light, with the expression of it in her heart and on her lips—"Truth Lord." She knew what it was to do truth, which is simply the acknowledgment of the conscience and the soul that there is nothing in us, and no reason why we should receive anything from God. Des-

titute and unclean, as well as without claim or title, was what she meant when she said "*Truth Lord.*" And this is faith: she had God's opinion of Christ, and no opinion of herself. And observe how this faith of hers is met by Him whose perfect goodness caused it to spring up in her soul: it receives from Jesus all that He would give. The principle of the world is nothing for nothing: that is to say, if you have nothing you need expect nothing. Have you never known those in the world who have had what is called "reverse of fortune?" As long as the sun of prosperity shone upon them they had many friends; but affairs once prosperous are succeeded by difficulties, losses, and it may be eventually absolute want, and with their prosperity vanished their friends—*nothing for nothing.* Now, this is the moment in the history of a poor sinner when Jesus proves Himself to be "a friend," "a brother born for adversity," "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." The owning of what we are, known by His light shining on and in us, brings out the manifestation of His heart, who is rich in mercy. Faith is His warrant for shewing Himself to be as good as faith knows Him to be. "*Truth, Lord,*" in her, calls forth "*Great is thy faith*" from Him. Then she gets the desired mercy for her daughter from Him whose heart was as sensitive to such needs of poor creatures around Him, as that same heart found its pleasure in displaying the

HIS VOICE.

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goodness of God to guilty man in his sins and sorrows.

O'er all Thy perfect goodness
Rose blessedly divine ;
Poor hearts oppressed with sadness
Found ever rest in Thine !

Still in Thee love's sweet savour
Shone forth in every deed,
And showed God's loving favour
To every soul in need !

W. T. T.

HIS VOICE.

Thou hast spoken—let me hear,
Speak again and draw me near,
While Thy hand is on my head
Slowly let each word be said,
Lest my dull heart might not know
How to commune with Thee so ;
How to catch, amid the strife,
All Thy tones, my Lord, my Life !

I have heard Thee—speak again,
Earthly lights are on the wane ;
Earthly sounds fade from my ear,
Earthly scenes are no more near.
Sweep the storm across the sky,
Pass the summer sunshine by,
Life's vicissitudes befall,
Safe—Thy hand is over all !

He hath spoken in my ear
Music strange, yet sweet and clear ;
Commune asks He with my heart,
Teaches me to walk apart.
Draws me on the path *He* trod,
Speaks of fellowship with God ;
I have heard His voice, and now
All my soul to Him must bow !

HIS VOICE.

'Tis a story scarce begun,
 'Tis a never setting sun,
 'Tis a song of music sweet
 While I listen at His feet.
 All the toil, the grief, the pain,
 Writes He on my heart again,
 Of the lonely way He trod
 While He communed *here* with God !

Higher now than heaven above
 He who walked the world in love ;
 All His path of toil is o'er,
 Sorrow falls on Him no more.
 He has left this weary land,
 Throned now at God's right hand ;
 Made that light of heaven my place,
 Looking up with unveiled face !

But the love that leads me on
 All my inmost heart hath won,
 Love made known in wondrous grace,
 Graven on His blessed face,
 Stamped upon His pierced hands,
 Written on the desert sands—
 Love which language cannot teach,
 Love my thought can never reach !

'Tis His Voice that chains my heart,
 'Tis His hand that draws apart,
 'Tis the music that I hear
 Rivets, presses me more near ;
 Every other sound has gone,
 Float I down the stream alone,
 All the universe above
 Like a mirror for His love !

Oh ! to reach those heights of grace
 Shining in His blessed face :
 Oh ! to walk with Him in white
 In those scenes of cloudless light :
 Oh ! to walk till then with God
 Journeying in the path *He* trod,
Listening silent at His feet—
 Following with footsteps fleet !

JOHN'S DYING NOTE.

JOHN iii. 25-36.

THE true test of every one and every thing is Christ. It was so when He lived and walked on the earth; it is so now, though the world seeth Him no more.

It is wonderful how latent principles and concealed thoughts are all elicited and brought to the surface before this test. Every man on earth is posted in his true place morally, when tested by Christ, and the importance or the contrary of everything is detected when its relation to Christ is found out. This world, with its motives and principles, its greatness and its littleness, is eminently favourable to *questions*. Many and varied have been the topics which, from time to time, men have suggested and debated; the din and strife of party clamour has again and again been heard, and when the fury of the fight has subsided, and the battle is over, the *question* which raised it is still without solution, and is left unanswered.

The present age delights in questions, reasonings, and uncertainties on all subjects, but

specially in the region where *revelation* claims *exclusively* to be heard. The delight and highest pleasure of philosophy and science, at the present moment, is to tear to fragments every little shred of faith or confidence in God's testimony which has escaped the malignity of Satan's rage against God and His Christ. In truth, man is never so little as in his greatness, and never appears so insignificant or dwarfish as in his puny efforts against Christ. Then is it most of all that man himself, with his own lips, proclaims his folly: then is it that God makes foolish the wisdom of this world. "Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world?" The truth is, the great answer to every question is, "Christ"—"Christ the wisdom of God and the power of God;" and the heart that knows His person, and loves His voice, delights to bear its record to what a *final, conclusive, satisfactory, answer* He, and He alone, is. Christ is God's resource in every crisis, and God's reply to every question. There have been times in the history of God's testimony and people on the earth when human ingenuity and ken might do their utmost, to issue only in despair; then it is that God displays the fulness of His resource; with Him the demand is no measure of the supply. In human circumstances, as a rule, the result of a crisis is a panic; but with God difficulties are delighted in, to show how entirely He is *above* them.

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Now it is this which marks what I designedly call John's dying note. He had spoken much and often ere this; he had testified, too, in earnest and to purpose; there were around him those who loved and valued him; and in this sense the greatest of women born was not alone: questions between John's followers and the Jews were raised by the latter; and an attempt to make John and Christ the leaders of opposite factions and parties was an occasion for John to show where his heart was, and how entirely Christ had settled all questions for him. Observe how blessedly he hides himself behind the Christ of God, and how he makes little of himself in order to make much of Jesus. What was John but a poor creature of the earth? His words too, what were they but the language of one who was "of the earth earthy?" It was to the bridegroom the bride belonged, but the friend of the bridegroom, who stood and heard Him, as John did Christ, rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. How blessed to see a man himself so captivated by Christ, bound with chains of love—embracing as it were his conqueror's feet—that he is ready to break every vessel, and himself first of all among them, if he may but set forth His excellency and His glory, who, coming from heaven, is above all!

But he will not even rest here; he will go beyond his own thoughts of who and what this

blessed One is, and hence the Father's thoughts about His own Son must form John's dying note: he will sing, even on earth, a nobler, sweeter strain; and how simple, yet expressive, it is, as the revelation of God in his heart, giving him heaven-born thoughts concerning the beloved Son—"the Father loveth the Son" "He giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" "He hath given all things into His hand." It is all Christ from first to last; man, Israel, bride, John, are all eclipsed and distanced; the tiny stars all diminish, yea, retire, before the rising sun, and we are left to sit down and rest our weary hearts beneath His rays, and find our satisfaction in the fact of Jesus being all!

"Hark, the thrilling symphonies
 Seem within to seize us;
 Add we to their holy lays,
 Jesus! Jesus! Jesus!
 Sweetest name on mortals' tongue,
 Sweetest note in angels' song,
 Sweetest anthem ever known,
 Jesus, Jesus reigns alone!"

W. T. T.

THE VEIL RENT, THE ROCKS RIVEN, THE GRAVES OPENED.

MATT. xxvii. 51, 52.

THESE verses relate what took place when the Lord Jesus yielded up the ghost. The blessed Lord died, laid down the life which He had, and which none had title or power to take from Him. "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." Such are His own blessed words. The moment that was done, results followed which nothing else could accomplish—which all His own blessed and beautiful life, as God incarnate, could never have produced. But the giving up of His life, His surrendering Himself as a willing victim to death, as the just judgment of God due to sin, as well as yielded by the power of Satan, is followed by the veil of the temple being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, by the earth quaking, the rocks rending, the graves opening, and many bodies of the saints which slept coming forth out of the graves *after His resurrection*. Heaven, earth, and hell, felt a power they had never owned before.

**" By weakness and defeat
He won the meed and crown ;
Trod all our foes beneath His feet
By being trodden down.**

THE VEIL RENT, ETC.

He hell in hell laid low,
 Made sin, He sin o'erthrew ;
 Bow'd to the grave, destroy'd it so,
 And death, by dying, slew."

* * * * *

The "Holy of Holies" was separated from the rest of the temple by a veil, made of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen work ; it *signified* the distance of man as a sinner from God, and set forth the impossibility on the part of God of having any intercourse with man in his sins. The Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest : God could not come out, and man could not go in. But *now* all is reversed. The veil was rent—that veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, typifying the spotless humanity of the Lord Jesus. It must be rent before the full moral glory of God can come out, and before we can go in. The new and living way was consecrated for us "through the veil, that is to say, His flesh."

It is most blessedly significant, too, the *manner* in which it was rent—viz., "from the top to the bottom ;" thus declaring that no hand but God's could rend it. He declares that He does not wish the distance, which up to this moment existed, any longer to continue ; and not only so, but undertakes Himself to remove it, and in such a way as to display all the righteousness, holiness,

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truth, and love of His nature. The life of Jesus, beautiful, and perfect, and blessed, as it was, His services to man, His obedience to God, could never have rent the veil or opened the graves. If there were no Saviour who died, whose blessed body was given, and whose blood was shed, God were still concealed behind that veil. Man, even at his best, was still at a distance, hell still unconquered, and he that held the power of death still unsubdued. But, blessed be God, it is not so, now that Christ has died. All of God has come out, sin in its root has been judged, the way into the holiest has now been made manifest. The Christ who died is risen and glorified, and in His face shines the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.

Two facts of immense importance stand connected with the precious death of the Lord Jesus Christ—first, everything on God's side is manifested and declared; secondly, everything on man's side is exposed and judged. By the rending of the veil not only is God set free to act in righteous love toward guilty rebels like us, but the affections of His nature, His heart, are disclosed in such a wondrous way, leaving us absolutely nothing to do in the presence of such favour but to adore and worship. Wonderful it is to think that there are no secrets in God's heart now; the sorrows of the beloved Son have told the secrets of the Father's bosom. Jesus,

who was the only-begotten Son, ever in His bosom, declared Him, and never more truly than when God forsook Him, when His heart was broken by reproach, when He looked for some to take pity, and there was none, and for comforters, and found none. It is very blessed to see that on God's side both His heart and the new place in which He would set us in His Christ, according to His heart, are both made known at the same time that everything on our side is exposed and judged. What tidings would this latter be to our hearts without the former? How could one ever face such a scene if the heart had not the knowledge of a home with Him who is the "brightness of eternal glory?" I am sure we are feeble in our apprehension of the terribleness of judgment, Divine judgment, as expressed in the cross of Christ; but (not to anticipate on that head) we are as feeble in apprehending the beauty of that Divine circle now thrown wide open to us, that spot, that unique region on God's side, where not only all His secrets are divulged, but where His heart finds its own satisfaction in disclosing its treasures to us! The earliest moment in which the blessed God could do this He did it, and that was when His own Son, who came to do His will, accomplished it to the perfection of God's own nature; then it was the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the silence which had long reigned within

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that mysterious curtain was broken, and within it, where only one man, of one tribe, of one nation, on one day of the year, was permitted to enter, poor hearts like ours are entitled to be perfectly and always at home.

“God now brings thee to His dwelling,
Spreads for thee His feast divine ;
Bids thee welcome, ever telling
What a portion there is thine.

In that circle of God's favour,
Circle of the Father's love,
All is rest, and rest for ever,
All is perfectness above.”

Then, secondly, at the same time that all on God's side is opened, all here on man's side is both exposed and judged ; the sun was darkened, the earth quaked, the rocks rent, the graves were opened : now it was that destruction and death felt the power of Him whose fame they had heard with their ears. If our hearts only entered a little more into the wonderful extent of this judgment, we should never desire to revert to anything so judged here, the emancipation would be wonderful to us. If we understood the cross better, the Lord's Supper would be our continual attitude of soul ; positive delight to connect ourselves with Him in His death, and remember Him in it, because through that death the circle of God's festivities was opened to us, and because in His death the love of Jesus, as well as of His

Father, was expressed to us. It would, moreover, fortify our hearts against crushing disappointment, for how could we expect anything but death here, if our hearts were in the continual remembrance of His precious death for us ?

" Remember Thee and all Thy pains,
And all Thy love to me ;
Yea while a breath, a pulse remains,
Will I remember Thee. "

W. T. T.

" THAT I MAY WIN CHRIST. "

PHIL. iii.

THIS epistle is not one of doctrine. We get, of course, in this chapter, the foundation laid (v. 9), but, as often remarked, it is an epistle that gives us the proper experience of the Christian, that is, the power of the Spirit of God working in him in his path ; and, consequently, we get the spirit and character in which a Christian should walk down here. In chap. ii. we see the graciousness of the spirit in which Christ walked. He always went down and *humbled* Himself, even down to the cross, and then God exalted Him as man to His right hand : even as Antichrist *exalts* himself, and is abased. Christ is the bright and perfect example of " He that humbleth himself shall be

exalted." In chap. iii. you get the energy of the Spirit.

Now, we cannot have too distinctly and clearly before our souls the great basis of the completeness of redemption. In the first place, the putting away of sins, and sin too—the putting away of all that the first Adam produces, and then our introduction into a totally new place—an entirely new standing—we have peace with God. Jesus "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." That is not all. Our place is *in Christ*, and there is no possibility of condemnation for a person in Christ. We see the efficacy of the work of Christ, we get the certainty of sins put away, are sealed by the Holy Ghost; consequently we are only waiting for Christ to come to take us to glory. That is our place, and all our duties flow from the place we are in, even as in natural things. We are brought into Christ-made children of God, sons of God; then our duties flow from that place. "Be ye therefore imitators of God, as dear children." Again, "He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." Therefore, the first great thing is to know our place: not only that we are forgiven (though that is the first thing we need), not only that we were guilty, but the believer finds out a great

deal more than that, he finds out that he is *lost*. *Guilty* brings in the thought of judgment; but if we are *lost* we do not think of judgment, because we are ruined already. I speak not only of what I have done, but where I am—outside Paradise, and totally ruined already. We are lost in our own condition. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." So that I do not say merely that I am justified, but that I am saved, and in Christ. I do not believe we get into full liberty till we understand we are totally *lost* and *saved*—not only what we have done, but what we are.

It is important that the Christian should distinctly get hold of that, for it is what redemption means. As with Israel in Egypt—the blood upon the door-posts saved them from the judgment of God; but besides that, God took them out of Egypt, and put them into Canaan. "We are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." It is a new condition and place altogether, and this is *deliverance*—not only forgiveness and justification, but deliverance; and, therefore, in Rom. vii. it is not "How shall I get forgiveness?" but "Who shall deliver me?" The answer is, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." He finds his sins blotted out; defiled, he is washed; having offended, he is forgiven; guilty, he is justified; God has made that perfectly clear for ever. But the old man is *dead* before God, and the new man

is in Christ. Christ is my righteousness. I *was* lost, without hope in myself, but now I am in Christ before God. That is deliverance. In Rom. v. you are justified; but in Rom. viii. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." To find out, practically, that I am *lost*, is a very different thing from finding that I am *guilty*; because, if lost, I have finished my whole history, and I must get my whole condition made new (thank God it is, in Christ). If I am guilty, I may hope to get forgiveness; but if I am lost, I must get a new condition altogether—a totally new creation in Christ Jesus. When I have this redemption, the effect is to leave me, as a matter of fact, down here, *being* thus delivered, and then I begin to run the race; for you and I have in this world to go through the wilderness (to find ourselves in heavenly places too). God has minded that we should be thus exercised to discern good and evil, and what we get in this chapter is power in that course. We have to "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking off unto Jesus." It is the expression, in Phil. iii., of the experience of one who was running the race faithfully.

Sin is never mentioned in the epistle; what you find in Paul was, that the power of the Holy Ghost was there. It was not that the flesh was not there, for he had a thorn in the flesh, but there was power to keep it down. You get com-

plete deliverance here, entire freedom, for he was running his race free ; and another thing you see is power, Christ's power. He was perfectly free, or he could not have run on in that power, and also (which is practically a great thing), he had an object, which gave him singleness of eye and purpose. You get the man set perfectly free: "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The principle of sin, in which I was lost, is dead and gone for faith, because Christ has died, and, therefore, I can say *I* died: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The life that I have is *Christ*, and as to the flesh, I say, "I died upon the cross." That is the place the apostle was then in, and there was power, because "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." There is Christ's power. His grace is sufficient for us ; therefore we can never excuse ourselves if we commit sin, because Christ's grace is sufficient for us—His strength is made perfect in weakness. It is not that the flesh is not there ; but a dead person does not act. We fail ; but the Christian condition is, "Ye are dead." If there is carelessness and want of prayer, failure does come ; but there is no excuse for it. If Christ is in me, there is life and power, and the flesh is a dead thing. It is not only that Christ has died for

your sins, but you have died with Christ; that is where real freedom comes in, and power comes in too, because Christ is there.

You will always find, that where Christ's power is in us, Christ is the object of our life, as in Gal. ii., "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and then he adds, "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." There is the object: wherever Christ is the power of life in us, Christ is the object of that life. Christ having become a man, and gone into glory, God has given the object of *His* delight to be the object of *our* delight also, and given us His Spirit to enable us to make it so. It is a wonderful thing to see that God has so set Christ before us, and given us His Spirit, and a new nature, to be able to enjoy Him, linking us thus with Himself.

The next thing is, "I want to win Christ." That is what he means by "That I may apprehend (or lay hold of) that for which also I am apprehended (laid hold of) by Christ." Christ had laid hold of him, that was all settled; he had learnt Christ, and now he says "I want to possess Him." He is not looking at the salvation wrought out by Christ, but at the *end*; and therefore he says, at the close of the chapter, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall

change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." It is the salvation we are *expecting* that he speaks of now.

We have the man freed, and with power; and we have the man with Christ as his object and nothing else: and there is where we all are, and it is just a question of our faith as to how far it is true of us practically. It all depends on how far Christ is our object. You have the graciousness of deportment in chapter ii. Here we get the active energy of the Spirit of God; and mark, it is where there is one single object that there is practical energy and power. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." In some things, he acts like a Christian; in others, he does not. If he has two or three objects, he is unstable, but if he has *one* object, he walks with energy.

Now what characterised the apostle was that he had given up all things; not "*did* count them but dung," but "*do*" now! Can we say that? At the moment of our conversion we all felt that all we had in the world had been deceiving us, and leading us to hell and its horrors. The pleasure, wealth, riches, ease, everything that was gain to us as men in this world, can we say of them, "I *do* count them but dung, that I may win Christ?" Paul was not satisfied with *having* counted, but he says, "I *do* count," and further than this, "All this will only hinder me." Like

a man running a race, he has on a beautiful cloak, we will suppose; he finds it hinders him, and he throws it off.

It is the object we have that always characterises us—blessed be God we have it in Christ unto everlasting life. It was not any uncertainty with the apostle, it was not that he doubted that Christ had laid hold of him, but he wanted to get Christ. There was this honest purpose of heart—the man was free, he had Christ's strength; and then there was this purpose of heart—spiritual energy and activity. There are two things which go together. The first "That I may win Christ," and then our resurrection from the dead, that is, our own glory, which comes in as the second thing. First, "That I may win Christ," it was Christ Himself who possessed his heart; still he says, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Well, I can have but one thing as my object. If I am making tents, as Paul did, I shall do it well; it is our duty as Christians to be patient and gracious in meeting with hard men—wrong doers. You will find that everything is judged of entirely by the object a man has. If he wants to get a thing, he will spend his money without stint to get it—he estimates everything by his object. An avaricious man will say of a spendthrift, "Did you ever see such a fool!" And the spendthrift will say of the one fond of money,

"He might as well have a stone, for his money is no good to him." The moment I get Christ as my object everything else will be as dross and dung, and there will be no want of lowliness, because the nearer we get to Christ the less we think of ourselves. I want to know *Him*, and the Spirit of God is not grieved. The path of the just grows brighter and brighter until the perfect day. His heart is more *capable* of knowing Christ, and he knows Him better—he is not thinking of self. It is the privilege held out to us that we shall be so perfect that we shall only think of the Lord, and in any measure as we are near Him now, we think of Him and not of ourselves. The Christian looks at himself, not only as forgiven, as justified, but as perfect, and going to be like Christ and with Christ. He has a new place; he is in Christ; he has it by the Spirit in faith now, and he wants actually to possess it.

Now how far can our souls say we are actually delivered, not only forgiven, but delivered? I do not mean that if you are careless you will not slip into sin, but there is a positive deliverance; we are not in the flesh at all. The world is there, Satan is there, and I have to watch every moment to have Christ sufficiently before my mind. You will find that nine-tenths of the things that are temptations to us would be no temptations at all if we walked with Christ. See a mother who has heard that her child has met

with an accident on the railway, and lies at the station suffering; how she hastens to the spot, and does not even think of the show and vanity in the shop windows she may have to pass. Another time she might linger there, but not now. If our souls are filled with Christ, as I said, nine-tenths of the things that are temptations to us we shall not think of *at all*. It is living as Christ—"By the word of Thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer." The great mass of the temptations we should escape altogether, because we should be thinking of something entirely different. God has called me up to be with Christ and like Christ, and now I am after that, and am looking for nothing else. We all have some object that we follow with energy and life, and can we say that it is *Christ*, and that that is the one thing that governs our hearts from day to day?

The Lord give us, beloved, to know what that true liberty is; "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty"—liberty with God and from the things around: though we still have to contend, and shall have, too, yet it is with the joy of Christ in our hearts as we go on. God has called us in sovereign grace to be with Himself, like and with Christ for ever, and where the soul is full of the Holy Ghost, there is joy and sustained freshness.

J. N. D.

(Notes of an Address.)

“ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI.”

MARK XV. 34.

FOR myself—I speak as a man—I never found peace before God, or conscious rest with Him, until I was taught the force and meaning of that cry of Jesus of Nazareth—“Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani.” Never until I understood that He, who knew no sin, had (then and there, on the cross) been made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, could I rest as a sinner in the presence of a holy God. And, as I suppose, it is owing to the distinctive peculiarity of that—His sorrow under the wrath of God—*not being understood*—that so many Christians have no settled peace at all.

The questions of sin and of guilt have never been met in their consciences. The incarnation is amazing and beautiful. That the eternal Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father, should have become a babe, and been laid in a manger of an inn: the contrast between the glory He came out of and the place man assigned to Him, *is a contrast!*—God and heaven could express their delight over Him, then and there, as well as feel it (Luke ii. 8-14). But the bearing of our sins in His own body was NOT in the cradle, but on the cross, and on the cross alone.

The flight into Egypt—the return and settling at Nazareth of the Child, the Youth in the temple

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and in returning from Jerusalem, the hidden retirement of His early manhood—is beautiful, each in its place; but none present us with Him as in the act of bearing our sins. Again, when we look at Him as (when He voluntarily identified Himself with those that owned their need of repentance, confessing their sins) at His baptism, in His service and ministries, all, and each part of all, is beautiful and perfect; but, if heaven could approve Him in each step, heaven, too, could give its avowals of approval to Him. Yet He stood not as sin-bearer under the judgment, at any of these periods.

Again, what a contrast, and who ever felt it as He felt it, between Himself as the seed of the woman and the race of man to whom He had come! What a contrast between Himself personally and individually, and the house of Israel, His own, among whom He had come! Himself, not only God manifest in the flesh, but that holy thing that was born of the virgin—holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, apart from sin; and yet voluntarily, amid sinful men and guilty Israel, the immaculate seed of the woman, the King of Israel in His holiness. This brought with it sorrows. So, when He had entered upon service, did the constant persecution for righteousness, which He endured, and the consciousness that there was none who could sympathise with Him, and that fallen men welcomed not the mercy

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of which He was the messenger—sorrows He had to endure at the hand of the world and man ; but even that was not forsaking of God. But in none of these parts, nor in the being straitened when His soul turned to His coming baptism ; nor when, in the garden, His soul passed into the scenes which then lay immediately before Him, was there (any more than anywhere else) that which there was when He cried out—"Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani." Here, too, He was perfect ; forsaken of God, He would not, did not, forsake God. Never did God or heaven see perfection shine out of Him as then and there, when His obedience was at the goal—"Obedient unto death, the death of the cross." But, if heaven found—in His submission under forsaking, for the sake of others—its delight, for it was the revelation of God as the Saviour-God, there was, there *could be* (just because it was *forsaking for sin*, our sin, which He had to endure) no expression of approval, NOTHING BUT FORSAKING. "Why hast Thou forsaken Me ?"

I do not see how a sinner can find rest until he has learnt somewhat of that which is distinctly peculiar to Calvary—learnt that, then and there, there was a cup drunk by the Lord, in obedient submission to God—cup of wrath due to us only, undergone by Christ at Calvary. The only spot I turn to, when in conscience the question is about sin or guilt, or sins (of the human family, of my-

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self as an individual, &c., &c.), is Calvary, and to the Lord there, crying out—"Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani."

He bore my judgment in my stead, then and there, in His own body on the tree, in the presence of God, and received the woe of wrath and forsaking at the hand of God. And there is my quittance, clear, and full, and complete, but there alone.

The experience of His soul when He said, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was altogether peculiar and distinct from that which He had to endure and experience at any other time whatsoever. In that suffering of His, as forsaken, I get the measure and the judgment of my sin against God.

G. V. W.

THE BLOOD-SPRINKLED LINTEL.

EXODUS xii. 22, 23.

THE Gospel is God's own answer to the question He Himself has raised about man and his sin. None could raise the question, and none could answer the question but Himself; that answer is Christ, given by God freely in His love—Christ lifted up upon the cross as a sacrifice for sin—Christ raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, and Christ ascended into the heavens.

Now Exodus xii. speaks about a lamb, whose blood, shed and sprinkled upon the houses of the children of Israel, secured them when God passed in judgment through the land of Egypt. The Lord Jesus Christ is the great substance of which the lamb of Exodus xii. was only the dim shadow. What a blessed, wonderful spring is imparted to the soul when this is believed, that the Lamb, whose blood must be shed as an atonement for sin, is the only begotten Son of God, provided, given, sent, by God into the world for this very purpose. As it is written, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, in that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." There is one point of great value and importance in Exodus xii.—everything is done under the hand of God. He provides all, so to speak, and then assures by His Word; this is most blessed to apprehend. The *security* of an Israelite in that night consisted in his being in a house whose lintel was marked with the blood of the appointed lamb, previously shed in death; the *sense* of his security, or the known enjoyment of it, consisted in his simply believing God's testimony—"When I see the blood I will pass over you." I would say a little about the *security*. Nothing less than that mysterious mark on the lintel would suffice, and nothing more was required; the blood shed told of atonement made: "it is the blood that maketh an

atonement for the soul." (Lev. xvii. 11). It was no question as to what an Israelite *was*, or what he *felt*; what God looked for as He passed through the land that night was the lintel sprinkled with the blood of the appointed lamb; wherever there was such before His eyes God was *satisfied*, and they were *secure*. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," proclaimed both the one and the other. So is it now, the *security* consists in my having to do with Christ, who went down into death to put away sin; nothing less would meet our dreadful case than the bloodshedding of Christ. He bore the judgment in His own body on the cross—He gave up His life—in His death we can say, "mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Every righteous claim of God has been met by the death of Christ; all that was contrary to God has been for the believer put away for ever. How *secure* is the soul in such an answer!

Now, in order to bring this out more clearly, allow me to put a case. We will suppose an Israelite, who has followed out, in every particular, the direction of God as to the lamb, and also as to the sprinkling of the blood upon the lintel; he retires into his house, and passes that terrible night in fear and anxiety. Whether he will be the next to fall under the judgment he knows not; if he could, he would go outside the door of

his house, and satisfy himself by gazing on the blood. But this he cannot do, and follow out the direction of God, and so he passes a wretched night, comfortless and miserable. But I take another case, that of an Israelite who, equally with the former, has followed out the commands of God as to the lamb and its blood; he, having also sprinkled the lintel, retires, restful, quiet, happy, and assured—the thought of judgment awakens no alarm in his breast. Which of the two is safest? The latter, do you say? If so, you make the *security* to consist in *something else beside the blood* being on the lintel. But do you not see that, *because in both cases the blood was there*, both were equally *safe*, equally *secure*? Both were not equally *happy*, both were not equally *certain* of their security. And why? Simply because both did not equally credit the testimony or word of God. The blood outside made both equally secure, but the testimony of God, carried inside and believed, was needed to make both equally assured—when I say equally assured, I mean as far as any could be at that time. Thus I trust we have seen that testimony to our ruin as sinners is borne by the word of God equally with testimony to our safety, “if we believe on Him who raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead.”

W. T. T.

THE EVENNESS OF THE PERFECT MAN.

THIS meat offering of God, taken from the fruit of the earth, was of the finest wheat; that which was pure, separate, and lovely in human nature, was in Jesus under all its sorrows, but in all its excellence, and excellent in its sorrows. There was no unevenness in Jesus, no predominant quality to produce the aspect of giving Him a destructive character. He was, though despised and rejected of men, the perfection of human nature. The sensibilities, firmness, decision (though this attached itself to the principle of obedience), elevation, and calm meekness, which belong to human nature, all found their perfect place in Him. In a Paul I find energy and zeal; in a Peter, ardent affection; in a John, tender sensibilities and abstraction of thought, united to a desire to vindicate what he loved, which scarce knew limit. But the quality we have observed in Peter predominates, and characterizes him. In a Paul, blessed servant though he was, he does not repent though he had repented. He had no rest in his spirit when he found not Titus his brother. He goes off to Macedonia, though a door was opened in Troas. He wist not that it was the high priest. He is compelled to glory of himself. In him, in whom God was mighty towards the circumcision, we find the fear of man

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break through the faithfulness of his zeal. He who would have vindicated Jesus in his zeal, knew not what manner of spirit he was of, and would have forbidden the glory of God, if man walked not with them. Such were Paul, and Peter, and John. But in Jesus, even as a man, there was none of this unevenness. There was nothing salient in His character, because all was in perfect submission to God in His humanity, and had its place, and did exactly its service, and then disappeared. The hand that struck the chord found all in time: all answered to the mind of Him whose thoughts of grace and holiness, of goodness, yet of judgment of evil, whose fulness of blessing in goodness were sounds of sweetness to every weary ear, and found in Christ their only expression. Every element, every faculty in His humanity, responded to the impulse which the Divine will gave it, and then ceased in a tranquility in which self had no place.

J. N. D.

CHRIST THE OBJECT OF AFFECTION AND SYMPATHY.

JOHN xx ; MARK xiv.

“WHAT wonderful times are ours,” are words on almost every lip at present. Showers of blessing, as they say, are falling on every side. Some have gone so far as to state that, like history, Pentecost is being repeated; as if the blessed Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost the Comforter, had left the earth since then; and that prayer, earnest prayer, had brought Him back. Truly these days of ours are strange and solemn. No doubt there is an energy of the Holy Ghost abroad in the land, both in the spread of testimony, and in the awakening of souls. It is well to bear in mind that God is sovereign while we are to be subject; and that in the exercise of His sovereignty He may, and does, use any instrument that He pleases; and the more His people are walking with Him, the more subject they will be on the one hand, and the readier to rejoice in all that He does on the other. But what about the Lord Jesus Christ in these times? I would seriously and solemnly ask if it be true that this spring-tide of blessing, which, it is said, is carrying on

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its waves thousands of souls, is bearing them to His feet, there to worship and adore? Is it awakening in their hearts new affections which find their goal in Himself? Is it bearing them on high, so as to lead them to count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord? The enquiry is of the deepest moment to us all. God forbid that any of His people should under-value or under-estimate any service rendered to fallen man. But is Christ dearer to us than every one beside? And is it a small matter to us if His desires and claims seem disregarded or forgotten? It is because such thoughts are awakened and kept alive by the present aspect of professing Christianity, that I propose taking a glance at the two Scriptures which stand at the head of this paper.

The touching story of Mary in John xx. is familiar to almost every one. It is a striking instance of ignorant, yet genuine, affection. She might have known His glorious resurrection. She ought to have remembered His words—“After three days I will rise again.” But though her faith and intelligence were defective, her heart beat true to its object and her treasure. Contrast her with Peter and John, and does she not stand on a platform far above them? They can return to their home, satisfied that Jesus’ body was not in the tomb, though they knew not where *He* was. This was not enough for Mary;

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her loyal heart pants to know where He is, and finding Him not, is ready to break with grief. She stands without at the sepulchre weeping, stooping to gaze at the spot where they laid Him. Unperturbed by the angels, disconcerted in no wise, there she lingers, and there her heart must be—beautiful instance of genuine though ignorant affection, and the amazing power of one object when the affections are governed thereby.

“They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him. . . . Sir, if thou have borne *Him* hence, tell me where thou hast laid *Him*, and I will take *Him* away.”

How was she rewarded? Most surely according to the desires of her heart towards Himself. First, He allows her to hear her own name on His risen lips. Wonderful moment for Mary! Wonderful moment for Jesus! Was not every pulsation of her devoted heart met, and more than satisfied, when His blessed voice caused her to look into His own face, her Master and her Lord? I am bold to say that two hearts were made glad that daybreak—hers who could find no home where He was not, and His who gave His life for worthless rebels like us. And I am bold to say further, that it gave Him greater joy to own her as His sheep, calling her by name, Mary! than it did her to be so owned and called. But this was not all, for He commissions her now to carry the most wonderful message ever entrusted to

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human lips (see verse 17)—“Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.”

He sends her forth to proclaim the victory of His love, not only that He had triumphed so gloriously, that every enemy was under His feet, but that He, the risen man, was head of a new race, that “both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren,” (Heb. ii. 11, 12). He sends her forth out of the *second garden*, where the mournful history of the first garden (Eden) had been more than wiped out by the glories of His triumph, to say to poor trembling hearts like ours, that He Himself had not only won a new place for them, but that He had positively brought them into it *in Himself*: “He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one,”—which does not mean that He was degraded to their level, but that He, by His death, His glorious triumph and victory, had elevated them to the heights of His own new place before His Father and God.

What grace! wondrous grace! He passes by angels that excel in strength, and comes down to a poor weak woman upon the earth, owns her as His sheep, and then sends her forth to wipe the tearful eyes and comfort the trembling hearts of His own, by announcing unto them the conquests

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of His love. Who can say now that Jesus does not delight to reward the devoted heart? And who can deny that in thus rewarding it, He gratifies His own changeless affections?

Let us now turn to Mark xiv. It is the only instance recorded in Scripture of any one having *intelligent sympathy* with Christ: it is a wonderful scene; every one is thinking of death. Jesus has the vision of death before His spirit. How must the passover, with its lamb whose blood was shed, have brought forward *death*, before every mind? There were the type and the antitype face to face as it were—the chief priests and scribes, with a hatred for Christ which nothing but His death could appease, sought how they might take Him by craft, and put Him to death. Thus we see how death filled all thoughts; but there was present one, a poor weak woman, too, whose heart kept company with all that was passing through His; she alone was in full sympathy with His feelings at that moment, and entered into the thoughts of God concerning the beloved Son.

It has been remarked that the account which Mark furnishes us with of the close of His blessed mission of love, presents Jesus more *solitary* in it than any other; incidents and circumstances which are recorded more or less in all the other gospels, are absent from Mark. If this be so, how strikingly significant is the record of this act of Mary's in the house of Simon the leper? Her heart

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and her affections, in true and genuine sympathy, traversing with Him the dreariness and loneliness of His path, as well as marking her sense of the utter worthlessness of all around in view of His agony and death: on one side intelligently apprehending not only who and what He was in Himself, but likewise His value in the eyes of His Father; on the other, making use of His tomb as a burying-place for every valuable thing of hers on earth. For her, if Jesus dies, He carries all of hers down into the grave with Himself!

In Matthew and Mark, the blessed Lord is *consciously* in man's hand, in the closing hours of His life. This, indeed, characterises those gospels in their record of His death, His cross; which was both the fruit of the counsel of God in view of redemption, as well as the fruit of Jewish enmity, and man's revolted, reprobate, heart. How blessed it is then to see her here at such a moment, marking her sense of the glories of His person in the face of the accumulated hatred of both devil and man. It is a blessed sight, in the intelligent apprehension of faith, the homage of one willing, loving heart, thus laid at His feet. One solitary soul in that rebellious land owning Him Lord of all. All this sheds its light on His own words—"Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her."

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Let us now look at the facts, as they are here recorded, a little more in detail. Mary's affection, her intelligent sympathy, takes the precedence of the treachery of Judas. Her love to Jesus was of that order and character, that it secured for Him that which was suitable to Himself at such a moment, and that which entirely met His heart and thoughts. "The box of ointment of spikenard very precious," answered to all that was around Jesus, in the hatred and malignity of man, in that hour; but it also coincided with all that filled His soul; and it was, as well, community of thought with the Father concerning the Son of His bosom. It is a sight of surpassing blessedness to gaze at Him as He sits there; to see Him accepting, and vindicating, too, the affection and sympathy which His own Person had created and called forth; to see her, too, fruit as she was of His grace, expending on Him to whom she owed her all—*that all*, as another has touchingly and blessedly expressed it. Mary, as it were, says by this action of hers, "While the king sitteth at His table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof."

There is another point of solemn interest in this affecting scene, namely, how opposite the thoughts of men are to what suits the mind of God and His Christ; the most that some could say concerning Mary's act was, that *waste* marked it. Oh, how little was He in their eyes, who

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measured the service rendered to Him after this fashion? For it is the person to whom the service is rendered, that is the true measure of its value. Jesus, the Eternal Son of the Father; Jesus, the spotless and perfect Son of God; Jesus, the willing and ready friend of need, and want, and sorrow, stood so low in their estimate, as to call forth the expression of *waste* in regard to that which was thus voluntarily expended upon Him. It is the same to-day; the present is but the offspring of the past; the family character is not wanting in either; the heir-loom of indifference to God's Christ, and no sense of who He is or what He is, passes on from generation to generation; and to-day, with all its boasted light, superiority, and advance, the poor, the perishing, the destitute, and the oppressed have their friends and allies, but Jesus, the precious, blessed, wondrous Saviour, is forgotten and neglected—only remembered to be slighted and despised.

“ The pride of careless greatness
 Could wash its hands of Thee :
 Priests that should plead for weakness
 Must thine accusers be.
 Man's boasting love disowns Thee,
 Thine own the danger flee ;
 A Judas only owns Thee
 That Thou may'st captive be.”

There is a bright spot in this dark cloud: turn your eye upon it for a moment: Jesus vindicates her. How blessed! The eye under which this

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act was performed discerned its value, and the heart that had caused to spring up in her affections suited to Himself her Lord, measures out its appreciation of all that was expended on Himself; and He lets every one know what He felt and thought of this manifestation of devotedness to His person. "Let her alone, she hath wrought a good work on me; she hath done what she could; she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily, I say unto you, wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." Oh, the joy of being vindicated by Jesus, and the satisfaction of knowing that, however feebly, we have truly ministered to the longings of His heart!

The Lord give His saints in these last days more genuine affection for, and true sympathy with, our Lord Jesus Christ and His interests, that nothing may be able to divert their hearts from Him, engage their powers but Him, satisfy their souls but Him!

W. T. T.

GOD SPEAKING FROM HEAVEN.

HEBREWS xii. 18-29.

THE apostle here contrasts Mount Sinai and Mount Zion, and points out what the present testimony is. It is a mistake we very often make that we are so many responsible persons going on to judgment, and there must give an account of ourselves. That is true of us, but that is very far from all. There has been a dealing of God with man, and He is *now* dealing with them for the last time ; that makes it the more solemn.

It is not now a question of good and evil in us. What the Lord presents to our souls now is, that that question is all settled ; “there is none righteous, no, not one ;” that is the way He is dealing now. If His grace is refused, judgment is pronounced upon their state ; that is what I mean by settled. Now, He comes either in judgment or in warning, and if that is slighted, there is condemnation. The contrast between the two Mounts is exceedingly striking. People do not believe they are in this state of condemnation. There the law is exceedingly useful in awakening—if they judge of good and evil, they cannot judge of what is beyond themselves. Man’s judgment is no higher than the evil he has done. A man brought up in dirt sees nothing in dirt ; so with the natural mind, it judges according to its own state. God brings in His

estimate of what man ought to be. That is what the law is—as a hammer breaks the rock in pieces. Therefore, “Moses said, I do exceedingly fear and quake.” “Felix trembled,” not that he was saved, but the Word of God was awakening his conscience, because conscience was there. God has dealt probably with every heart here. The Word breaks us up, and shews us we are not what God wants; but that is not the will being converted. The flesh abuses everything. God gave the law to convict of sin; man takes it to work out righteousness. But God is not leaving you to the day of judgment; He is dealing with you *now*, and this is the day of grace.

When the Word of God comes home to man—what man really ought to be—who could “answer Him one of a thousand?” Wherever the Word reaches the conscience, it is a present dealing; not put off to the day of judgment, because it reaches it *now*. Man knows perfectly well he cannot meet it. You know you have not loved God with all your heart to-day; you have not loved your neighbour as yourself one day in your life. My conscience tells me the law is right—though I may kick against it. You must not have any thought of your own righteousness in the day of judgment, because you have not got any.

The young man in Matthew xix. 16, did not say, “What shall I do to be saved,” but, “that I

may have eternal life;" and the Lord's answer perfectly and entirely meets the question that was asked Him. "This do and live." The young man said, "This I have done, and what lack I yet?" "Sell all, and come, follow me." This tested him, for his heart was set on his possessions; he went away from grace. So, in John viii. 9, one by one they went away from grace, because they dreaded the eye that could detect them. That is what people do still—they cannot bear conviction. It is getting away from God, because the heart and conscience cannot bear that which comes out in the presence of God. What a terrible thing that is, if your only hope of comfort is to keep away from God—to keep out of His sight!

Verse 22.—We are come, not to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Zion. Zion is a word of immense import, if we read it spiritually. Zion was not simply mercy and patience. The ark was the only possible means of intercourse with God that Israel had, and they had sent it away; so have we—so to speak—looking at our national state. The importance of Zion was, that Israel had been already tested and had failed. Eli was a godly man, and when he found the ark was taken, and that all was over, we read that he fell backward and died.

You have to be brought to the conviction, like Eli, that it is all over. Then God comes in, not merely in mercy and patience—that he had all

through—but God comes in, as he did then, when all the responsibility was closed by the total failure of man, taking the ark out of the hands of the Philistines, and placing it on Mount Zion, by David, as now by Christ, David's seed.

Verses 22, 23.—The whole scene of millennial glory on earth and in heaven is exceedingly interesting, but I do not speak of that now.

Verse 25.—How does Christ speak from heaven? It is not, There is a day of judgment, and you must prepare yourself for it; but He comes and speaks to man, and deals with man on the ground of His being a man in heaven. If He speaks from heaven, He speaks not merely of mercy, but of grace, on the ground of an accomplished work. He appeals to our hearts upon the ground of what He is and has done. Christ is *sitting* at the right hand of God, because He has nothing more to do as to making out a righteousness for us. As to the question of righteousness, that work that He has finished is the righteousness that brings us into glory, who, through grace, have believed in Him. I get these two things,—the place that Christ speaks from, and the work that brings the people in. He does not reproach you. He comes and tells you, You must not think I am ignorant of what *sin* is, *I bore it*. He knows what the consequence is as none other can know it. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word

in season to him that is weary." Are you learning God in the presence of grace? The hearts of the sons of men are wholly set in them to do evil. Man's history is a terrible one. Because Christ humbled Himself in grace, man profited by the occasion, in order that He should be despised and rejected of men. And is there not a rejection of Him now? Do not some of you reject Him; do not people know that they are sinners, and yet go on sinning? That is despising it. But where the heart has been brought down, what do I find? Suppose I am coming to God by Him, why, He tells me I am in heaven because my sins are put away. And what can God say if Christ, who bore my sins, is in the presence of God? The thing before me is not judgment, but Christ. If I come to God as a judge, why, Christ is there. He cannot but own that my sins are all put away—Christ appearing in the presence of God is the witness of it.

The judgment day would be according to *my* works, but the present day is according to the efficacy of *Christ's* work; so we see what a great thing it is for Him to speak to us from heaven. It is an appeal that ought to put to shame and confusion every one that does not bow to it. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things." That is the only faith God will have. Christ is so perfectly glorified that He says, I won't have any other. If I own Christ, *I am*

nothing; that is the thing that is wanted. Do you want to have a little share of your own pretension in the presence of a dying Saviour? If you could get in a bit of your own righteousness, it would be like the dead flies, causing the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour. Thank God, that voice, if it is in the soul, is eternal life; it is God's way of communicating life.

Now, have you all taken this ground that God has taken with you, telling you that you are all lost—still telling it in grace? Beloved friends, He is not waiting for the day of judgment, when judgment will be executed. He is speaking to you from the right hand of the Majesty on high, where He sat down when He had by Himself purged our sins. Are you going to refuse Him that speaks? I know our hearts drag us down, and the things around us are contrary to us, but it is Christ who has come and presented Himself before our eyes. Remember how He speaks; and are you going to refuse to hear Him, like the deaf adder? Are you going to take God in judgment, when you have despised Him in grace?

The Lord give us to see the truth, and taste the unspeakable love of Him who gave Himself for us, of Him who will with Him freely give us all things!

J. N. D.

(Notes of an Address.)

“O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?”

THE following derives all its interest from the remarkable leading of God's Spirit in bringing the writer and subject of this paper together a very few days before the Lord took the latter home to Himself. She was a child of sorrow and suffering, indeed; the mother of a family, all of whom had fallen under death's hand, leaving herself and her partner a solitary couple. The weight of her sorrow pressed her down, and disease of a trying nature began to develop itself. Living now next door to her, and seeing the frequent visits of the medical attendant, and occasionally the clergyman of the parish, I felt a deep interest and a yearning anxiety, which they only know who have had it, as to her *true* state and condition. Did she know a Saviour's love?—Was she looking to Him?—Was the prospect before her dark or bright? were often-weighed questions in my mind; and many a time did I speak to the Lord about her, and find my only solace and comfort there; for I should say this pressure on my spirit about one of whom I had known nothing personally, and whom I had never seen, was *new* to me; for I am not an evangelist in the true sense of the word, but greatly desire to have a deeper interest in, and concern for, immortal souls.

Thus matters went on for weeks, until at

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last, on my return home one afternoon, I heard she was much worse, and that death was evidently very near. After looking to the Lord, I sat down and wrote a very few lines to her husband, asking after her, expressing my deep sympathy with him, and also the earnest hope that she knew the Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin; adding, that I myself, as a poor needy one, had known what it was to trust Him. I had occasion to make a call a little way from the house, and on my return found that she had meanwhile sent a message to me, requesting me to call and see her. I hastened to her bedside, and, as I took her hand, she said with great earnestness, "Ah, I have been longing for some weeks to see you, and now I feel so thankful the Lord has sent you to help me on my way." As it was advanced in the evening, and she was very weak, I did not remain long with her. When leaving, she requested me to see her again next morning. I did so, and again the same evening, and so on, almost each day until she fell asleep.

From the first evening I saw her I found out that she was a soul awakened to a sense of her need of Christ, and His sufficiency for the deepest need. I have since found out that the gracious Lord wrought this in her in various ways, mostly, perhaps, through sorrow and family bereavement, of which she had no small share. I was in no

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wise instrumental in this; but I had the joy of seeing in her the power of God's delivering grace in many ways, and the blessedness of His Word in quieting her *natural* fear of death. One little circumstance of this kind I may record. She expressed on one occasion to me her fear, in prospect of death—not, she said most decidedly, as to her acceptance in any way, but she had a shrinking from death and the suffering of it. The nature of her disease, too, was very likely to lead to such suffering. I read her part of Joshua iii., calling her attention to the fact, that when the children of Israel were crossing Jordan, it was on the ark, not on the waters of the river, their eyes and thoughts were to be fixed. "When ye *see the ark* of the covenant of the Lord your God, and the priests, the Levites, bearing it, then ye shall remove from your place and *go after it.*" As soon as I had finished, she said with great earnestness, "That ark is Christ."

I said, "Thank God, it is so." She never lost sight of that, and it comforted her many a time afterwards. The last time I was with her she had all her family around her bedside. It was the last time they saw her. She herself wished and arranged it so. Her simple acknowledgement of perfect confidence in Christ, and rest in Him, was very sweet. And then she asked for the hymn—

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“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear.
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”

And the earnest way in which she sang it, weak though she was, and exhausted, was very touching. This was my last visit to her. I called as usual next day, but she was unable to see me; and that evening, without the struggle she at first dreaded, peacefully and calmly she fell asleep, so quietly, so gently, that “they thought her dying when she slept, and sleeping when she died.”

It is the living power of the Word of God in quieting fear, and fixing, through the Holy Ghost, the eye of the soul on Jesus, that is so blessedly set forth in this case; and it is recorded to His praise and glory who went before His beloved people through the dark waters of death, measured them all Himself, taking *every sting* out of them, and leaving nothing behind save gain for them; thus enabling them to say—“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

W. T. T.

“WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?”

NUMBERS xxiii. 23.

THE thought here is that our state should answer to the state into which we have been brought. Where the conscience is good this is the case: we enjoy the thing into which we have been brought in the measure in which we enter into it. The soul must be broken down; the pride of man, that would meet God face to face, must be broken down—that pride which is the worst of all. (I am not speaking of brutish sins.) In his natural course man has no idea that sin separates him from God.

But when we come to righteousness, it is another thing. We all know we have sinned, and that heaven is a holy place, and yet we expect to get there. Call it mercy, or what you will, but man would rather be something else than what he is if going to be judged now. The conscience must be awakened by a present revelation of God. The light comes in, and makes everything manifest, and puts us just as we are in the presence of God. There is no pride in the conscience when we are before God; pride of heart is just being without God altogether. Whom am I to be afraid of if God is not in all my thoughts? When I have to do with God there is fear, right fear; that is the beginning of wisdom. There is never any pride in the conscience when we have

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to do with God. In these verses we find the most absolute justification; God sees no sin at all.

When you look at it as it is here—an absolute judgment outside of what we have done—what hath God wrought? I don't prescribe any particular course of experience, but the pride of heart must be gone to enjoy this.

All the failures of the wilderness had gone before this. (xxiii.) Could the enemy, the accuser of the brethren, take up all that Israel had done, and make it a barrier to their entering the land—hinder our getting into heaven?—for this is heaven for us. He could not. (Deut. ix.)

They were there at the same moment as when this question was raised by the accuser, Can you go in or not? Well, what is Moses' account? Incessant murmuring. “Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you.” What is the normal state of a Christian? The Christian's path is clearly living up to his privileges—Christ our life, walking in the Spirit, accepted in him.

We must either be before God in the lowliness of the sense of the grace of God, or meet a God who breaks us down. What is man's place with God?—Lowliness. And that being so, all the man's delight is being nothing, and receiving everything.

The judgment of the Spirit in a saint is an-

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other thing from the judgment about him. By the Spirit of God I see such a thing was not meekness, not gentleness on my part. The Spirit of God judges me according to what I am; that is all right, but when *God* judges me it is according to what Christ is.

The Spirit of God judges everything in us that is contrary to God; but when the question arises with the accuser, you see what God's judgment actually, absolutely, is about me, and that is according to what Christ is and what He has wrought. "God is not a man that he should lie." All the hostility comes to nothing. Why? Because it met God. (Verse 21.)—"He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." Why, Moses had seen nothing else! In one sense God *had* seen it all. Why hath He not seen it? Because He hath put it away Himself. There is no such thing seen when you come to the judgment of God *about* us.

It was not that He allowed the evils. He had humbled the people, and proved them, to know what was in their hearts. They had gone all through the wilderness thus. He had chastened them about their sins. You get all God's gracious dealings with them in Deut. viii. But here it rests upon God Himself, and I find Christ there, the Lamb that was slain, in the presence of God. Suppose I am broken down, and

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humbled, and go to God about it, what do I find there? I find the Lamb slain there; a man there. What tale does that tell? That Christ has finished the work and gone back there, and put our sins away. “Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” If I come at the beginning or at the end, I find Christ there. God does not see iniquity in me. Why? Because Christ has put it away. It is—what God has wrought, not what I have wrought. He undertook that work, and there I find that “by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Christ could not allow sin. Well, then, did He put me away? No; He put my sin away!

We cannot judge ourselves *too much* and too earnestly. The converted man loves holiness. The question is now, Is God satisfied with what He has wrought? That, of course, is simple. It over-rides all experience. Experience is the work of the Holy Spirit in us, but that is desert work. “Thou hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed.” Experience is right; but when you come to the end of all experience, it is—what has God wrought?

Chap. xxiv. 6.—“As the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted.” Well, He has wrought in our hearts that we should follow Him in righteousness and true holiness. When God has wrought, that is the effect. He has taken

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me in hand, brought me out of Egypt. Who is to condemn? Condemn yourself when you are wrong. But what matter who condemns if God justifies; that is the true side. Are you satisfied with yourself? Then you don't know God at all. Satan may accuse, so as to bring chastisement for our good, but no judgment.

Verse 24.—Now you get strength. "Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion."

There I get power. "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Consequent on this we get power against the evil.

Reader, is your heart or conscience on that ground? When you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, are you there in your heart according to what God has wrought? or are you looking to the ground of your acceptance for what you have done yourself? Are you judging of yourself, by yourself, down in the wilderness, or by God, up in the mount? It is *God* that justifies; the whole thing is God's work; that is a blessed thing.

Our hearts are able to rest and see there is an end, an utter condemnation of all that is of the old Adam state. The whole thing for the heart to rest in is, "What hath God wrought." The human heart kicks against that, for man likes to be something. The more we look into it, the more we shall see the value of it. Let us judge

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ourselves, and walk according to what God hath wrought in practical holiness. I am going to be like Him. Well, I must be like Him here, bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

The Lord break us down thoroughly; empty us of ourselves, of all thought that we can do anything; and keep us in His presence, that we may know that joy now; that we may stand there in peace!

J. N. D.

(Notes of an Address.)

 GROANING "WITHIN OURSELVES."

THERE is nothing so hard for our hearts as to abide in the sense of grace—to continue practically conscious that "we are not under the law, but under grace." It is by grace that the heart is "established;" but then there is nothing more difficult for us really to comprehend than the fullness of grace—that "grace of God wherein we stand," and to walk in the power and consciousness of it.

It is only in the presence of God that we can know it; and there it is our privilege to be. The moment we get away from the presence of God, there will always be certain workings of our own

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thoughts within us, and our own thoughts can never reach up to the thoughts of God about us—to the "grace of God."

There are two things which may hinder our peace of spirit, and which, being frequently confounded and mixed up together, create a difficulty in the minds of the saints: first, a troubled state of conscience respecting acceptance and salvation; secondly, a groaning of spirit similar to that mentioned by Paul in Rom. viii. 23, because of circumstances around which distress and try us.

But these are quite distinct. The trouble and exercise of spirit which the saints may and indeed will have whilst living in this world, because of circumstances around, is altogether an opposite thing to that which is trouble of conscience respecting pardon of sin. Where the latter is, that love is not in exercise towards others, but self is the centre, even if rightly so. But when the trouble is because of the state of things around us, the contrary is the case. How great the burden on the soul of the Lord Jesus in passing through this world! But it flowed from love and from a perfect sense of what the grace of God was.

Grace supposes all the sin and evil in us, and is the blessed revelation that through Jesus all this sin and evil has been put away. A single sin is more horrible to God than a thousand sins, nay, than all the sins in the world, are to us; and

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yet, with the fullest consciousness of what we are, all that God is pleased to be towards us is LOVE! It is vain to look to any extent of evil—a person may be (speaking after the manner of men) a great sinner or a little sinner; but this is not the question at all. Grace has reference to what God is, and not to what we are, except indeed that the very greatness of our sins does but magnify the extent of the "grace of God." At the same time we must remember, that the object and necessary effect of grace is to bring our souls into communion with God—to sanctify us by bringing the soul to know God and to love Him. Therefore the knowledge of grace is the true source of sanctification.

If grace then be what God is toward me, and I have nothing at all to do with what I am, the moment I begin to think about myself as though God would judge me because of my sins, it is evident that I am not then consciously standing in grace.

The heart naturally has these thoughts; and indeed it is also one of the effects of being awakened, for the conscience then begins directly to reason about what God thinks of it; but this is not grace.

The soul that turns back upon itself to learn God's judgment about it, and what His dealings with it are likely to be, is not leaning upon what God is—is not standing in grace.

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I have said that there are two things which, though quite distinct, are nevertheless frequently confounded in the minds of the saints—a bad conscience, and the "groaning" of the spiritual man because of evil around. The moment we get a little way from the sense of grace we shall be in danger of confusing these together. Suppose, for instance, that I as a saint am sensible of the terrible weight of evil which is all around me, and groan about it, soon (unless it be guarded against) this will mix itself up with trouble of conscience, I shall lose the sense of God's love and put myself under law.

But a saint may "groan" thus without at all losing the consciousness of love, nay, for the very reason that he has it.

When the Lord Jesus "groaned in Himself" and wept at the grave of Lazarus, His deep sense of the sorrow which sin had brought into the world did not affect that of His Father's love—"Father, I know that thou hearest me always." And so a Christian may be sorrowful, but should not on that account feel as though God were not love, or lose the sense of His grace.

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NUMBERS xiii. ; JOSHUA xiv.

IT is most important to understand the moral condition of Israel at this time; otherwise great difficulty must be experienced in seeking to apprehend why Jehovah permitted Moses to send out spies to search the land of Canaan. A careful study of Deuteronomy will very clearly demonstrate the fact that unbelief on the part of Israel was the *origin* of the mission of the spies, though allowed of God, who can work His sovereign will in spite of all; just as the demand for a king afterwards, though Jehovah acceded to it and allowed it, was a virtual denial of His regal titles and claims over the rebellious nation. There is one important fact which appears to me to place the question of the searching of the land beyond all dispute. In the 3rd of Exodus, where the earliest intimation of His purpose is recorded, there is likewise a description of the character of the land as it existed to His eye—its exceeding goodness, fertility, and beauty, are all there delineated and traced. How, then, could it have been possible for God, having cast Israel on the fidelity of His word and promise, to originate that which virtu-

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ally was a slur upon His veracity and the certainty of His word? No; Jehovah permitted it, but never originated it.

There is a principle of weighty import in the circumstances which attended the searching of the land. First, observe how the testimony of the spies was but confirmatory of Jehovah's word: "And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh, and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it." But then, *immediately*, other principles began to work. The goodness of the land was not denied—how could it, in the presence of the *earnest* before their eyes? But between them where they were and the possession of this goodly land there were difficulties, and these are all mapped out with the accuracy of unbelief: "Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great; and, moreover, we saw the children of Anak there. The Amalekites dwell in the land

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of the south ; and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains ; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan." And these obstacles and impediments, by occupation with them, obtained such a hold over their hearts, that they were, in their own sight, as well as in the sight of their enemies, but grasshoppers.

Now it is very important to observe how *a sight of the land* tests them ; and, in truth, nothing tests like it. This principle stands true in regard to all God's ways with His people at all times. As soon as ever He discloses His purpose regarding us, His mind and thoughts for the time present, then it is that all the difficulties standing in our way are presented in full array ; and hence it is, at this present time, that those who see what God's great thought is concerning His beloved Son, have difficulties and opposition that all others are strangers to. If any doubt the application of this principle, they have only to study the history of God's testimony on the earth, in order to be certified as to its truth. Who, may I ask, are beset with every kind of opposition at this present time ? Are they not those who seek to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" ? Only give up the truth of Christ's body on the earth as a *practical* one, and you will be promoted to great honour ; stand out as a unit, and you will be let pass. But connect yourself *practically* with

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the great truth—"There is one body and one Spirit," and you are at once subjected to all the opposition of men, and the most malignant hatred of Satan. You are surrounded with difficulties on every side; and if you allow such between you and God, instead of having Him between you and them, your heart will lose confidence, as Israel's did, and the test will become to you an occasion which Satan will use to turn you away from God, instead of being an opportunity to turn to God. Now observe the consequence of failing before this test. First, there is *weeping*, next *murmuring*, then *hard thoughts* of God; and, lastly, they propose crowning self-will—"Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." Observe how gradual the nature of their declension—of every declension—is. They had forgotten the living God, and His interest in them as His people; they had preferred the estimate which their foolish hearts had formed of God's land in the light of the difficulties between them where they were and it; and now the issue is complete—a captain of their own choosing is their resource. This gradual character of all decline is very solemn, and has a special voice, because of the spurious notion that our falls are immediate, or all at once. Not so, beloved reader; like everything else, they have their beginnings, and hence the solemnity of the words—"Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

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But now let us turn for a moment and look at a bright side of this dark picture. The dismal dreariness of unbelief serves ends we should little fancy. The crisis not only brings out the man of unbelief, it likewise calls to the front the man of faith; and this scene is no exception. Joshua and Caleb, men for a crisis, are equal to the emergency; and their united testimony at this moment is very beautiful—"We are well able to overcome," is the language of the one, and "If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it us," is the testimony of both; that is to say, the *hand* and *heart* of God are the resources of men of faith in a crisis. Is it not blessed to see a man like Caleb hiding himself behind the power of Jehovah, the arm of God, so that, forgetting the weakness of Israel, and the strength of both giants and walled cities, he rallies, as it were, the broken ranks of his people with these words—"Let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it," because the right hand of Jehovah's power, which was celebrated on the shores of the Red Sea, as having dashed in pieces the enemy (Exodus xv. 6), was before Caleb's heart and thoughts: he goes back to that wondrous scene in his testimony, and seeks to connect his people thereby with that same Jehovah who always triumphs gloriously.

And their united testimony in chap. xiv. is not

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less beautiful. The delight of Jehovah in His Israel—*i.e.*, His affections, His heart—is a sufficient plea that He would surely bring them in the light of this love, this delight of God; they can say, “the Lord is with us.” Oh, what rich resources of faith a *crisis* calls forth! It is very striking to see how it is all that is in God they testify unto. The springs of delight in God’s own heart, motives there entirely apart from the objects of His favour, are wondrous topics for faith to rest on. And hence it is that even the acknowledged difficulties become tributary to His own, “the people of the land are bread for us.” Our God delights in difficulties, to show how entirely above and beyond them He is. The faith of God’s elect, these crisis men, look upon them as bread! There is another point of great beauty here. These men of faith are exposed in this crisis to be turned upon by their own—“the congregation bade stone them with stones;” then it is the glory of Jehovah appears, to vindicate the witnesses to the power of His hand and His heart: “the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.”

Now, ere we pass from this part of our subject to pursue the history of the land possessed, let me point out the immense advantage a saint now has over any of God’s people at any previous period, but only to take shame to ourselves that

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so few of us are crisis men in purpose and heart at this present time.

Most blessed as this testimony of Caleb and Joshua was, as far as they could witness to the *ability* and *delight* of God to bring His people into possession of what His heart had in store for them, yet what is it if compared with the witness which a saint now can bear to power and love? Who, for instance, in olden times, knew the power of His right hand, in taking the beloved Son out of death and seating Him in highest glory? How blessed by faith to be spectators of the glory of the Father visiting the grave of Jesus, raising Him up and claiming Him as His own! How blessed to-day to be witnesses, in the power of the indwelling Spirit, to such glory! Truly we are they who are privileged to know "what is the exceeding greatness of His power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Blessed and wondrous vision this is to occupy faith, the Christ of God, the glorious Man, constituting as His point

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of departure all those things which are termini with us. Principality, power, might, dominion, names, are the *extent* to which poor things like us can reach in comprehension; but when we look at Jesus raised and exalted by the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, we behold Him *departing* only from that which *bounds* our ken. So much for the power of His hand. If again we think of His heart, His affections, when were they proclaimed or known until the beloved Son, ever in His bosom, disclosed them? Joshua could say, "If the Lord delight in us, He will bring us in." I hesitate not to say that an "if" now, in the light of the *cross*, and the *glory*, of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as the position of the saint by virtue of union and association with the beloved Son, would be the unbelief which casts a slur on the love which has disclosed itself in such a manner as to secure confidence in itself. "All the Father's heart made known"—marks the wondrous place into which we have, through His sovereign grace, been introduced.

How it speaks to the heart and moves the affections, the thought that this marvellous love of God (His own peculiar love) has been made known in the sorrows of His own Son, His Lamb! The agonies and the blood of Jesus not only measured the distance of ruined creatures from God, they also measured the affections of

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God. Is it too much to say so? When you and I, beloved reader, by faith visit that wondrous scene of sorrow and love, when by faith we see His travail and sorrow, do we not also see the heart of God therein expressed as never before; and we, by virtue of the same agony and blood, standing not only to witness such love, but to adore the source and the channel through which it flowed forth so blessedly to us?

It was a wonderful day for the earth and for Moses, when, in response to the desire of his heart to see His glory, Jehovah replied—"Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock; and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by. And I will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen." Wonderful sight *that* for Moses, hid in a cleft of the rock, and covered by Jehovah's hand; but, let me ask, is that the sight He gives His saints now? Oh, beloved reader, if the eternal Son of the Father humbled Himself to become a man, and as a man humbled Himself down to those depths of agony and grief, expressing *therein* God in His nature, as well as glorifying Him in meeting every one of His righteous claims, what could suit either that Son or the

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Father's heart, save the exaltation of the one to the highest place in heaven, and the manifestation of the other to poor things like us? It was in keeping with Moses that he should but see His back parts; and it was consonant with Jehovah's manifestation of Himself at that time to disclose no more, but *now* His righteousness as well as His love require the full manifestation of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. I have referred to these facts simply to point out the immense contrast between the testimony of a Caleb or a Joshua, blessed, faithful men though they were, and the witness expected from a saint now.

Let us now look a little at the history of the land *possessed* by the same Caleb whose testimony is recorded in Joshua xiv. Forty-five years of endurance and faith had intervened between this Scripture and the one we have already considered, and Caleb is now an old man of eighty-five years, yet with no mark of decay as regards the energy that characterized him at Kadesh. He had turned about and wandered with his nation for forty years in the wilderness, and that for no fault of his. If Israel were the people of God, let them be ever so bad in themselves, that is sufficient to connect them with the affections of the man of faith. But during that forty years of wilderness toil and trouble, he carried in his heart the beauty of that goodly land which his

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eyes had for a moment beheld. No protracted period of trial or provocation had prevailed to obliterate from his thoughts or affections Jehovah's land. It is not difficult to conceive how its richness and beauty lived in his heart, and comforted him many a weary day. How blessed to hear him trace up everything to its source in these words—"And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years." The sense of who He was to whom this aged warrior owed his steadfastness as well as his life, is not absent from his soul. Years only bring out with greater distinctness how completely cast he was upon Jehovah, and how his soul rejoiced in this blessed fact—the Lord was as good as His word.

Again, observe here the unfading nature of *faith*, it never wears a grey hair. Though Caleb was now an old man of eighty-five years, he was as fresh and vigorous, as young and as strong, as at forty. "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war, both to go out and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain whereof the Lord spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the Lord said." Then he receives his inheritance

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and his blessing—"And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel." How blessed to think of the spot which the faith of this crisis man claims and receives! Hebron was the place where David was anointed king (2 Samuel ii. 4). It was a place signalised in many ways. Here it was that Sarah died (Genesis xxiii. 2); here likewise Abner was buried (2 Samuel iii. 32); but in no respect was it so remarkable as in the first-named instance. In this is there not the sweet and blessed picture of that spot where faith alone can fold her wings? The place that faith gets as its inheritance is where God's beloved one is crowned; *there* and there alone it rests, its repose and enchantment are there.

There is one other fact of great beauty in connection with this faithful servant of Jehovah, which I must not pass without notice; it serves to show how faith's *surroundings* and *associations* are ever of a like nature with itself. We are told in Joshua xv. how Caleb's walk at home was no exception to his testimony abroad; observe how he seeks to surround himself with associations of a like nature with himself. He will give his daughter to one who is not only worthy of Caleb's daughter, but who is distinguished by the same

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confidence and faith which made Caleb a crisis man. All this has its voice surely for us, beloved, in these days, when so much of the world, in one way or another, is sought after by those who, by profession at least, declare that they have been crucified to it and it to them.

We have thus examined a little of the history of the searching and possessing of the land of Canaan by these faithful, true-hearted, witnesses for Jehovah in their day. The Lord grant it may have been with profit, instruction, and encouragement too, according to the power of His own Spirit, who loves to communicate the things of God to the children of His love, the heirs of glory.

W. T. T.

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HEBREWS x. 14.

IN the ninth chapter of this epistle is set forth, in the most complete argument, the manner in which sins are put away by the one offering of Jesus Christ; whereas in this chapter, the subject is, how this is applied to the conscience, so purging it, that no dread of God's judging because of sins any longer remains. This is the meaning of "no more conscience of sins." So *full*, *perfect*, and *sufficient*, is Christ's offering, that by Him all who

believe are not only justified from all things, but are entitled to be within the Holiest, *and to know it*. Could anything be more wonderful or excellent?—inside the veil, where of old only one man, of one tribe, of one nation, on one day of the year, could enter; there, too, not by sufferance, but by *right and title*, and suited for such a place, having a conscience so purged that it is fit for the presence of God. I may just observe in passing, that Hebrews shows the two-fold position of a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. As regards heaven, he is, as in this chapter, within the Holiest *now*; as regards this world, his place is outside the camp, as in chapter xiii. On this latter I do not now enlarge; it does not come within my present purpose.

Let us look a little at the *foundation* of this great salvation. First, as we have it in verse 10, “By the *which will* we are sanctified.” God willed *not*, and had no pleasure in the death of a sinner, nor had He pleasure in the sacrifices offered by the law, which could never make the worshipper perfect. In these repeated sacrifices there was a remembrance of sin every year: “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come to do Thy

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will, O God." Thus we are let into the secrets that passed between the Father and the Son in the council chamber of eternity before the foundation of the world. It was the *will* of God, and the Son sets Himself to do that will, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." Oh, how different from man's natural thoughts of God! How eclipsed, even the very best thoughts about His character and love! He *willed* it, and what His heart conceived, the Son of His love will undertake to accomplish. Will you, beloved reader, say what are your thoughts about God? Whoever could have stooped so low in a love that removed out of the way all that hindered its expression, and that too at the cost of all that was dear to itself! Such, then, was His will, which is the great *source* and *spring* of this wonderful display of grace.

Second, we have the person and work by which it has been accomplished. The person, the Lord Jesus, the Eternal Son of the Father, He it was who took a body prepared for Him by God, and in it glorified Him, as well as established a righteous ground upon which God can be "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Hear His own words—"Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again." "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." He was the One who shed His blood. The righteousness of God demanded

the blood of such a victim, so perfect and so blessed. Sin could be put away by nothing less; and for the purging of the conscience there was nothing wanted more. He it was who, by the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God (and only He could); and now that very same righteousness of God raises Him up from the dead, from the very death by which He glorified God, and sets Him in glory, and likewise rends the veil from the top to the bottom. Could anything be more wonderful? "This man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down (that is, sat down in perpetuity) on the right hand of God for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." This one offering accomplished what the blood of bulls and of goats, shed from the beginning of the world, could never do. This one offering needed no repetition, so there remaineth no more offering for sin.

Lastly, we have the way by which it is known and enjoyed, in those words—"Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Oh, how blessed to have the knowledge and enjoyment of this! Could there be anything equal to the blessed certainty in the soul, founded on God's will, Christ's offering, and the Holy Ghost's testimony? The Holy Ghost could not have come down until Jesus was glorified; but Christ being glorified

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out of the very judgment by which He for ever put away sin, the Holy Ghost comes down. Wherever I look I see infinite *power* and infinite *love*—the *love* that gave Christ, and brought Him down to the grave, and the *power* that raised Him up and set Him at the right hand of glory.

W. T. T.

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MAN, as a respectable citizen of the world, may be as separated from God as a murderer. "The remnant of them," as the parable speaks, "took his servants and slew them." The remnant! a word which lets us know that the refusers of the supper were of *one* class with those who shed the blood of the innocent. The ease and indifference with which Cain could turn his back upon the Lord, and upon the recollection of his brother's blood, is dreadful. He got a promise of security, and that was all he cared for. And quickly, under his hand, accommodations and delights of all sorts fill the scene. In some sense this is still more shocking; this exceeds. But is not this "the course of the world?" Was it not man that slew Jesus? Does not the guilt of that deed lie at every man's door? And what is the course of the world but the ease and indifference of Cain in this highest state of guilt?

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The earth has borne the cross of Christ; and yet man can busy himself with garnishing and furnishing it, and making life in it convenient and pleasurable. This is shocking when we look at it in full divine light. A respectable citizen of the world Cain was, but all the while a heartless forgetter of the sorrows of Abel. His ease and respectability is the blackest feature of his history. He went away as soon as he got a promise of security; and that promise he uses, not to soften his heart and overwhelm him with convictions of all that had happened, but as giving him full occasion to indulge and magnify himself. We read in the New Testament of "the way of Cain." It may be, nay, it is, run by others (Jude 11). And what a way does this chapter show it to be! He was an infidel, or a man of his own religion, not obedient in faith to God's revelation. He practised the works of the liar and the murderer. He hated the light. He was proof against God's word in mercy and in warning. He cares nothing for the presence of God which his sin had forfeited, or for the sorrow of his brother which his hand had inflicted. And, as such an one, he can take pains to make himself happy and honourable in the very place which thus witnessed against him. Is this "the way of Cain?" Is this man still? Yes; and nature outlives a thousand restraints and improvements. For at the end of Christendom's career,

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it will even then be said of a generation, "They have gone in the way of Cain." This is deeply solemn, beloved, had we but hearts to feel it. There is, however, a rescued, separated, people. Seth's family are after another order altogether. They are not seen in cities furnished with accommodations and pleasures, apart, like Cain, "from the presence of the Lord;" but as the household of God, separated from the world that lay in the wicked one, to the faith and worship of His name. There is much, I believe, in their standing and testimony which has instruction for our souls. Like all else in these chapters, it is but short notices we get, but great things are to be found in them.

This family of Seth may generally be thus spoken of: they are strikingly opposed to the way of Cain, and remarkably apprehensive of the way of God. I speak not here again of their *faith*, but of their *standing* and *testimony*. The Lord had set a mark on Cain that no one finding him should slay him. He would not have the blood of Abel avenged. This we have already seen. The family of Seth are strikingly observant of this. No attempt, or anything like it, is made by them to answer the cry of innocent blood. They know that it is heard in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; but, under this word of God, they are deaf to it themselves. Vengeance does not belong to them. The harvest had not

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come. They were not reapers. In obedience they heard, not the cry of blood, but the voice of the Lord countermanding vengeance. And they suffer it. They take the wrong done to their brother, and are acceptable with God. The innocent blood is to remain unavenged. Its cry from the earth is not to be answered, at least for the present. *That* is enough to teach the saint his pilgrim heavenly calling. The family of Seth are therefore as pilgrims and strangers here, and all their habits are those of heavenly citizens. If the earth be not to be cleansed, the elect are to be strangers in it with a heavenly calling. Beautifully true to the mind of God this is. For this is the way of God ; and it was apprehended by these saints, more in the light and knowledge of His most perfect and beautiful ways than by many of us, beloved, who, in the fuller revelations of this present age, have been so much nourished and instructed. But it is not the much schooling we get, but the capacity which sits at the lesson. David wanted capacity for this same lesson, when he talked of building a house of cedars, a fixed habitation, for the Lord, while the land was still defiled with blood. But the Lord (may I say) would be, like the antediluvian saints, a stranger on the earth, a dweller in tents, while blood was staining it ; and that very night rebuked the purpose of the King of Israel. (1 Chron. xvii.) We have many exhibitions of this way of God in

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different forms of it. The Lord, for instance, would have no altar in Egypt, uncircumcised as that land was. He would not have a throne in the land (in the full glory of it) till the day of Solomon, when all was sanctified for His royal presence. Afterwards the glory was grieved away by the abominations which were done in the temple. The captives, in like spirit, hung their harps on the willows of the Euphrates; for how could they sing in a strange land, or let the songs of Zion be heard in Babylon?

Separation was the rule of the Divine mind. Separation was holiness. Pollution demanded it, and faith rose at the bidding. And with all this, the Seth family, the household of God in earliest days—days before the flood—are in company. They are one in spirit with Jehovah Himself in Egypt, with the glory of the defiled temple, with the harps of the captives in Babylon, and with the Church of God in “this present evil world.”

J. G. B.

THE SIN OFFERING.

It is remarkable that nothing was so stamped with the character of holiness, of entire, real separation to God, as the sin offering. In the other offerings, perfect acceptance, a sweet savour, and, in some cases, our leavened cakes, are found therewith in the use of them; but all passed in the natural delight, so to speak, which God took in what was perfect and infinitely excellent, though it supposed sin and judgment to be there. But here the most remarkable and exact sanctions of its holiness were enjoined. (Lev. vi. 26-28.) There was nothing in the whole work of Jesus which so marked His entire and perfect separation to God, His positive holiness, as His bearing Sin. He who knew no sin alone could be made sin, and the act itself was the most utter separation to God conceivable, to bear all, yea, beyond our thought, and to His glory. It was a total consecration of Himself, at all cost, to God's glory; as God, indeed, could accept nothing else. And the victim must have been as perfect as the self offering was. As a sacrifice, then, for sin, Christ is specially holy; as indeed, now in the power of this sacrifice, a Priest present before God, making intercession, He is "holy, harmless, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens." Yet so truly was it a bearing of sin that he who carried the goat before his letting loose, and he that car-

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ried the ashes of the red heifer, and sprinkled the water of separation, were unclean until even, and must wash to come into the camp. Thus are these two great truths in the sin offering of Christ presented to us in these sacrifices. For, indeed, how can we conceive a greater separation to God, in Christ, than His offering Himself as a victim for sin? And, on the other hand, had He not really borne our sins in all their evil, He could not have put them away really in the judgment of God. Blessed for ever be His name who has done it, and may we ever learn more His perfectness in doing it!

J. N. D.

ABRAHAM'S DOUBLE VICTORY.

TWO victories distinguish Abraham—one over the armies of the kings, and one over the offers of the king of Sodom. The first of these Abraham gained because he struck the blow exactly in God's time. He went out to the battle neither sooner nor later than God would have had him. He waited, as it were, till "he heard the going in the mulberry trees." Victory was therefore sure, for the battle was the Lord's, not his. His arm was braced by the Lord, and this victory of Abraham's was that of an earlier sling and stone, or of the jaw-bone of an ass, or of a Jonathan and his armour-bearer against a Philistine host, for Abra-

ham's was but a *band of trained servants against the armies of four confederated kings.*

The second, still brighter than the first, was achieved in virtue of fellowship with the very springs of Divine strength. The *spirit* of the Patriarch was in victory here, as his arm had been before. He had so drunk in the communication of the King of Salem—had so fed on the bread and wine of that royal, priestly stranger,—that the king of Sodom spread out his feast in vain. The soul of Abraham *had been in heaven*, and he could not return to the world. That was his blessed experience in the valley of Shaveh. Happy soul indeed! O for something more than to trace the image of it in the book!

Surely, beloved, this is the way of victory in all the saints. The springs of strength and joy are found in Jesus. May you and I be able to look at Him and say, "All my fresh springs are in thee." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." And what are all conquests in God's account but such? 'Tis within—

"The fervent Spirit labours. There he gains
Fresh conquests o'er himself, compared with which
The laurels that a Cæsar wears are weeds."

J. G. B.