

THE EVANGELIST:

A Monthly Magazine

ADAPTED

FOR GENERAL CIRCULATION.

EDITED BY H. H. S.

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

JOHN iii. 16.

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THE EVANGELIST.

LOST! LOST!

“The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
(LUKE XIX. 10.)

MAN is lost. This is a fact. He is not only a sinner, but a lost sinner; he is not only wandering from God, but has so far wandered as to be lost. He is so completely lost, that he does not, cannot, find the way back to God. Another was needed to bring him there. Man is then far from God—“gone astray”—outside the sense of God’s presence. Law could not bring him back—it only proved him to be a transgressor. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” Like the prodigal in the “far country,” in ruin and filth, the hungry soul finds nothing to meet his craving but the husks in the swine’s trough. Yet in this lost and loathsome state, even when we were dead in sins, God’s eye pitied, and God’s heart loved. God only could bring the lost wanderer back to Himself; and this only could be done through the death of His beloved Son. Sin must be judged, the sinner must be purged, ere he can be happy in God’s presence, and an infinitely holy God happy with him. God therefore sent His only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. He came to save. He died for the ungodly. He suffered for sins,

the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God. This is divine love, love to sinners, lost sinners. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) This is love. It sprang up in God's heart, it manifested itself to us in giving His only begotten Son, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life. Hence Jesus said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." God then is the mover, the source, and accomplisher of eternal salvation through the death of His Son. He loved, He gave, and Jesus seeks and saves ; but he saves not good people but bad people, not occasional sinners, but lost sinners, those who are dead in sins, so morally gone astray that they "cannot please God." It is such He still seeks, such He still saves. He publishes a present and everlasting salvation, present forgiveness of sins, present justification, the present possession of everlasting life, and therefore present "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1 ; Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

Dear Reader, have you bowed to God's verdict of your "utterly unclean," utterly "undone," "lost" condition. It is God who speaks of man as lost, and because we were lost, He sent His Son to seek and to save. Only for one moment reflect, and you will see that you cannot bring one thing connected with your whole history that could in any wise make you acceptable to God ; nor can you do anything to save yourself, and this simply because you are spiritually dead and lost. Oh then, take the place, dear reader, before God, of a lost one needing a Saviour, and you will find a perfect Saviour, and a full and everlasting salvation

“JESUS SAID.”

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in Jesus at God's right hand. He still *seeks* and, blessed be His name, still *saves* the lost.

Look then, dear reader, to the Lord Jesus, approach God only by Him, trust only in Him, rely only on His precious word; for He is able to save them to the uttermost (for evermore) that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb. vii. 25.)

“JESUS SAID.”

“I REMEMBER,” writes a servant of Christ, “a case in Ireland when a Testament had been torn up and the leaves thrown to the winds; a poor man found one of the leaves and picked it up. He could read, and saw, “And Jesus said,” “and Jesus answered and said,” “and Jesus said,” and so on. He said to Himself, What! has the blessed Lord said so many things, and I did not know them? Struck by these simple but solemn words, “Jesus said,” he went off to the neighbouring town and bought a Testament, was converted, believed what Jesus said, and was happy in a known Saviour. But you may say, How did he know it was true that Jesus said these things? Well, God guides the humble, simple soul. Jesus had said it, and His word had power over his soul by grace. But as I have related to you one history, I will tell you another. I was in a cabin in Ireland where I was known, and began speaking to the brother-in-law of the man of the house about the Scriptures; his niece, a young woman, who was present said, “But they tell me, sir, that is a bad book, that the devil wrote

it." She was very ignorant, and could not read. I said, "That is a shocking blasphemy—but I will not reason with you, but read you a bit, and you shall tell me yourself if the devil wrote it." I read to her what are called the beatitudes: "And he opened his mouth, and taught them saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." I then said, "Well, what do you think? Did the devil write that?" "No, sir," she said, "the devil never wrote that; that came from nothing but the mouth of God." The word of God had laid hold of her. She lived and died most happy; dying three years after of a fever in an hospital."

RESTING UPON ORDINANCES.

AN EXTRACT.

"To rest upon ordinances is to rest upon the flesh; there are none in heaven. When Christ, who is there,

is everything, it cannot be done. Christ has indeed established ordinances to distinguish His people from the world, by that which signified on the one hand that they were not of it, but dead and risen with Him, and on the other to gather them on the ground of that which alone can unite them all; on the ground of the cross, and of accomplished redemption, in the unity of His body. But if instead of using them with thanksgiving, according to His will, we rest upon them, we have forgotten the fulness, the sufficiency of Christ, to build upon the flesh, which can thus occupy itself with these ordinances and find in them its fatal sustenance and a veil to hide the perfect Saviour, of whose death, as in connexion with this world and with man living in the flesh, these ordinances so plainly speak to us. To rest upon Christian ordinances is exactly to deny the precious and solemn truth which they present to us, and there is no longer righteousness after the flesh, since Christ is dead and risen. This the apostle deeply felt; this he had been called to set before the eyes and the consciences of men by the power of the Holy Ghost. How many afflictions, how many conflicts this task cost Him! The flesh of man likes to have some credit; it cannot bear to be treated as vile and incapable of good; to be excluded and condemned to annihilation, not by efforts to annul itself, which would restore it all its importance, but by a work which leaves it in its lone nothingness, and that has pronounced the absolute judgment of death upon it—so that convicted of nothing but sin, it has only to be silent. If it acts it is only to do evil. Its place is to be dead, and not better. We have both right and

power to hold it as such, because Christ is dead, and we live in his risen life. He has Himself become our life. Alive in Him, I treat the flesh as dead; I am not a debtor to it. God has condemned sin in the flesh, in that His Son came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin."

LISTEN TO THE SAVIOUR.

"POOR child of sin and woe,
Now listen to the Saviour's pleading voice;
No longer need'st thou go
Without a friend to bid thy heart rejoice.

"I know thou canst not rest
Until thou art from guilt and sorrow free;
Earth cannot make thee blest;
Come, bring thy suffering, bleeding heart to Me.

"Oh, what on earth appears
To comfort thy distress and heal thy grief,
To dry thy bitter tears,
And offer thy poor sinking soul relief?

"Come, leave the desert land,
And all the husks on which thy soul has fed;
And trust the faithful Hand
That offers thee a feast of living Bread.

"O sinner! 'tis the voice
Of One who long has loved and pitied thee!
He would thy heart rejoice,
And set thee from all sin and suffering free.

"And canst thou turn away?
It is the Friend of sinners bids thee come;
O trust in Him to-day,
His blood will shelter thee, and take thee home."

WAITING FOR THE SON OF GOD FROM HEAVEN.

THIS posture the Thessalonian saints assumed on their believing the Gospel. (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The Apostle seems afterward to strengthen them in that posture, by telling them that from it they were to be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. (1 Thess. iv. 17.) And again, afterwards, he seems to guard them against being disturbed in that attitude, against being tempted to give it up, by further telling them that that place of *expectation* should be exchanged for the place of *meeting* ere the *day of the Lord fell in its terrors on the world and on the wicked*. (2 Thess. ii. 1.) And still further, this very posture of waiting for the Son from heaven had induced a certain evil. The Thessalonian saints were neglecting present handiworks. The Apostle does not in anywise seek to change their posture, but admonishes them to hold it in company with diligence and watchfulness, that while their eye was gazing their hand might be working. (2 Thess. iii.)

Other New Testament Scriptures seem also to assume the fact that faith had given all the saints the same attitude of soul; or, that the things taught them were fitted to do so. (See 1 Cor. i. 7; xv. 23; Phil. iii. 20; Titus ii. 13; Heb. ix. 28.)

Admonitions and encouragements of the like tendency, that is, to strengthen us in this place and posture of heart, the Lord Himself seems to me to give just at the bright and blessed close of the volume.

“I come quickly” is announced by Him three times in the twenty-second of Revelation—words directly

8 WAITING FOR THE SON OF GOD FROM HEAVEN.

suited to keep the heart that listens to them believingly in the attitude of which I am speaking. But different words of warning and encouragement accompany this voice.

“Behold, I come quickly : blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.” (v. 7.) This warns us that while we are waiting for Him, we must do so with watchful, obedient, observant minds, heedful of His words.

“Behold, I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every one according as his work shall be.” (v. 12). This encourages to diligence, telling us that by the occupation of our talents now during His absence, on the promised and expected return He will have honours to impart to us.

Surely, I come quickly,” is again the word (v. 20). This is a simple promise. It is neither a warning nor an encouragement. Nothing accompanies the announcement as in the other cases. It is, as it were, simply a promise to bring *Himself* with Him on His coming again. But it is the highest thing, the dearest thing. The heart may be silent before a warning, and before an encouragement ; such words may get their audience in secret from the conscience. But this promise of the personal return of Christ gets its answer from the saints. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Thus the Lord, after this various and beautiful manner, does the business of the Spirit in the Apostle. His own voice, in their different and striking announcements, encourages the saints to maintain the attitude of waiting for Him.

GENESIS.

9

Great things are a doing. The Church, the Jew, and the Gentile, are all in characteristic activity, each full of preparation and expectancy. *But faith waits for that which comes not with such things.* The rapture of the saint is part of a mystery, a part of "the hidden wisdom." The coming of the Son of God from heaven is a fact, as I judge, apart altogether from the history or the condition of the world around. J. G. B.

 GENESIS.

WE may look at Genesis as presenting to us what we may call both the title page and the table of contents of the whole Bible.

The *title* is found in the first verse—"the heaven and the earth"—and the *distinction* between things "heavenly" and "earthly" is kept up all through Scripture. The tower of Babel was man's wicked effort to unite the two. This was pride and confusion. It displeased God, and judgment followed. The same character of wickedness, in a spiritual sense, is now being acted over again in the mystery of Babylon the Great, but it will be overtaken by judgment. In the eternal state there will be "a new heaven and a new earth," as, before that, millennial times will have "celestial" and "terrestrial" glories, and heavenly and earthly saints. Heaven *and* earth are connected with creation, redemption, and glory.

The *contents* of the Bible are found remarkably clustered together in the book of Genesis. Like the other scriptures, this book also, either plainly or in type, sets Christ before us. Jesus said, "The Scriptures testify

of me." We therefore find Christ here as Creator, Redeemer, Head and Ruler over all, having all things in subjection to Himself; for we are told that Adam was "a figure of Him that was to come." Christ is here seen in *death* in Adam's deep sleep, in the woman's Seed bruised, in Isaac on the altar, and in Joseph in the pit and dungeon. We see Him in *resurrection*, particularly in Isaac received again out of death in a figure, and in Joseph's being delivered out of the pit and dungeon prior to his taking his place in Egypt's glory. Further, we are reminded of the *Lord coming for His saints* to meet Him in the air, by Isaac being not brought before us after he had been offered on the altar, until He comes out at eventide to meet His beloved bride, and take her unto Himself; and we see Jesus in *manifested glory* in Joseph's reigning over all the land, with his Gentile bride by his side, his brethren forgiven, restored, and blessed, while all Egypt cries before him, "Bow the knee." (Chap. xli.) Nor can we fail to see Him in Melchizedek as the *blessing Priest*, who will bring forth the bread and wine to refresh His people, after all their conflicts here are over. (Chap. xiv.)

In this marvellous book we have first *creation* in its varied details set before us, pregnant with instruction and comfort. The *third* day is twice pronounced by God to be "good." Then we have *redemption by blood* as the alone ground of approach to God, as taught by Abel's sacrifice. Man's evil ways, and God's dealings in grace and in judgment, are largely brought out. We have man pronounced to be thoroughly evil (chap. vi.), and justification or righteousness reckoned only in the way of faith. (Chap. xv. 6.) The pilgrim

character of the man of faith (Abram), content with a tent and an altar, his devotedness and intimacy with the counsels of God, are contrasted with the deep failure of the one who "lifted up his eyes" (Lot), and walked accordingly—his consequent worldliness, misery, and at last compelled to escape for his life from that which God's judgments were overtaking. Here we find too some notice of Satan's ways as a liar, deceiver, and murderer. One apostle tells us that Satan "beguiled Eve," and "deceived" her, and another apostle informs us that Cain, who slew his brother, "was of that wicked one." Nor are the snares laid by Rebecca for Jacob, by Potiphar's wife for Joseph, and by Tamar for Judah without their solemn significance. We find in Genesis also the origin of the world, as a great system reared by fallen man and Satan to gratify lust, and to seek happiness outside the presence of God, in the city which Cain built. The two forms of human wickedness, corruption, and violence, are found here (chap. vi. 11), as also the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. (Chap. iii. 6.)

And yet more. The "dispensations," as they are called, are also more or less referred to in this first book of Scripture. First, we have man in *innocence*. Secondly, man fallen, and "without law," yet accountable to God as having some knowledge of good and evil—a period or dispensation which Scripture speaks of as extending from Adam to Moses. We may call it therefore a time of "conscience." Thirdly, we have an *earthly* people—the children of Israel—having peculiar promises and blessings, the only people

on earth specially owned of God, but whose ruin and apostacy is briefly shadowed forth in their hatred to Joseph, the beloved son, casting him into a pit, and seeking to cover over their iniquity with a lie. This would correspond with the period, or dispensation of law, extending from Moses to the death of Christ. Fourthly, we have the church—a *heavenly* people, the Bride of the Lamb—illustrated in the wife which Abraham's servant sought in the far country for Isaac, who had ere this gone through death and resurrection in a figure, whom he meets at the close of her pilgrimage, and receives unto himself. This corresponds to the period marked from the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost to the coming of the Lord *for* His saints. Fifthly, we have millennial times clearly referred to, whether we look at Eve sharing with Adam his honour and glory in Eden (chap. ii.), or the reign of Joseph before his restored and happy brethren, with his Gentile bride sharing his glory (chap. xli.), or the promise to Abram that in him all the families of the earth would be blessed (chap. xii.), or in the ways of the true Melchizedek, Priest of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. (Chap. xiv.) Sixthly, though the eternal state of a new heaven and a new earth is less plainly marked, still we do get the old world cleared of evil by the righteous judgment of God, and a new earth associated with blessing following, which may faintly set forth the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness that will succeed the judgment of God by fire. We also see the Lord deigning to become Abraham's guest (chap. xviii.), which may hint at this eternal state of blessedness, when the tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. (Rev. xxi. 3.)

“COMPEL THEM TO COME IN.”

“Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be *filled*.”—LUKE xiv. 23.

THESE are the words of Jesus, and how full of mercy! Could language more powerfully convey the deep unutterable love of His heart towards sinful men? Surely no one on earth ever did, or ever could, love sinners like Jesus. He came into the world to save sinners. He preached to them. He prayed for them. His heart was filled with deepest pity and compassion towards them. “He sighed deeply in His spirit” over the unbelief of some, and “grieved for the hardness of heart” of others. He wept over impenitent Jerusalem, and opened wide His gracious arms to gather them, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not. Still He loved. He made intercession for the transgressors, bore the sins of many, poured out His soul unto death, put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and died for the ungodly.

Thus Jesus, in the perfectness of love, met the righteous judgment of God on our behalf, satisfied every holy claim, glorified God, and purged our sins—“suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” Every demand of divine holiness and truth having been thus righteously met, the aboundings of divine grace now flow out unhinderedly, in the gospel of God, to guilty and ruined sinners. The sacrifice of Christ having been offered, God is now faithful and just to forgive the vilest of sinners, that takes shelter before Him in the atoning work of His beloved Son. Hence we read that “the grace of God bringeth salva-

tion”—not our works, our religiousness, or our feelings—but “*the grace of God bringeth salvation.*” Salvation, too, in its fullest, truest sense—present and eternal salvation. Salvation to the uttermost; salvation at once; salvation without money and without price; salvation to any one who comes to God by Christ, as He said, “By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” (John x. 9.) It is brought *from God to man*, to the chief of sinners; for “*the grace of God bringeth salvation.*” (Titus ii. 11.)

This wondrous message, therefore, of reconciliation to God by the death of His Son is to be spread far and wide, and the servants who carry the message are enjoined to be so earnest with sinners as to “compel them to come in.” God is in earnest, Christ is in earnest, and His servants should also be in earnest, and “compel them to come in.” This is not trafficking in unfelt truth; not the cold enunciation of dry orthodoxy; not the tame monotony of well-set eloquence; not the pastime of critical intellectualism; but the fervent, burning, inimitable eloquence of love, telling out the message of divine grace to most unworthy objects, a felt sense of bearing that which rescues souls from eternal misery, plucks sinners as brands from the burning, and when in the power and unction of the Holy Ghost, lands them in full peace and liberty in God’s most holy presence—compels them to come in.

Those whose hearts are thus fired with the sweetness, tenderness, and fulness of divine grace, must feel that time is short—that death is snatching its myriads of victims on every hand. They must enter somewhat into the value of souls, the eternal misery of the

damned, the never-ending joys and glories of the saved, and the power and value of the cross of Christ. They know that soon “the door will be shut,” the coming of the Lord draweth nigh, and then, O then, eternity—boundless, changeless eternity! How soon it may be. How brief the span of time, and then both he who writes and they who read will be, *must be*, in eternity—the *saved* in glory with Christ, the *lost* in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

In the face of these eternal realities, dear reader, we would ask you pointedly and most lovingly, Have you come in? We are urged by the Lord Himself to “compel them to come in.” Have you come to God by Christ? Have you received Christ Jesus the Lord as your Saviour? Is He alone the foundation of your hope? Is He your way to God? Have you come unto Him, and drank to satisfy your never-dying thirsty soul? Did not He say, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink?” Dear reader, have you?

COME! all oppressed with sin and care,
 Who weary and much laden are,
 Cease from your works and REST,
 By faith in God's *life-giving* SON—
 Who for your guilt did once atone,
 Now bids the outcast find a home
 Of refuge in His breast.
 Who thirst for life's free waters, come!
 Drink now and be refreshed.

You've *nought to do*, for ALL is DONE!
 That work's complete which Christ begun,
 Only on it depend.

“I OFTEN FEEL SO COLD.”

You've *nought to pay*, for ALL is PAID!
 Without your help salvation's made,
 God is no debtor to your aid,
 Christ's work *you* cannot mend.
 BELIEVE ON HIM your sins were laid,
 Then “*doubts and fears*” will end.

Will He take pleasure in your cries,
 If *you* His *finished work* despise,
 And trust to “tears” or “prayer”?
 Thus want a *Saviour of your own*!
Christ and good works, not Christ alone!
 TWO Saviours, then! God offers ONE!
 He'll not His Glory share.
 Add to His work or take therefrom,
 Sinner, you may not dare.

“I OFTEN FEEL SO COLD.”

I WAS calling on a very old servant of God, who had for many years been walking in His ways, and he told me how a young man, who had lately died in India, had preached there once, and had also spoken at two prayer-meetings in the neighbourhood; “and, indeed, I think that he was very plain, and like a little child; his words were made a blessing to many—my next-door neighbour received great benefit, any way.”

“Was she actually converted to God?” I asked.

“Well, I wouldn't like to say that; but I would hope she is in the right way; she loves to speak on those things, and I am sure she would be glad to speak to you, if you would see her.”

“I should only be too glad. Do you think she would come over here? You might send one of the children for her,” I said.

“I OFTEN FEEL SO COLD.”

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“I think I’ll go myself,” he said, “it would look more respectful-like.”

“Very well,” I said; and in a few minutes he returned with his friend, a nice, frank young woman, who shook hands with me as she sat down, and looking me straight in the face with her large honest eyes, she told me at once how she used to love to listen to the preaching of my cousin—“He spoke so simply and so plainly.”

I told her a little about him—how he lived at one time with me; and then I asked her had she herself got that great salvation which he used to preach.

“I don’t know that,” she said; I often feel so cold, that I fear I have never received it.”

“But do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your own Saviour?”

“Well,” she said, “I’ve got this far, that I know there is no one else to look to.”

“But do you look to Him?” I said.

“Oh, indeed I do,” she said, “but I often feel so cold and careless, and then at other times I have such evil thoughts coming into my mind, and even love what is wrong, that I say to myself—How can *I* be a Christian? and then I go to my knees, and, after prayer to God, I feel so much happier, that I sometimes think that after all I may be a Christian!”

“You must remember one thing,” I said, “that even after you do really believe in Jesus, and get salvation, you don’t get rid of the old evil nature.” She looked at me astonished. “No,” I said, “the flesh is still there; for if you remember, in Gal. v. the Galatian believers are told, that if they ‘walk in the

Spirit, they should not fulfil the lust of the flesh; for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot [or more properly, *should not*] do the things that ye would [naturally].’ Now, St. Paul gave these directions about the flesh to people who had the Spirit, which proves that the flesh, or old evil nature, is in the true believer, who has the Spirit; and if you lived a true servant of God for forty years, you would have it there still; and more than that, it would never be any better. You might mortify it, and keep it under as dead, so that it would not appear, but it would never be any better. When a person really believes in the Lord Jesus, he gets eternal life, and this life is a new principle in him, and it loves to do the will of God, and to please Him; and the believer lives in this new life, as Paul said, ‘I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.’ All the aspirations of this life are heavenly and upwards, while all the aspirations of the flesh are after the earth, and sinful, and wrong. The true Christian is made up of two parts—the new spiritual life in Christ, and the flesh; and in proportion as you cultivate the former, and walk in the Spirit, the happier feelings you will have, and the more the flesh will be kept under.”

“I understand it better now,” she said. “I never understood about the Spirit and the flesh before; and I know He does promise the Spirit to those who believe.”

"To be sure He does," I said, "and He gives the Spirit to those who do believe in Him: so if you really believe in Him as your Saviour, you need not doubt your having eternal life because you feel in you the old nature, which loves sin, and is estranged from God: but by the power of the Spirit, you should mortify it; and if you walk in the Spirit, you shall not fulfil or yield to its desires. Do you really believe that God has accepted the death of Christ as an atonement for YOUR sins, and that His own Son suffered for you, and bore the curse of YOUR sins on the cross?"

"I do, indeed," she said, "and that I am only a poor sinner, and unable to do anything myself."

"Well," I said, "hear what the Lord says to you, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' Now, can you not take Him at His word in this matter?"

"I think I can," she said; "but what about the future?"

"Come with me a little further on, to the tenth chapter, and listen—'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.'"

"But if I were really converted to God, don't you think that I should be so filled with love for Christ, that there would no longer be any sin in me?"

"Not necessarily," I said, "because, as I have been

explaining to you, the flesh is unhappily still in you; and if you do not walk in the Spirit, it will quickly bring forth sin.”

“But I must have some love for Christ; and mine is often so very cold!”

“But,” said I, “it is *not your love to God* saves you, but *His love to you*. My love to Him often varies—sometimes I scarcely feel any love for Him, I’m ashamed to say; but His love to me never varies. ‘Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.’ And then again, you may remember how ‘the apostle of love’ never speaks of himself as the disciple who loved Jesus, but as ‘the disciple whom Jesus loved.’ And perhaps,” said I, “if you cannot call yourself the disciple who loved Jesus, you could yet speak of yourself as the disciple whom Jesus loved! Remember, it is not your *feelings* save you; it is not *your love* saves you; but it is when you believe God’s Word about His Son Jesus having been made sin for *you*, and rising again for *your* justification, your *faith* is counted to you for righteousness, like Abraham of old, who ‘believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.’ Happy feelings are the fruits of the Spirit—so are love, joy, peace—you may have them, or you may not, according as you walk in the Spirit; but they are by no means the grounds of your salvation. The ground of your salvation is Christ’s finished work, and your believing in Him as a poor sinner; ‘for it was not written for Abraham’s sake alone that it was imputed to him, but *for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him* that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.’ (Romans iv. 23–25.) All this proves clearly that it is *not your feelings, not your love* to Him,

which saves you, *but your believing on Him* who tells you that He has so loved you, that He has given His own Son to die *for you*—to be made sin *for you*—and to rise again for *your* justification; and ‘by Him all that believe are justified from all things.’” (Acts xiii. 39.)

At this time, I found the train was just going, and I had only time to say, “Good-bye;” but I give you the substance of our conversation, as the difficulties of one are often the difficulties of another in spiritual matters.

T. W. T.

EXODUS.

REDEMPTION is the key word of the book of Exodus. We have *redemption by blood*—shelter from judgment—in chap. xii., and deliverance, or *redemption by power*, in chap. xiv. The first eleven chapters shew us, firstly, that the people who were thus the objects of divine love were poor, despised, and oppressed, having nothing whatever to recommend them. Secondly, that they were under hard taskmasters headed up in one mighty potentate, who hated them, and did all he could to keep them from deliverance from their heavy burdens, and from the service and blessings of the God of Israel. But God judged all their enemies, and brought them away from all their power.

Because they were redeemed, they were separated as a people God had taken up, and were to purge themselves from all leaven (evil), and go on to the land flowing with milk and honey, the inheritance God had in store for them. The children of Israel were thus *an earthly people*, whom God had separated from all the families of the earth to possess blessings in the earth. Exodus therefore shews us this people in relationship with God. First, from the 12th to the 19th chapter we find them dealt with in grace as objects of Jehovah’s electing love. Their murmuring, therefore, because of the bitter water in chap. xv. is met by God shewing Moses a tree to cast into the bitter water

to make it sweet; their murmuring in chap. xvi. because of hunger is met by God sending them manna from heaven; and their murmuring in chap. xvii. because they had no water to drink is met by God bringing water to them out of the smitten rock. All this was *before* "law." In chapters xix. and xx. we have the account of God coming down with lightnings, thunders, voice of words, sound of trumpet—giving the law, which the people willingly *put themselves under*. Man in the flesh always prefers "law" to "grace," because it gives importance to himself, and he knows not his utter helplessness and ruin. The people being thus "under law," chapters xxi.—xxiii. give legal statutes and judgments suited to an earthly people under legal and righteous rule. In chap. xxiv. the book of the covenant and all the people are sprinkled with blood, and make themselves responsible by saying, "All the words which the Lord hath said we will do;" while Moses said, "This is the blood of the testament (covenant) which God hath enjoined unto you." Moses went then into the mount with God, but before he came down the people were dancing round a golden calf, saying, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (chapter xxxii. 4). So much for man "under law." God must have now cut off all these law-breakers in judgment, had He not had thoughts of mercy and grace concerning them. While Moses was therefore in the mount with God, He shewed him the pattern of the tabernacle, its sacrifices, priesthood, and worship (chap. xxv.—xl). The law being inclosed in the ark, and covered by the mercy-seat, plainly shews, though man is a law-breaker, that God could establish the law, and yet cause mercy to abound. These were shadows of good things to come. In this way God still owned them as a people redeemed out of Egypt, and peculiar objects of His care and favour. The pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night, and all the services

of the tabernacle, the Aaronic order of priesthood, the daily manna, and water from the smitten rock, abundantly shew this.

It is worthy of remark that the first song recorded in Scripture is found in this book (chap. xv.), and that its joyful subject was redemption. We are told in the book of Job (xxxviii. 7) that at creation "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy;" but it was not till God had made Himself known in the way of redemption that we find men on the earth singing and rejoicing before Him. How could it be otherwise?

THE SABBATH, AND THE LORD'S DAY.

Do we receive the Lord's day from tradition, or from Scripture?

"If the blessed privilege of the Lord's day depended on tradition, I for one would hold it as of no force whatever. I might bear with one who observed it, because Paul tells us to do that—'One man regardeth one day above another, another man every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.' But it does not rest on tradition. The change from the seventh day to the first is connected with the essence of Christianity and the person of the Lord Jesus. The Sabbath was the sign and seal of the old covenant, the witness that God's people had a part in the rest of God, which in itself is the very essence of our everlasting blessing. But it was then given, as all was, in connection with an earthly system, and was a sign of the rest of the old creation, as it indeed was originally so instituted in Paradise. *But the rejection of the Lord when He came into that is the proof that man cannot have rest in the old creation, that he is a sinner, and needs redemption out of that state.* The blessed Lord become a man, was not for that less the Lord, and came to accomplish this redemption, and as

Son of Man was above all these things,—was *Lord of the Sabbath* as of everything else. It had been given for man in grace and goodness, though it took the form of law, as all did among the Jews. *But we as redeemed have to do with the new creation.* All that system has found its end in the death of Christ. Not the rest of God, but the hope of rest in the old creation. So Christ lay in the grave that Sabbath, but now He is risen, risen the first day of the week, and the first-fruits of them that slept. We begin our Christian life as the first-fruits of God's creatures. We begin as dead and risen in Christ. We do not therefore celebrate the rest of the old creation—we were utterly lost as belonging to that; but the resurrection of our blessed Lord, as the foundation and beginning of the new, when redemption was accomplished. Hence, after His resurrection, He meets His disciples that first day of the week when they were assembled, and the first or Lord's day following, the same thing, and thenceforth it is carefully distinguished in Scripture. We learn that the disciples came together the first day of the week to break bread. (Acts xx. 7.) They were to set apart in grace for the poor on the first day of the week. (1 Cor. xvi.) And in the Revelation it is called the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10), just as the Supper is called the Lord's Supper. (1 Cor. xi. 20.) Hence we own with joy the Lord's day, as the Scripture teaches us, the first day of the week, not the seventh, in which the Lord's body lay in the grave, the witness that the old creation was judged, condemned, and passed away,—that there was no rest in it but to die. No rest for the old man; but the restlessness of sin, and the misery of its fruits. No rest in it for the new man, not for Christ, because all was polluted and alienated from God. And He teaches us that He came to work in grace, and die in it, and begin all anew, of which His resurrection, and the Lord's day as a sign of it, is witness.—*An Extract.*

“I SHALL DIE.”

So it came at last. Often had God warned him in various ways. A godly son, with wife and family, lived next door, and often felt deep distress at the old parent's ways, and besought him to turn to the Lord Jesus, and flee from the coming wrath. But he heeded it not. He preferred drunkenness and vice to the things of God. He cared not for his soul, and turned a deaf ear to the message of God's love to sinful, guilty men.

Two years ago he was nearly killed, and when prostrate on a bed of suffering he vowed that if ever he were raised up it should be to serve God. He recovered, but it need hardly be added that his resolutions utterly failed; for he believed not God's word, that “all flesh is as grass,” and he knew not that he was “without strength.” As health and vigour were restored, he returned to his former habits of vice and profligacy. In scenes of drunkenness, quarrelling, and fighting he was often taking part, and he went on, careless as to his former vows, and apparently without any concern for his soul. For some time God bore with his evil ways; but at length the fatal moment came; for God is not mocked. One morning he left home in his usual health and spirits; but he had not long commenced his customary employment underground, when suddenly, without a moment's warning, a heavy lump fell upon his back, and instantly crushed him. In a moment he called out for his godly son, who happened to be not far off, and on his arrival the old man exclaimed, “James, I shall die! I shall die!” for he felt he had

only a short time to live. He was taken up, and conveyed as quickly as possible to his home, where he lingered for about an hour, perfectly sensible to the last, under the care of his loving and pious son, refusing to hear a word about God's way of salvation, but thankful for anything that ministered in the least to his *bodily* ease or comfort. As is often the case, the agony of pain he was enduring seemed wholly to absorb his thoughts. How solemn this is, and how forcibly this narrative brings before us the inspired declaration, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1.)

While I write, preparations are making for the funeral, and, according to the custom of these parts, hundreds of his fellow-workmen will this day follow him to the grave. All will be done as decently and respectably as circumstances will allow; but how few consider the Saviour's words, that "all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." It is one thing to die and be buried, but the awful reality is, that after death is judgment!

It is to be feared that such cases are far from singular. Many who read these pages may be sensible how often they have been besought by kind friends or relatives to come to the Lord Jesus, and find peace with God through His precious blood. They look back on times of weakness and illness, when accident, fever, or other disease threatened to lay them in the grave; they remember the solemn resolves they then made, and the little result that followed. They cannot forget how they trembled at the prospect of death and the grave,

and tried to banish the thought of judgment to come from their minds. The kind interest of Christian friends, their loving persuasions to turn to the Lord, and their earnest, thrilling prayers, rise often before their minds. And yet, dear reader, you are spared. God's longsuffering has borne with you to the present hour. You have not yet been cut off. You are still within sound of the voice of divine mercy, living in a day when the gospel is still preached, often hearing that the way to glory is still wide open, and plainly marked by the Saviour's blood. *Then why are you not saved?* If God, against whom you have so sinned, continues to call, why do you not answer? If the ambassadors of Christ are still instructed to say, "Be ye reconciled to God," how is it that you continue at enmity with Him? Do think of this. It is God who so *loved* as to *give* His only begotten Son to die for sinners, and it is the activity of divine love that by the gospel bids you, as a sinner and an enemy, to be reconciled to God. How blessed this is! brought into the full brightness of unclouded glory in God's most holy presence, at perfect peace with Him through the blood of Jesus! for He has made peace by the blood of His cross. God and the sinner who believes happy together, every question of sin settled, the conscience purged, and the heart at rest in God's presence, and all through the death of Jesus; as we read, "When we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the *death of His Son*."

Dear reader, have you thus had to do with God *face to face*? Have you taken your true place before Him of an *enemy*? And are you so satisfied with the death of Jesus, as God's just judgment of sin, and vindication

28 "I'VE BEEN LOOKING TOO MUCH AT MYSELF."

of all His righteous claims, and the full outflow of His love toward you, that in confidence you have drawn nigh to Him by faith, and known present peace through our Lord Jesus Christ?

"I'VE BEEN LOOKING TOO MUCH AT
MYSELF."

THESE were the words of an aged woman, who had long known herself to be a sinner against God, but for years had been occupied with her feelings and hopes of getting better, or of doing something for her salvation. But all these efforts proved most unsatisfactory. Again and again she became elated with some fancied improvement, but it was always soon followed by disappointment and despondency. At length God shewed her by His truth her terrible mistake. "I see it now," said she, "I've been looking too much at myself,—Jesus has done it." She felt her burden gone, and light and joy took possession of her heart. Jesus was indeed precious to her. His sweet words comforted her. His finished work upon the cross was the sole foundation of her confidence. It is this that makes the Lord Jesus so very precious; for such can say,—

"He saved me from my lost estate;
His loving-kindness, oh how great!"

When asked how she became happy, she replied, "I was one night thinking of Jesus, and whether He would save me, when I seemed to be looking at Him as on the cross; and the words came so plainly and forcibly to my mind—'Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more.' It is these words that

“I’VE BEEN LOOKING TOO MUCH AT MYSELF.” 29

make me so happy.” And well they might; for what other source of peace is there than Christ crucified—that “He suffered for sins the just for the unjust to bring us to God”? and what can give solid comfort to the soul but the unalterable word of the Lord, the incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever?

We have lately read of another anxious soul trying to get peace by her own efforts, and we subjoin it because we are assured there are many in a similar state, and our hope is that God may graciously use it to deliver some who may read this paper from the terrible mistake of trying to obtain salvation by *working*, instead of by *believing* on the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I am so wretched, so very wretched,” said a poor woman; “I kneel down on my bare knees and pray, but I get no better.”

“But why do you go on your *bare* knees?” asked the Christian lady, to whom these words had been addressed.

“Oh, ma’am, because I am so wicked,” said poor Peggy, with great simplicity; “and so I kneel down and pray till I can scarcely feel for cold, and cry to God to have mercy on me a wicked sinner.” But Peggy found no answer, and thus she was made very unhappy. The lady then simply explained to her the way of salvation, and when she saw her again, all tears were gone, and a peaceful smile had displaced the gloom of her countenance. She said, “I am happy now. A few mornings ago, after prayer, the words, ‘*Your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more,*’ brought sweet comfort to my soul. It seemed as if God spoke them to my heart. I approach *now* without fear, through the blood of Jesus His Son, who is at His right hand; and my desire is to live for His glory.”

WORLDLY MERRIMENT.

“I THINK,” said Samuel Rutherford, “the men of this world, like children in a dangerous storm in the sea, that play and make sport with the white foam of the waves thereof coming in to sink and drown them; so are men making fools’ sports with the white pleasures of a stormy world that will sink them. But, alas! what have we to do with their sports which they make? If Solomon said of laughter that it was madness, what may we say of this world’s laughing and sporting themselves with gold, and silver, and honours, and court broad and large conquests, but that they are poor souls in the height and rage of a fever gone mad. Then a straw, a fig, for all created sports and rejoicing out of Christ.”

HE EVER LIVETH.

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” (1 Peter iii. 18.)

‘He ever liveth to make intercession for them.’ (Heb. vii. 25.)

JESUS *lived*—He lived for sinners,
Outcast, in the world He made;
Lived, that in His blessed person
God’s full grace might be displayed.

JESUS *died*—He died for sinners,
On the cross He cried, “Forgive;”
Died, that lost and ruined rebels
Through His precious blood might live.

JESUS *rose*—He rose for sinners,
Proving that the work was done;
Sweet assurance that the Father
Was well pleased with His Son.

JESUS *lives*—He lives for ever,
High upon the Father’s throne;

WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

31

Liveth evermore to succour
 Those who make His love their own.
 Jesus *loves*—He loveth sinners,
 Loveth more than tongue can say;
 None that trust on Him for mercy
 Will He ever turn away.

WHAT ARE WE TO BELIEVE?

AN EXTRACT.

“WE are not called on to believe that we do believe, but to believe that Jesus is the Son of God, by whom we have access, and are brought into perfect present favour, every cloud that could hide God’s love removed, and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ‘Thy favour is better than life, therefore I can praise thee while I live;’ so that in the midst of the wilderness ‘weariness we can rejoice. * * * *

“As regards the standing and peace of the soul, it is deeply important to see that while what we are ever struggling for is to get something in which we can come before God, it is God who comes before us in the gospel with His Son as our only righteousness; it is unto all, but upon those who believe. Mark here another thing that is connected with peace of soul. Some may say, ‘I don’t deny His divine righteousness, I believe it; but how am I to know that I have a share in it? Is it applied to me? I want it applied to my soul.’ Well, God has applied it to you, if you believe; if, in the consciousness of your sinfulness, you have believed the record God has given of His Son, then you have had it applied to your soul; for it is upon all them that believe: you are righteous. If you go on tampering with sin or the world, God must work this out of

you ; that is true, and the same is the case if there be much of the pride of self-righteousness ; but the thing that is believed is what His Son is, and has done. If there is tampering with sin or the world in our souls it prevents our laying hold of the truth ; not even if we have found divine righteousness can we have the joy of the Holy Ghost in our hearts ; for God must be real to us. But what we have to rest on is Christ's dying for our sins, and the acceptableness of Christ's person.

“Many a Christian would be glad to rest, and as they think to rest there. But in the last thought they deceive themselves ; they look for something better in themselves than they have found, but that is not submitting to God's righteousness, not submitting to what Christ is. They have not learnt the value of the cross, nor its meaning. If they had learnt its value, they would not be trembling for fear ; for how could they be trembling if they knew that their sins are put away ? How could they be looking for good in themselves if they knew that the cross was the final condemnation of all flesh in itself ? You say that you have no other confidence than the cross ; that may be as to your conviction of the truth, and you may feel your need of it in a certain sense, so as to know that you cannot do without it. I suppose you do, or you would not look to it ; but you have not yet learned the value of the cross, which purges the conscience by the absolute putting away of sin. And the secret of it is that you still look for something besides sin in yourself—that is there is still the looking for, still some hankering after your own goodness lurking within. You

do not think yourself so thoroughly bad as the cross proves you to be; for you are what needed it. You are sin in your nature as in your acts. God in it has 'condemned *sin in the flesh*' as needing that abhorring on His part, *and that is all you are in yourself*. You have yet to learn that God justifies the ungodly; you will have more than that, but you must come to that first. It is 'being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;' it is not mere justification from sins, but actual deliverance — *entire redemption.*"

THE LOVE OF GOD.

2 THESS. iii. 5.

OH, wondrous love of God!
 A vast unfathomable ocean, unto which
 Should ceaseless flow the river of our thoughts—
 Deep source from whence the river of thy pleasures flows
 Whilst toiling here below.
 In this (to us) bleak howling wilderness,
 Because it cast Thee out, Lord Jesus,
 How can we find a place?
 Ponder this love, my soul,
 Which brought from out the bosom of the Father
 (Where He dwelt from everlasting)
 The Son of all His love, in whom He took delight,
 Down to this weary world to die
 A death of agony and shame
 For us, whom He has purchased with His own blood.
 What love of His who gave this precious gift!
 Shall we not prize it? worship and adore the bounteous Giver?
 Hail! the refreshing grace from Thy loved hand,
 Which keeps and guards Thy pilgrims
 All the long midnight of Thine absence,
 Leaving with us the sweet expectancy
 Of that bright moment
 When we shall meet Thee in the air,
 And so for ever be with Thee.

A. M. H.

HE FILLETH THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS.

IN Luke ii. 47-54, we see it is "the mighty" that God puts down, "the rich" that He sends empty away, and "the proud" He scatters in the imagination of their hearts; but He does "great things" for the lowly—those who feel themselves to be of "low estate"—and filleth "the hungry" with good things. Oh then to be viler in our own eyes, meaner and weaker in our own sight, that His might and His goodness and blessing may be more with us. It was when Jacob felt his thorough helplessness that he clung to the One who wrestled with him, saying, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me;" and it was when he took his becoming place of vile, confessing his name to be Jacob (the supplanter), that God called his name Israel (Prince), and declared that he had power with God and with man, and had prevailed. (Gen. xxxii. 24-30.)

LEVITICUS.

HERE we have *holiness* and *grace*. We see God maintaining relationships with a people whom He has chosen and redeemed out of Egypt, and teaching them the character of worship, and of sanctification becoming them. The book begins, therefore, with God speaking to them by Moses, *out of the tabernacle*. He teaches them in the first three chapters the ground of acceptance, communion, and peace; and afterwards shews that trespasses and sins can only be purged by sacrifice. In all these points Christ is typically set forth in the perfect

spotlessness of His person and the everlasting efficacy of His work. The necessity of priesthood is also plainly and practically taught. No evil is passed over, but judged and put away. The place of uncleanness was outside, and not where God was pleased to dwell with His people. A leper, therefore (leprosy a type of sin), was compelled to be outside the camp of Israel till he had been cleansed by coming before the priest, and, being sprinkled seven times with blood, pronounced clean. They were taught in various ways to distinguish between things clean and unclean, holy and unholy.

In the feasts (chapter xxiii.) there is intimate association with God and His people. They are in separation from all other persons, and before the Lord. The passover commemorated their shelter from judgment in Egypt, by the blood of the Lamb. In the feast of weeks we have the sheaf that was waved before the Lord—Christ risen—"the firstfruits." After seven weeks, on the fiftieth day (Pentecost), there was the presentation of sacrifices and offerings before the Lord. At the gathering in of the harvest, the poor and stranger were remembered for blessing, which may point to blessing on the Gentiles when the harvest of the earth is completed in the gathering of Israel into their promised rest and blessing. The blowing of trumpets after this, calling the assembly together, giving rest from all servile work and offering unto the Lord, may set forth the holy joy and rejoicing that will follow their entrance into their long-told and long-expected blessing. Then too will they know and enter into the value of the atoning work of Him who *died for that nation*. They will celebrate the rest it has secured for

them. It will be indeed "a sabbath of rest" unto them, and they will "celebrate their sabbaths," nor will they ever forget that they had been bondmen in Egypt. The feast of tabernacles, prophetic of Israel's millennial joy, was peculiarly a time of rejoicing before the Lord their God—in it they remember that they had been bondmen in Egypt. They dwell in booths seven days, that their generations might know that God made the children of Israel to dwell in booths when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.

In the latter chapters of the book, we have instruction as to the redemption of the land, the land enjoying her sabbaths, and God's promise to remember the land, because of its connection with this earthly people who had been brought into relationship with Himself.

ONE OF SATAN'S WAYS WITH SAINTS.

THE temptation with which he disturbs them is to hinder them from living upon Christ as poor, needy, helpless sinners, and from finding by faith all they want in His fulness. This exalts the *Saviour* too much, and makes *them* too safe and happy; therefore Satan would persuade them to get riches, and strength, and a clean heart, quite without sin, *in themselves*, so that they may look *inwards* with complacency, *outwards* with 'stand by, I am holier than thou,' and *upwards* with 'God, I thank thee I am not as other men are.' Thus pride enters, and Christ is thrust out.—*From an old Writer.*

"How heavenly those souls act that act from an enjoyment of Christ."—*Paul Hobson, A.D., 1647.*

ETERNAL LIFE.

A. Well, *H.*, I hear that you believe in Jesus.

H. Yes; God has given me power to do so.

A. Then, did you do nothing to be saved?

H. Nothing. I was saved by GRACE. "By grace are ye saved through faith." (Ephesians ii. 8.)

A. But if you did not work for salvation, you cannot boast about it.

H. It is "not of works, lest any man *should* boast." (Eph. ii. 9.) But I can and do praise God for it.

A. Well, I should like to know what you have got by faith in the Lord Jesus.

H. That is soon told—I have got eternal life—"The GIFT of God is ETERNAL LIFE through Jesus Christ our Lord."

A. But what is eternal life?

H. Life that lasts for ever and ever—life that can never come to an end.

A. Then do you mean to say that you can never die?

H. My body *may* cease to live, but the life which I have *in* Christ Jesus will *never* come to an end.

A. How do you know this?

H. Jesus says, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and *whosoever* liveth and believeth in me SHALL NEVER DIE." (John xi. 25, 26.) I was dead—dead in trespasses and sins. (Eph. ii. 1.) But God has *given* me eternal life, and this life is *in* His Son. (1 John v. 11.)

A. But cannot you be lost?

H. Yes, if Christ can be lost.

A. That's a bold way of speaking!

H. It may be, but it is God who has made me bold. Do you think that when He tells me that Christ is my life (Colossians iii. 4), and that because He lives, I shall live also (John xiv. 19), that I can be afraid of ever being lost?

A. Then you can never perish!

H. NEVER! NEVER! Does not Jesus say, "I give unto my sheep (those who hear His voice, whom He knows, who follow Him) eternal life, and they shall NEVER PERISH" (John x. 27, 28); and does He not also say that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should NOT PERISH, but have EVERLASTING LIFE." (John iii. 16.)

A. You seem very sure on this point. I speak to many who say they have eternal life, but that they may lose it.

H. How can it be eternal life, if it can come to an end? They must think that Jesus did not know what He was talking about, and that they know better than He does?

A. Well, they say Satan can rob them of it.

H. Then they make him stronger than Jesus, and they don't know or else they don't believe that "through death Jesus destroyed or overcame him that had the power of death, that is the devil." (Hebrews ii. 14.)

A. Can Satan rob you of what God has *given* you—eternal life in Christ?

H. No! For Jesus says of His sheep, "neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." (John x. 28.)

A. Stop! Stop! He says any MAN!

H. Ah! that word "*man*" is put in by man,—it is in different letters from the rest of the verse—Jesus only said "*any*."

A. Then, the "*man*" is put in in the next verse.

H. Yes, it should be "*and NONE is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*" (John x. 29.) And you see in this verse it says, "*My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck out of His hand.*"

A. Then you think God is at any rate stronger than the devil?

H. Yes, and Jesus is also. Does it not say in the next verse (verse 30), "*I and my Father ARE ONE*"?

A. Then if you are to be lost, it is Jesus that must cast you out and not Satan!

H. Yes, but Jesus says, "*Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" (John vi. 37.)

A. So you don't agree with those people who say they can be saved to-day and lost to morrow?

H. No! For they make God A LIAR!

A. That's strong language.

H. Yes, it's God's language, He says, "*He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*" (1 John v. 10, 11.)

A. Then you believe God has GIVEN you faith in the Lord Jesus?

H. Yes.

A. That He has GIVEN you eternal life?

H. Yes.

A. That you can NEVER PERISH?

H. Never.

A. That Satan can never rob you of that life?

H. Never.

A. That Christ is your life?

H. Yes.

A. And that you will live for ever with Him in glory?

H. Yes! He is shortly coming to take me to Himself, that where He is there I may be also! (John xiv. 3; 1 Thessalonians iv. 15–18.)

“I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO HELL.”

IN this Christ-despising age, how common it is to hear the most profane expressions drop from the lips of men. Ah! how little do they think when they are inflaming their passions by the free use of the intoxicating cup, and giving vent to the evil utterances of a depraved and desperately wicked heart, that God hears every word, and marks every syllable that escapes their polluted lips. They forget that they are God's creatures, and that ere long every one of us must give account of himself to Him.

Not long ago a little tradesman, sixty years of age, residing in Somersetshire, when under the influence of drink, fell into deep water and narrowly escaped being drowned. The next day when expostulated with as to the danger of continuing his intemperate course, he was asked, “What would have become of you, John, had you died in the water?” He replied, “Why I should have gone to hell, and been a porter to the devil.” Some time after this he left his sick

christian wife in bed to visit his son. His wife said, "You will not stay late, father, will you?" He replied, "No, I shall be home at seven. Good bye." At his son's he drank some intoxicating liquor, and went homewards. About a quarter of a mile from his cottage, and within a gunshot of a house in the public road, he fell into a ditch in which was a little water. He cried out to a farmer who was passing for help. The farmer said, "Is that you, Jack?" and went on to the house near, and begged them to go to the ditch just above to help out Jack, as his horse would not stand still. Accordingly they went, but twenty minutes had elapsed, and they found the poor man smothered in mud, his face and nose filled with gravel and mud, and life quite extinct. This was the more remarkable as the pit only contained about a bucketful of water. Little did the man think when he said to his kind, God-fearing wife, "I shall be home at seven," that he was then so near eternity. Nor did he perhaps consider the deep solemnity of the expression, "I should have gone to hell." But God hears words. Not a thought escapes His notice. He knows whether a heart has gladly received Christ as his Saviour, or whether he loves the pleasures of sin, and despises Christ and His word. Happy indeed are those who have present enjoyment of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, for "By Him (Christ) all that believe are justified from all things."

Dear reader! are *you* saved? or are *you* still trifling with *your soul*? Is it not high time to look up to Jesus at God's right hand, and, through His blood, know the forgiveness of sins? O beware of despising the Saviour!

“A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE.”

“AN awful and deeply-impressive incident,” writes a physician, “in my professional course, occurred in the case of Miss M., a young lady aged twenty-five of large fortune, and highly accomplished.

“In the last stage of pulmonary consumption, nothing would satisfy her but coming to Scarborough late in the autumn, to be under my professional care. Though I had relinquished general practice, and was scarcely personally known to her, yet I consented to attend her.

“As might be expected, the change of residence from Lincolnshire to Scarborough was not attended by any relief to the fearful disease which every day was hastening to a fatal termination.

“Miss M., however, went out every day in a carriage; but she constantly averted every attempt, on the part of myself and mother, to arouse her to her hopeless condition, and prepare her for the great change.

“At last she took her last airing, and the next day she appeared in a dying state. Still she shunned every appeal, however affectionately urged. Towards dusk she was carried up-stairs to her bedroom in a fainting condition, supported by myself.

“By the aid of restoratives she partially rallied. I agreed with the family to remain through the night in an adjoining room, and was going there to put on my slippers, that I might occasionally enter her apartment quietly. I had just said to her, ‘I am going into the

adjoining room, and shall return presently,’ when she cried in a loud, piercing voice, ‘*Stay!*’

“On turning round I was startled with her appearance. The features of her face were fixed as in death, and frightfully contorted, with her tongue protruding from her mouth. Again she shrieked in agony, her screams echoing through the whole house.

“She cried aloud, ‘hell! I am lost! lost! I am in hell! I burn! I burn! Lost for ever!’

“Vainly I endeavoured to soothe her, but with a look of unutterable woe she exclaimed, ‘I have forgotten my God, and He has forgotten me. They told me I was handsome and charming. I gave myself up to the world and its pleasures, and now, oh, I burn!’ and then she gave utterance to the most horrible curses. She was quiet for a little time, but again she burst into paroxysms of anguish, and exclaimed, ‘Yes I have forgotten my God, and He has forgotten me!’

“I urged the pardoning love of God, and the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.

“‘All this,’ she said, ‘might avail for others, but not for me.’

“Her terrified mother stood dumb, unable to speak one word of comfort to her child. Her cousin, more instructed in grace, tried to read some texts of Scripture, and to repeat appropriate hymns, but with little good result.

“This awful scene continued for two hours, with occasional intervals of calmness and apparent self-meditation.

“Again the paroxysms of agony returned, and her piercing utterances were even more horrible than before.

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The storm was succeeded by another calm, which I eagerly embraced to direct her thoughts to Jesus.

"'Consider,' I said, 'that the blood of Jesus calls louder for pardon than your sins for punishment. Think that the Being who made us suffered and died for us—the Creator dying for His guilty creatures! What love could be greater than this! It is indeed wondrous love! Confide in His love, and you shall be saved.'

"These remarks were peculiarly comforting to her soul. After meditation on them for a while, she desired that I should say something more.

"I quoted the text in Zechariah, 'a brand plucked out of the fire,' and showed that she was the brand, and that Christ was able and willing to pluck her now from the burning. This remark seemed to make a deep impression upon her mind, especially as she felt the flames already begun in her.

"She exclaimed, '*I am a brand indeed, plucked out of the fire. Yes! yes!*'

"Still her tranquillity was momentary: she could find no rest for her troubled soul. After praying with her, I bent over her, and repeated promises adapted to her state. 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow;' the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

"'Behold,' I said, 'the arms of everlasting love outstretched to save you now. Throw yourself into His open arms. Oh believe they will support and save you.'

"Still the way of salvation seemed hidden to her. I said, 'Jesus cried on the cross, "*It is finished!*" how can you doubt His own words? It is impious to

doubt the efficacy and sufficiency of His atonement. God was more honoured in the death of Jesus than He could have been by the obedience of all our race. You say you are “*forsaken of God*,” think that Jesus cried, “*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?*” He was forsaken of God that you might not be forsaken for ever.’”

Such were the words spoken by this physician to this bleeding and broken heart. During that long and terrible night, as he tarried by this death-bed, he wrestled and prayed to God for the conversion of his patient. It was like Jacob by the brook Jabbok, when he cried, “I will not let thee go unless thou bless me,” and he prevailed.

She looked from herself to Christ: her faith took hold of the cross, and her fears and conflicts gave way to joy and peace in believing. And as, when Jesus came up into the ship, the winds were laid and the waves were still, so when Jesus entered into this anxious soul, tossed on the sea of agony and despair, all trouble fled—immediately there was “a great calm.”

In this happy state she continued till her change came. Nor was it long delayed; gradually she sank to rest; no cloud darkened her spirit.

There was light in the valley of death, for the Saviour was with her there. With her hand in that of her “beloved physician” she passed away singing, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Truly this was “a *brand plucked out of the fire*.”—*An Extract.*

NUMBERS.

NUMBERS is a *wilderness* book. It gives us the various encampments of the Israelites in the desert on their way to the land flowing with milk and honey. We have, therefore, God's *order* concerning His people and His *care over them*, as well as their *sad failures and departures* from Him.

Everyone in Israel able to go forth to war was numbered according to the tribe to which he belonged. A distinct station was also assigned to each of the tribes around the tabernacle. The Levites had a peculiar place of separation unto the service of the tabernacle. The priests also had their work. Nothing could be more orderly. The law of the Nazarite is found here (chapter vi.), because the wilderness was the fitting place for testing entire consecration unto the Lord.

The wilderness was the place of entire dependence upon God. There were no visible means of support. God undertook to care for them, and was to be trusted. He alone was their helper. The pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night over the tabernacle, fully witnessed to this. By it they were guided in their way through the trackless waste. The manna from heaven every morning ceased not all through the desert journey. Their thirst was satisfied also by water from the flinty rock. The redemption of Israel by the blood of the lamb, was celebrated by the pass-over not only in Egypt and in the land, but also in the wilderness. (chap. xi. 5.) The power of God was also put forth on their behalf to overcome their enemies (chap. xxi. 3), and in many other ways God's presence and care of His people were fully manifested.

But they smarted for their unbelief, and their evil

manners often brought upon them the severe chastisements of God. We are told, "With *many* of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. They *murmured*, and were destroyed of the destroyer." (chap. xiv. 2, 29.) "They angered Him also at the waters of strife (Meribah), so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes; because they provoked his speech, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." (chap. xx. 13; Ps. cvi. 32, 33.) The prophecies of Balaam set before us not only the security of God's people, but the future glory that awaits them; and though this wicked man knew that there could be no enchantment against Israel, yet he succeeded in ensnaring many of them by his evil counsel, through the daughters of Moab; — they committed fornication, and there fell by the plague sent out by God four and twenty thousand. (chap. xxv. 1–9.) We are told, "Behold these (women) caused the children of Israel, *through the counsel of Balaam*, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor; and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." (chap. xxxi. 16.) We read also that they tempted God, and were destroyed of serpents. (xxi. 6.) That all these facts have typical significance, and are presented to us for our warning, is clear enough; for the apostle says that "all these things happened to them for ensamples (types), and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." And the inspired writer adds, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that ye may be able to bear it." (See 1 Cor. x. 1–13.)

No doubt the Holy Ghost presents Christ to us in this book in type, in Aaron the High Priest, the Nazarite, the Light of the Sanctuary, the Passover, the

Pillar of Cloud and Fire, Aaron's rod that budded, the daily Manna from heaven, the Rock that gave forth his water, the Red Heifer and Water of Purification, and various other sacrifices, the Serpent of Brass, Cities of Refuge, &c. How blessedly true it is that the Scriptures testify of HIM!

ALONE.

ALONE!—a Stranger here—
Divinely lighting up a world of sin—
Didst thou, in grace, O living Lord, appear,
Our shadowed sphere within.

Alone! alone in love,
In grace, in holiness and truth; alone
Through righteousness all human thoughts above,
Thou soughtest out thine own.

Thou soughtest—'twas to save;
Yea, thou, the Lord, wouldst seek and save the lost,
And therefore was thy goal on earth, the grave;
Thy path of life, the cross.

Alone! 'twas thine to bear
The awful judgment Adam made our due.
Alone! for who wrath's chalice dread could share?
Who e'en thy purpose knew?

Alone! forsaken thou
Of God, thy God, when doing all His will;
Of man, thy creature, though thy thorn-pierced brow
Told out thy titles still.

Alone! upon the cross—
Despised, rejected, and by sinners slain—
Thou didst transmute unfathomed present loss
To heights untold of gain.

Except a corn of wheat
Fall deep and die, alone it doth abide.
Out of the Eater issued forth our meat;
Thou livest and hast died.

Alone, the Victor now,
Art thou in glory on the Father's throne;
Co-risen, we henceforth thy claims avow,
Thy place, thy life, our own.

“IT IS FINISHED.”

“I AM sorry to hear,” said a preacher to a working man in Yorkshire, “that you have lost your son.”

“Yes, indeed,” replied the old man, “it is quite true.”

The preacher went on to say, “I hope he made his peace with God.”

“None to make,” replied the old man.

The preacher, thinking the old man did not understand him, repeated, “I hope he made his peace with God.”

“None to make,” again the old man said.

“What do you say?” said the preacher.

“None to make,” was again the old man’s reply.

“What do you mean?” again the preacher asked.

“None to make,” was all he could get from the old man.

This question was repeated several times, and always brought from the aged man the same answer. So the preacher left him, no doubt thinking him a dark and ignorant person. However, the old man soon followed, and coming up with him said—

“What were you saying, sir, just now, about my son?”

“I was saying that I hope he made his peace with God.”

“Well, I say he’d none to make.”

At last, the old man stretched out his arms, and said—

“What did Jesus Christ say upon the cross? Did He not say, ‘It is finished’?”

“Ah,” said the preacher, “you are right; you are right. ‘It is finished.’ He had none to make.”

And surely nothing is more plainly set forth in scripture than the fact that Christ has “made peace by the blood of His cross” (Col. i. 20), and accomplished such a work of eternal redemption, that whosoever believeth in Him now risen and ascended has peace with God. Yes, *has* peace, has it *now*, not when he comes to die, but now, as the scripture says, “Being justified by faith, we *have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. v. 1.) That we were all enemies to God, and required to be reconciled to God is quite clear, or we should not have needed peace to be made. And how did He make peace? We are told, “By the blood of His cross.” There He bare our sins, there He was made sin for us, there “God condemned sin in the flesh,” “He spared not His own Son,” and there He “put away,”—observe, that scripture says, “*put away* sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. ix. 26), so that God can now say, “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” (Hebrews x. 17.) Thus sin having been condemned and judicially put away by God in Christ, the Holy One, instead of being judged in us sinners, *peace is made*, and God is just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

The cross of Christ is then the true and only *ground of peace*, and it tells us of peace made, as the resurrection and ascension of Christ bear witness. The *enjoyment* of this peace is connected with our simply taking this ground, in faith, before God. Satan will try to

dislodge us from it, but faith ever relies on God's testimony, and resists the adversary with “It is written.”

“Though the restless foe accuses,
Sins recounting like a flood,
Every charge our God refuses,
Christ has answered with His blood.”

Dear reader, have you peace with God? Have you the comfort in your soul of every question about your sin having been righteously met by Christ on the cross to the entire satisfaction of divine justice and holiness? This is peace. It is the peace that Christ has made. Peace not dependent on our own feelings, or experiences, but entirely based on what Christ has done. You have not then to *make your peace with God*, as people call it, but receive Christ Jesus, the Son of God, as your Saviour, and through Him you *have* peace with God. Yes, you are justified by His blood, and you have peace at once; you have not to wait till you come to die for it, but you have it now; for Jesus did everything to satisfy divine justice and righteousness, and presented to God in His blood that which cleanseth from all sin.

“I wish,” said a servant of Christ, “I could relate to you as it was told to me, an account of a lady in Scotland, and of the way in which her doubts and anguish were removed. It was during a time in which several known to this lady had been brought to Christ. Among the rest a particular friend of hers had been converted. Feeling some measure of concern herself, she went to a servant of Christ who was labouring in the place, and told him she was unhappy. He replied that he was glad to hear it. Astonished at this, and

somewhat offended also, she told the minister what efforts she had made to obtain salvation, how she had read and prayed, but still seemed as far from peace as ever. He told her that it was not by anything she could do, but by what Christ had long since done and finished on the cross, that she was to be saved. All seemed dark and mysterious to her, and she left; resolving, however, to call on her friend, who had recently been converted. She did so, and asked her what she had done to obtain the peace of which she spoke. "Done! I have done nothing! It is by *what Christ has done, that I have found peace with God.*" The lady replied that this was what the minister had just been telling her, but that she could not understand it. She went home with her distress greatly increased; and shutting herself up in her room, she fell on her knees, resolving that she would never rise till her soul had found rest and peace. How long her agony continued I could not say; but nature became quite exhausted, and she sunk to slumber. While thus asleep she dreamed that she was falling over a frightful precipice, but caught hold of a small twig, which overhung the abyss beneath. By this she hung, crying aloud for help, when a voice from below, which she knew to be the voice of Jesus, bade her to let go the twig, and He would receive and save her. "Lord, save me!" she cried; but the voice again answered, "Let go the twig." She felt as though she dare not leave hold, but continued crying, "Lord, save me!" At last, the One below, whose voice she heard, but whom she did not see, said in the most tender, solemn tones, "*I cannot save you unless you let go the twig.*"

Self-desperate, she let it go, fell into the arms of Jesus, and the joy of finding herself there awoke her. The lesson taught her by her dream was not lost upon her. She perceived that Jesus was worthy of all her trust, and that not only did she need no twig of self-dependence, but that it was holding to the twig that kept her away from Christ. She let all go, and found Christ all-sufficient.

"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.)

Now I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.

I long to go, I long to go
Where Jesus' face I'll see;
I soon shall go, where Jesus is,
And with Him ever be.

Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurl'd,
Yet I can smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world.

Tho' cares, like a wild deluge, come,
And storms of sorrow fall;
Soon I shall safely reach my home,
My God, my heaven, my all.

There I shall bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.

THE blood of Christ alone purges the conscience, delivers from every fetter, and gives the believer title to everlasting glory and rest in God's holy presence.

TO DOUBTING SOULS.

IF Jesus were on earth, would you not go to Him, and ask Him to save you? Would you not believe Him if He said to you, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace?" Thus He speaks to you in the Bible. Hear His voice, believe what He says, command away every doubt by the authoritative voice of the mighty Saviour. He is now at the right hand of God; but still He speaks—speaks from heaven—speaks in the living word, the Scriptures of truth. And why is He exalted to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens? In order to be a Prince and a Saviour—to give repentance and the remission of sins. His name, Jesus, given to Him at His birth, and again given to Him by God in the resurrection, proclaims the blessed truth, that salvation is in Him. Faith in that name is sufficient.

Two gentlemen were lately conversing together upon this momentous subject. One said to the other, after pointing out to him the mighty work of Christ on the cross, "Do you need anything more?" The other replied, "Yes I think I do; I think I must have some work of my own." His friend replied, "Jesus at the right hand of God is my title, and my only title, to salvation. Here are pen, ink, and paper; now write me down a better."

The truth is that Christ in glory is the proof of the complete and all-sufficient value of His death. If a friend becomes surety for me, and is thrown into prison on account of my debt, and I afterwards meet that friend walking at liberty, I am sure he must have made

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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full satisfaction for my debt, otherwise he would not be out of prison. So the Lord, at the right hand of power on high, is a proof that He has answered to the full every demand of God against me as a sinner. His death is everything or nothing. It is either the entire blotting out and cancelling of every charge that can be made against me, or it avails me nothing.

"It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. viii. 34.)

 THE LORD'S SUPPER.

AN EXTRACT.

My feeling about the whole service is that we are in the joy of heavenly places, risen ourselves, and look back to the sufferings of Christ as that which brought us there. It is a broken body and shed blood—it is death. We are occupied with a broken body in the Supper, but it is those who are risen and in blessing by it who are so. Hence the joy flowing from our position has nothing amiss in it; but the more we are thoroughly at home there, the more shall we, as dwelling there, contemplate the sorrows and sufferings of Christ. But they are past, and He is at the right hand of God; so that, though occupied at the moment by how much He has suffered, when occupied with the act itself, there is the sweet consciousness that it is all over for Him, and we are risen in spirit with Him. In the Supper itself (I do not say all that accompanies it) we are surely occupied with Christ's death, but it is viewing it not from outside the cross, as coming to it, or human interest in suffering human nature, but

from the risen place in which our worship is carried on. We shall enter much more deeply into His sorrows, not now measured by our need, but contemplated from God's side of it—a much deeper feeling I believe; it is a divine or heavenly contemplation of the cross. It is not coming to—not while it is accomplishing—but remembrance of Him, when suffering for us, which has obtained peace for us, who is now at the right of God. As to which comes first, we must have life before we know what death is, or our own dying to sin, which is another thing. But it is the applying death to ourselves that enables us to realise rightly life and glory. The “excellency of the knowledge” makes me count all but dross and dung, but it is as “always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus” that we are enabled both to rejoice in the things the Spirit shews to us, and to manifest the life of Christ in our bodies. I desire that the believer may grow up to Him who is the Head in all things, contemplating His glory; but there is a judgment of self and of all the details of our life which, keeping down the movement of will in details, keeps up a practical separation from the world, which is a testimony. There was more of this at the first. Now many come in fresh converted or enjoying the fulness of truth. Up in our parts I cannot say there is much worldliness, but in houses and other things much is in many places taken for granted which is of the world, and I think something is wanting in very many. I should be very glad to see retrenchment in many worldly symptoms; and I do not think the revival course of testimony tends to this. It looks for testimony in saving souls,

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all surely right, but it tends to overlook testimony in the path of Christians.

The death of Christ, which I contemplate in the Lord's Supper, is not exactly my death with Him, though if realized it leads me to it. It is *His death*—the love in it.

THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE.

O WHAT shall we feel in Thy presence, when first
The visions of glory upon us shall burst;
Since now our soul longeth and speaketh for Thee,
O when, blessed Jesus, Thy face shall we see?

Soon, soon, precious Jesus, Thy face we'll behold,
Our souls filled with rapture that cannot be told.

That face, once so marred, we shall gaze on at length,
And fearless behold, as the sun in its strength:
Those eyes, flames of fire, that so searching we prove,
Shall beam on us then inexpressible love.

Thy voice, like great waters,—how calmly our soul
Shall hear in the glory its deep waters roll:
Though now it rebuke us, and humbles our pride,
It shall speak only love to Thy glorified Bride.

We see Thee, Lord Jesus, with great glory crowned,
And, waiting Thy coming, in peace would be found;
The visions of glory have turned all to dross—
For Thee give us grace to count all things but loss.

THAT BLESSED HOPE.

It is because the believer is *in Christ*—"complete in Him"—standing before God "not in the flesh," but in the acceptableness and nearness of Christ, who is our life and righteousness, and knowing too that we are united to Him by the Holy Ghost sent down from

heaven, that we can peacefully and happily wait for His coming—the Lord Himself.

The more we contemplate Christ, and are occupied with God's thoughts of Him, the more our hearts desire His coming. It is the attractiveness of Christ, His infinite perfections and glory engaging our souls, that inspire us with holy longing to see Him face to face. Our *affections* are not only thus drawn out toward Him, but our *characters* become so formed according to His mind that we can really occupy *bridal* ground, and by the Spirit call on Him to come.

THE SCHOLAR'S COMFORT.

“I HAVE taken much pains,” said the learned Selden, “to know every thing that was esteemed worth knowing amongst men; but with all my disquisitions and reading, nothing now remains with me to comfort me at the close of life, but this passage of St. Paul, ‘This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’—to this I cleave, and herein I find rest.”

“If God should restore me to health,” wrote Mr. Cecil, during a tedious and dangerous illness (1798), “I have determined to study nothing but the Bible. Literature is inimical to spirituality if it be not kept under with a firm hand.

“I have learnt more within these curtains than from all the books I ever read.

“Should it please God ever to raise me up to preach again, CHRIST shall be my only subject.

DEUTERONOMY.

THE children of Israel are still in the wilderness, though it may be almost within sight of the green fields of the promised land. In this fifth book of Moses, he addresses them as soon to enter upon their inheritance, and again and again encourages them to obedience as the alone ground of enjoying Jehovah's blessing.

In the first three chapters, Moses rehearses the way they had been brought on their wilderness journey from Horeb (chapter i. 6); he refers also to some of their victories, and speaks of God's goodness to them. In the fourth chapter, in the prospect of going in to possess the land, he admonishes them not to add to, or take from, the word which he commanded them, and encourages them to obedience because of their relationship to God. In the fifth chapter, Moses repeats the ten commandments. The sixth chapter gives exhortations to obedience, the seventh reminds them that their blessings are conditional, and the eighth encourages them by bringing to their remembrance the way God had led them, and His faithfulness; and warns them against pride of heart, and thus forgetting the Lord their God. In chapter ix. Israel's rebellions are rehearsed, while the 10th and 11th chapters give the most solemn charges to obedience.

From chapters xii. to xxix., we find a variety of instruction given, suited to an earthly people brought into relationship with God, who therefore are a holy and peculiar people; such as forbidding to eat blood, warnings against idolatry, the difference between clean and unclean living creatures, the year of release, the

three principal yearly feasts—the passover with feast of unleavened bread, the feast of weeks, and feast of tabernacles. We have also Christ prophesied of as the prophet whom the Lord God would raise up (chapter xviii. 15), the cities of refuge are referred to, and the punishment of certain evil doers, and they were not to forget to utterly destroy Amalek (chapter xxv. 19). The 27th, 28th, and 29th chapters give a list of curses for those who are evil doers, a list of blessings for those who are obedient, and the most solemn threatenings to those who disobeyed the word of God.

Chapters xxx.—xxxiii. begin with promise of mercy to those who are penitent Moses foretells their apostacy after his death, and then rejoices (chapter xxxii.) in the truth that they are still God's people, and that His purposes of love will yet be accomplished by delivering them from the power of their enemies, and establishing them in blessing in their own land. In chapter xxxiii. Moses pronounces blessing on the various tribes of Israel, concluding by the certainty of Israel yet being a happy people saved by the Lord, and all their enemies put under their feet. The last chapter gives us the death of Moses, and we are told that God buried him, so that “no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.”

Here we see that Moses failed to bring the Israelites into the land, and could not enter into it himself because of his own sin; the people have the law still ringing in their ears, with curses or blessings, and Jordan the river of judgment rolling between them and Canaan. Joshua must bring them into the land, and on him we are told Moses laid his hands, and he was full of the spirit of wisdom (chapter xxxiv. 9).

“I’VE NO FOUNDATION.”

It is alarmingly solemn what a power of self-deception is prevalent at the present time. To those who often converse with persons about their souls it is very manifest. There are few, when asked if they are saved, who do not readily reply, “I hope so;” and yet, when pressed for the ground of their confidence, become quite confounded. It needs, therefore, that this matter, of such eternal importance, should be brought home personally and pointedly, in order to lift the blindfold which Satan has so successfully applied, and really meet the need of souls.

Alas! we might multiply illustrations of what we mean, but one or two will suffice for our present purpose.

We were lately struck with a fellow-passenger on the Great Northern Railway. His calm and gentle manner, and diligent reading of what appeared to us a religious book, so attracted us, that we could not forbear kindly saying to him, “Sir, will you allow me to ask if you have peace with God?” “Yes,” was his ready reply. But when asked what means it had pleased God to use to give him this precious blessing of peace, he hesitated, looked confused, and after a little while said, “I was always brought up to it.” This at once disclosed his real state of soul. He might have been well brought up; but surely that could not meet the question of sin, and of being reconciled to God. If there be no way of approach unto God but through the blood of His own Son, the manner

of his being brought up could not possibly meet the guilt of conscience and transgressions which the soul knows when brought into the presence of God. This was pointed out, and Scripture proof given that peace with God is alone through our Lord Jesus Christ, because He died for the ungodly, and made peace by the blood of His cross. He seemed surprised, and said nothing more on the subject.

It was only a few days after, when travelling on the Midland Railway, and speaking on the blessedness of being in glory with Jesus, a man said, "Yes, we all hope for that." But, on being solemnly asked what was the foundation of his hope, he paused for a little while, and then said, "I have no foundation." This was honest; but the flippant expression of hope sets before us a sample of many, many persons. They are in the habit of saying they hope to be saved; but if it be really sifted, it is, alas, too true that they have no real hope; they have no foundation. How sad this is! And what, it may be asked, is the foundation of the sinner's trust? Ah, there is only one; for Scripture says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. iii. 11.) This is *the* foundation which God has laid. It is Jesus Christ crucified for sinners. There is salvation in no other. Hope is alone through Him. Peace only through what He has done. The conscience purged only by His precious blood. Redemption accomplished by His death. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Dear reader, have you a good hope through grace? Is *all* your trust of salvation in the Son of God that

died for sinners? Are you trying the hopeless task of making yourself righteous? or are you satisfied to have Christ for your righteousness? Oh, beware of a vague, indefinite, false hope! for God hath declared that no man cometh unto the Father but through Jesus His Son, and that "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.)

THE RELIGIOUS HYPOCRITE.

THE hypocrite *knows* that he is only *pretending* to love Jesus. It is the *knowledge* that he only affects to be a lover of Christ that constitutes him a hypocrite. He puts a beautiful mask on an ugly face. With his own hand he puts it on, and he never takes it off so long as he remains a hypocrite. If he say, "*I was a hypocrite, I had the thoughts of a hypocrite, did the deeds of a hypocrite, I have sinned,*" then God is faithful and just to forgive. He is no longer a hypocrite, he is a pardoned sinner; and going to God, saying, "I have sinned," God receives him as a son—his sin is blotted out.

A man may think he has been a hypocrite. The best thing for him is to tell the Lord Jesus what his thoughts are. Jesus died on the cross for hypocrites who have found themselves out, and are weary of being hypocrites, who say, "We are miserable sinners, and without Christ—undone." Jesus died for such hypocrites. If a hypocrite do another any good, he blows a trumpet. He tries to hide his sins by publishing his deeds, and backbites his neighbour to preserve his own character. Hypocrites *make* long prayers, but they never desire

the *fellowship* of those who really pray. They seek after ceremonies, but avoid the company of true worshippers, lest, coming to the light, they should be discovered and exposed. The hypocrite never contemplates the word of God, unless to deceive others by pretensions to the knowledge of Christ. The moment he contemplates the word, to know God and Christ and himself, he ceases to be a hypocrite.

Let the vilest hypocrite, or the sinner who has sinned ever so much, look to Jesus and His cross—not to himself, but to Jesus crucified—and all is well. Then he may say—

“I the chief of sinners am;
But Jesus died for me.”

Satan in malice would persuade a real child of God that he is a hypocrite, just as in his guile he would persuade a hypocrite to pass for a Christian. Satan has many masks for many faces. He would put the mask of religion on the hypocrite. Satan attains his end when in any way God is dishonoured. The Spirit of God, by the cross and resurrection of Christ, through the word of truth, convinces and comforts the believer, showing him that Christ his portion *was* his Substitute and is his High Priest, and that his desire to be like Christ springs from above. With respect to the hypocrite who never confesses his hypocrisy, God in due season will make him manifest to all. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

“He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.” (John iii. 21.)

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”—JOHN iii. 6, 7.

Ye sons of Adam, who your birth
To him can only trace,
Who’re “in the flesh,” are of the earth,
And of a ruin’d race,
Though righteous as a pharisee,
Your rectitude is vain;
If ye with God in bliss would be,
Ye must be born again.

If only born from nature’s womb,
In Adam only known,
Your cheerless prospect is the tomb,
And judgment from the throne.
As sinners, sons of unbelief,
You’re bound in Satan’s chain,
And soon must wail in endless grief,
Unless ye’re born again.

The Word of God doth plainly warn,
(Let none the Truth deny),
That every soul must *twice be born*,¹
Or *twice* in judgment *die*.²
Believers have eternal life
In Christ, where grace doth reign,
Beyond this world of woe and strife,
For they are born again.

To nature owe they not their birth,
To man, or flesh, or blood;
Their pedigree is not of earth,
Their sonship is of God.³
The Spirit given, with Christ they’re one,
And one shall e’er remain:
A link that can be broke by none,
For those who’re born again.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD,

Would ye be of the Spirit born?
 Then, see the Son of Man,
 The object of reproach and scorn,
 Beneath sin's dreadful ban!
 The sinless One made sin for us,
 The Lamb for sinners slain!
 Believing, look on Him, and thus
 Ye will be born again.

¹ John iii. 7; 1 Peter i. 23. ² Rom. vi. 23; Heb. ix. 27;

³ Rev. xx. 11 to end; John i. 12, 13.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD, AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW.

AN EXTRACT.

THE evident scope of *the righteousness of God* is, that He Himself is righteous in justifying the believer by virtue of Christ's work in all its extent and blessedness—a work first viewed in the efficacy of His blood-shedding upon earth, but alone fully displayed in His resurrection, that we might stand in Him cleared from all charge,—the very old nature being thus judged, dead, and gone, and a new life given according to the power, and character, and acceptance of Him risen from the grave.

Legal obedience is essentially individual. The law is the measure of duty as in the flesh to God. *Its righteousness*, therefore, wholly differs from God's righteousness, not in degree and sphere only, but in source and kind. To the sinner the law was necessarily a ministry of death and condemnation; to our blessed Lord an occasion of manifesting His perfectness, and having its own character retrieved. But

never did the law hold out such a prospective reward as quickening or justifying others. The idea is purely imaginative and entirely false. Nor did Christ earn life by doing the law,—such a thought denies the glory of His person. “In Him was life;” yea, He was “that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” Not as made of a woman, made under law, did He give life, but as the Son of God, quickening whom He would in His own sovereign title, and in communion with the Father. For the law knows nothing of the sort. It says the man that *doeth* these things lives, and the man that does not dies. . . . No dead ever passed into life by this road, but only by faith, only by hearing the voice of the Son of God; for eternal life is the free gift of God, and is never otherwise the portion of sinful man. It is false, then, and ignorance of the gospel to say that we enter into life by virtue of Christ’s keeping the commandments; for life and incorruption are expressly declared to be brought to light by the gospel, not by the law. “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law;” but it could give neither. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

Hence, in Scripture, legal righteousness is never treated as vicarious. If it be, where? Not only is the language of the law intensely, exclusively personal; but the New Testament pointedly contrasts it with the language of faith. (See Rom. x.) “The righteousness which is of the law” (verse 5); “the righteousness which is of faith” (verse 6).

WHY SO ANXIOUS?

DID not the Saviour say, "Take no thought for the morrow," and "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"? Then why so thoughtful about the future? Why such anxiety night and day about that matter which so presses upon you at this time? You say, I cannot help *feeling* it. True. God intends that you should *feel* it. He knows it is a care to you. He sees your poor heart burdened, and He it is who bids you to cast the whole burden upon Himself. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you." Think then of those precious words, "for He careth for you." Do you doubt His care for you? Can you question it when you look at Jesus crucified, and think of the love that could move God to give His own Son thus to suffer for you? Surely it is when we are contemplating Jesus delivered to such a death for our offences and raised again for our justification, that our hearts cannot but exclaim, whatever be the circumstances we are in,

"The object of that love I am,
And carried like a child."

And after all, can you by anxiety make your circumstances better? Do you not rather by fretting and sadness grieve the heart of your loving Father, and give Satan an opportunity of filling your mind with darkness and despondency? Does not your constant anxiety night and day render your mind and body unfit for the Lord's service? You say, I ought to be exercised before the Lord about it, because He says,

“No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous, nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to *them which are exercised thereby.*” Quite true, but does not the same Scripture bid you not to faint when thou art chastened of Him? Then why so anxious? Nay, is not one reason you are so anxious that you have got away from the Lord as *the object* of your heart, and from the circle of *His thoughts* to the narrowness and wretchedness of *your own thoughts*? Roll then this heavy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you. *Leave it with Him. Meddle not with it.* Let it be enough for your heart that He careth for you. Often and often you have proved that He has been better than all your fears, and it may be that He will be in this also. Listen then to divine counsel, “Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” How tender and gracious this counsel is, and how it seems to anticipate that we should be so foolish as to damage our souls, and dishonour the Lord by carrying our own cares, and worrying ourselves about the future. How much better to leave the matter entirely in His hands, who invites us to do so, and lean upon Him who says, “He careth for you,” and that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose.”

“I have nothing to do with to-morrow,
My Saviour will make that His care;
Should He fill it with trouble and sorrow,
He'll help me to suffer and bear.

“I have nothing to do with to-morrow,
Its burdens then why should I share?
Its grace and its strength I can't borrow,
Then why should I borrow its care?”

JOSHUA.

IN the book of Joshua we see the people of Israel brought into the land by *the power* of God, according to His counsel and promise. A dry path having been formed across the overflown river of judgment (Jordan), by *the priests bearing the ark of the covenant* having gone into the midst of it (typical of Jesus having gone into death and judgment for us), where they remained until *all* the Israelites had *clean passed over*.

Being thus in the land, large stones were heaped *in Jordan* to commemorate the finished work (chap. iv. 9, 10), and another heap of twelve stones from out of the midst of Jordan was pitched *in Gilgal*, that the exceeding greatness of God's power and kindness to His people might be seen in coming ages; for all was of God.

The people were then circumcised; for they were not debtors to the flesh, and no flesh shall glory in God's presence. Circumcision thus set forth the truth that "the flesh profiteth nothing," and was only fit for the judgment of God. They kept the passover, to show that they had been redeemed out of Egypt by the blood of the Lamb. The morning supply of manna now ceased, because they had "the old corn of the land," so that, feeding on it, they might be strengthened to fight the battles of the Lord of hosts who was with him. (chap. v.)

But Israel soon failed. As long as they were content to be weak and dependent, and willing to fight with "rams' horns" according to the word of the Lord, the strong walls of Jericho fell before them; but when they walked by sight and sense, and judged that they were so strong that two or three thousand would be enough to overcome the men of Ai, they fled before their enemies, and deeply suffered for their self-reliance. Afterwards, it was made manifest that there was unjudged evil among them, and God, who is holy, could not fight their battles till this was judged

and put away. (chap. vii.) This being done, they overcame Ai in the power of God. It was not long before another form of failure manifested itself; not from self-reliance for strength, as at Ai, but from their fancied wisdom in the case of the Gibeonites: they asked not counsel of the Lord. (chap. ix. 14.) This having been dealt with, the children of Israel were again, by the power of God, victorious time after time, until they had slain thirty and one kings. (chap. xii. 24.)

Again we see how terribly their faith failed in not utterly driving out *all* the Canaanites, and taking possession of and enjoying *all* the land which the Lord God had given them. (chap. xvi. 10; xvii. 1-3.) An account is given of the land being divided by lot in ch. xiv. &c. Joshua's farewell address in chapter xxiv. is very touching; but with all the blessings and prosperity God had given His people, he had to exhort them to put away the strange gods which were among them, and to incline their hearts unto the Lord God of Israel.

Such is a brief sketch of the facts the book of Joshua sets forth concerning the children of Israel. *Its typical instruction to us, however, is very important; for the land corresponds to the "heavenly places" into which we are brought, and made to sit "in Christ Jesus."* And as the Israelites, when in the land, had to fight to drive out the enemy, and take possession of that which God had given them, so, no sooner do we enter (by faith in Christ risen and ascended) upon the heavenly places where divine grace and power have brought us, than our conflict begins with "*wicked spirits in heavenly places,*" who try to oppose our standing where God has set us, and, if possible, to prevent our possession and enjoyment of things above, which He has graciously blessed us with *in Christ Jesus*.

Again, as Israel only really held so much as the sole of their foot touched (chap. i. 3), so the Christian only enjoys so much of the blessings God has given him in Christ as he really stands for and takes hold of,

spite of the enemy's opposition, according to the word of the Lord. And as Joshua was with Israel, so the Lord Jesus will be *with* us and *for* us, against all the power of Satan and his hosts: hence we are exhorted to be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might." To be consciously near to God in Christ, complete and accepted in Him, belonging to heaven in the true enjoyment of being sons of God, and having the spirit of adoption, is proper Christian experience. Perhaps few Christians are really consciously there. Those who are, know well that they are not debtors to the flesh. They know, too, that in God's eye they are "not in the flesh," but "in Christ;" "not under the law, but under grace;" "not of the world," but delivered from it. (Gal. i. 4.) We can say, therefore, that we are the true circumcision; we know that the flesh has been judged, condemned, and crucified, set aside in the crucifixion of Christ for us, as unfit for the service of God. (chap. v. 2; Rom. vi. 6.) We remember that *Christ*, our passover, was sacrificed for us, and know, too, that we owe all our blessings to His precious blood. We feed on Christ Himself, now known to us in the glory—the old corn of the land—and are strengthened for conflict and service. Reverse and failure we may painfully experience, but, dealing with God about them, we often prove that He overrules all for blessing, and that in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Our real loss and greatest source of weakness is, that we give place to the enemy, instead of going up to *possess and enjoy* all that the Lord God hath given us. Unjudged evil must bring in Satan, and hinder God's power and blessing. When Israel judged the sin of Achan they prospered, and overcame their enemies; afterwards, however, when they omitted to utterly destroy all the Canaanites, according to the word of the Lord, and humbled not themselves because of it, they reaped the bitter consequences. May we be strengthened by the Spirit to walk with God!

“ESCAPE FOR THY LIFE!”

WHY must I escape? Because the judgment of God is coming, and you are a sinner. *By nature* you are a child of wrath, and *by practice* you have constantly transgressed His holy word. Moreover, you cannot change your evil nature, or deliver yourself from it, or even blot out one of the many sins written in God's book against you. Your case then is most urgent—your condition desperate; you are “dead in sins,” and “lost.” In God's sight your nature is incurably bad (Rom. viii. 7, 8); you are utterly unclean, and utterly undone. Escape, then; escape at once. “Escape for thy life!”

Where shall I escape? To Jesus the Son of God, for He only can save you. He is at the right hand of God. There you will find Him. There is salvation in no other. He is the only Saviour of sinners, and He delights to save. He only can save you. He casts out none that come to Him. It is no use to escape to religiousness, to ministers, or to societies, because you want salvation; you want the forgiveness of sins; you want present peace with God. Take refuge then in the Lord Jesus, who died for the ungodly, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things. (Acts xiii. 39.) Fly, then, to His outstretched loving arms. Trust Him who said, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. xi. 28.) Escape then to Him, and “Escape for thy life!”

When shall I escape? At once. Delay not. To-day is the accepted time, to-morrow may be too late. Now you are this side the grave, to-morrow you may be in eternity. Oh then, linger not. Be decided. To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart. Take refuge in the Lord Jesus *now*. Beware of putting it off. Eternal torment for uncleansed sinners is a dread reality. Escape then, to Jesus; escape now. “Escape for thy life!”

How shall I escape? Just as you are. Come to Jesus with all your sins. Come as lost and guilty; for Jesus died for sinners, loves sinners, preaches to sinners, and saves sinners. He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. Do think of this. You have then nothing *to do*, nothing *to feel*, nothing *to be* before you come to Jesus; but simply come to Him in all your guilt and wretchedness, and He will save you; for “God so *loved* the world that He *gave* His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Oh then, dear reader, escape the coming wrath by fleeing to the Lord Jesus; escape at once; escape just as you are. “Escape for thy life!” May the language of your heart be—

“Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot;
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!”

“CHRIST never said to a sinner, “Go *right*, and come up to Me,” but when we were *wrong* He came down to us—“while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.”

THE DYING PRIORESS.

AN EXTRACT.

THE last illness of Madame de Courtiaux lasted six weeks, during which the clergy on the one side and the nuns on the other beset her dying-bed, persecuting and tormenting her with every device that could suggest itself, and exhausting every argument, threat, and insidious persuasion to induce her to sign the formulary.

Two days before the close of her life the bishop, who was as usual standing before her bed, exhorted her to reflect, for she would soon be in the presence of God.

“My lord,” replied the Prioress, “God is continually present with His children. It was in His light only that I ever sought light; it is then because it is His word, and not merely because I have weighed it during a solitude of six years, that I assure you my decision is made. It is because it was made in His presence that it is not now to be re-made.”

“But,” continued the Prelate, after an exhortation of about two hours’ length, “who will present you to God? It will not be the Church, which you refuse to obey; nor yet will it be myself, who am pastor only to the sheep within her fold. What will you do when you have to appear before God, bearing the weight of your sins alone?”

The dying nun paused, as if deeply affected; then, fixing on him a mild but steady eye, replied, “Having made peace through the blood of His cross, my Saviour

hath reconciled all things unto Himself in the body of His flesh, through death, to *present* us holy and unblamable and unreprouable in His sight; if we continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel." (See Col. i. 20-23.) Then the dying prioress, rising in her bed, with clasped hands and fervently uplifted eyes, exclaimed, "In Thee, O Lord, I have trusted, nor wilt Thou suffer the creature who trusts in Thee to be confounded."

RANSOM AND ITS ACCOMPANIMENTS.

EXODUS xxx. 11-38.

IN this portion of scripture we have four remarkable actions of the Spirit of God clustered together—the ransom of souls, the laver for Aaron and his sons, the holy anointing oil, and the sweet incense.

Men, in self-sufficiency, having thought themselves competent to understand scripture without the teaching of the Spirit of God, have boldly given these things a literal application, and have therefore wildly fancied that money must be paid to certain officials for the soul to be fully ransomed, that divers washings and ordinances are necessary to enable them to enter into God's glory, that they must be anointed with oil, and that incense should still be burnt. All this is most dishonouring to Christ, because it denies His finished work.

Scripture, however, declares as to man, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

(1 Cor. ii. 14.) We need therefore the teaching of the Spirit in order to "know the things that are freely given to us of God."

As to the books of Moses, our Lord plainly said, "Moses wrote of Me;" we should expect, therefore, to find Christ presented in the various types and ceremonies which Moses was commanded by Jehovah to set up.

A mind then subject to God's word, and dependent on the teaching of the Spirit, readily perceives that men have been so unduly taken up with the Mosaic shadows of Christ, as to forget and set aside Christ Himself and His finished work, the gift of the Spirit, the true character of worship, service, and fellowship with the Father into which His marvellous grace has brought us.

1. As to the ransom money, it was no doubt typical of the price Christ has since paid in His shed blood to redeem us to God. The silver sockets of the tabernacle on which the boards rested being made of the ransom money, shows that atonement or redemption is the foundation of every thing for us toward God. (Chap. xxxviii. 26, 27.) Peter evidently refers to this ransom money, when he says: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as *silver and gold* . . . but with the *precious blood of Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by Him do believe in God." (1 Peter i. 18-21.) This scripture then explains the ordinance of every man paying the half shekel a

ransom for his soul (verses 12, 13), as shadowing forth Christ's accomplished work of redemption for us. There is therefore now nothing to pay, because the ransom price has been fully paid—He gave “His life a ransom for many.” There is nothing to be done for it, because Christ hath obtained eternal redemption for us. He said, “It is finished,” when He bowed His head in death upon the tree. Hence the apostle Paul says, “*Ye are bought with a price;*” and again, “In whom *we have* redemption through His blood.” (Eph. i.)

Observe that ransom stands first in the order of these four actions, because until the soul is brought consciously into God's presence on the ground of redemption, he is perfectly unable to enter into His mind as to what follows. It is therefore of the utmost importance that all believers should learn from the word of God that they *are redeemed*, and that not only *from* sin, and death, and hell, but *to* God.

2. But this is not all. Believers are also brought into relationship with God and Christ, “children of God,” and “priests,” as well as members of the body of Christ. Being thus on the ground of redemption and in new relationship with God, they are fitted both for service and worship. But, as a matter of fact, we find that every now and then the conscience becomes defiled, and therefore shrinks from God's infinitely holy presence. As therefore the laver was provided for Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet when going into the sanctuary or attending to the altar, so our God has given us His word, that by the “washing of water by the word” we might detect defilement, confess it, and know (from the word) not only that

all has been judged on the cross, but that communion is always restored on confession. Thus we are maintained in the light. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the Lord: so they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not; and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations." (Verses 18-21.)

3. Those who are redeemed to God, and His children, are also anointed, are partakers of the Holy Spirit—"Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) Every child of God then receives the Holy Ghost. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is *in you?*" (1 Cor. vi. 19.) Again, "After ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance," &c. (Eph. i. 13, 14.) "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath *anointed* us is God." (2 Cor. i. 21.) This was shadowed forth by Aaron and his sons being anointed with the holy anointing oil (v. 30). It was

made of principal spices (v. 23); its perfume therefore was very manifest. It was strictly forbidden to be imitated, for this only was of God; nor was it to be poured upon man's flesh, or a stranger, only on those who were redeemed and in relationship with God. All this is simple enough. The oil being made of sweet spices, those who were anointed could not fail to give forth a fragrant odour, so by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, and takes of the things of Christ, and shows unto us, we should savour of Christ wherever we go, or whatever we are about. May all believers who read these pages solemnly lay this to heart!

4. Lastly, we have the "sweet incense," which is another precious shadowing forth of Jesus—His intrinsic virtues and worth, as estimated by God. This too was made of sweet spices, and it was "holy for the Lord." The former part of the chapter shews us that it was burnt night and morning on the golden altar for "*a perpetual incense before the Lord.*" And is not Jesus now in the glory and continually the delight and joy and rest of God Himself? Is not the sweet savour of that blessed Saviour continually before Him? What a precious perfume! No wonder it is said, "As for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof; it shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, *to smell thereto*, shall even be cut off from his people." (Verses 37, 38.) How jealously the type is guarded, and no wonder it should not be imitated, if it were to represent God's thoughts, and feelings, and delight in the personal worth and glories of His beloved Son. But, through

grace, He has not only redeemed us, called us children, and given us His Spirit, but would have us enter into the Father's feelings, and joy, and rest in the perfections and glory of Jesus and His finished work. "Our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." (1 John i. 3.) It is in Christ that God has found full rest, and pleasure, and satisfaction. And do not we too, beloved Christian reader? Are we not satisfied with Christ as He now appears before God? Is He not enough for our hearts? Surely, if He satisfies the infinite boundless heart of God, He must be more than enough to satisfy us. What full rest, and joy, and sufficiency under all circumstances there is in Christ for us. Well may we sing—

"Yet sure, if in Thy presence
My soul still constant were,
Mine eye would more familiar
Its brighter glories bear.

"And thus Thy deep perfections
Much better should I know,
And with adoring fervour
In this Thy nature grow."

JUDGES.

THIS book is both humbling and encouraging. While presenting a miserable picture of the constant departure of the children of Israel from Jehovah, it also sets forth the readiness of God to deliver when they called upon Him.

They failed to cast out the Canaanites (chap. i.), and the generation following knew not the Lord, but forsook Him, and served Baal and Ashtarothe; and though

God raised up judges which delivered them, when the judge was dead they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers. (Chap. ii.) When they intermarried with the heathen and served other gods, and forgot the Lord their God, He sold them in anger to the king of Mesopotamia; but when they cried unto the Lord, He raised up Othniel to deliver them, and gave them rest forty years. When they did evil again, and were delivered for their sin into the hands of the king of Moab, and cried unto the Lord, He delivered them by the hand of Ehud, and the land had rest eighty years. Afterward Shamgar delivered them from the Philistines. (Chap. iii.) But the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord sold them into the hands of the Canaanites, but again He delivered them in the days of Deborah the prophetess, when they cried unto the Lord (chap. iv.); and the next chapter tells us what a time of triumph and rejoicing it was, and the rest continued for forty years. "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord," and were impoverished greatly by the Midianites, to whom they had been delivered; and God raised up Gideon to deliver them when they cried unto Him, and he obtained a great victory. (Chapters vi. vii.) We are told, "Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more; and the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon." But again the same sad tale is told, that the children of Israel remembered not the Lord their God who had delivered them. They turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. (Chap. viii.

28–35.) Thus they provoked again the Lord to anger, and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. (Chap. x. 7.) Again they called unto the Lord in their distress, saying, “We have sinned against Thee,” &c. “And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served Jehovah; and His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel” (chap. x. 17), when Jephthah was raised up, and delivered them from the children of Ammon (chap. xi. 32). But the same sad history followed. “And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.” (Chapter xiii. 1.) Then we find Samson was used of God to slay the Philistines and to judge Israel twenty years. (Chap. xiii.–xvi.) The rest of the book gives further details of evil, and concludes with the telling words, “In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

Alas! what a history is that of man! What weakness, what evil he manifests, and how corrupting are his ways! Well might the angel of the Lord come up from Gilgal (the place of strength and blessing) to Bochim (the place of tears), and say unto them, “I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars; but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides,

and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept. And they called the name of the place Bochim." (Chap. ii. 1-6.) How true it is that disobedience to the word of the Lord is always connected with sorrow!

"BELOVED OF GOD."

"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—ROMANS viii. 38, 39.

"Beloved of God!" Oh, wondrous name,
For those who can a Saviour claim
In Jesus; and to Him have come
As sinners ruined, lost, undone.

"Beloved of God!" The title seems
Like strains of music heard in dreams;
Notes of the song they'll sing above,
Brief echoes of the heavenly love!

It gleams upon the path of life,
And cheers us in the battle's strife.

"Beloved of God!" what foe can harm
When He makes bare His own right arm?

And though the march be hot and long,
What sweeter theme to make our song?
'Twill lighten e'en the heaviest load
To know that we're beloved of God!

And should wild storms of sorrow come,
And care and grief, to bow us down,
Oh, let us take the chastening rod,
Remembering we're *beloved* of God!

And this is faith, both clear and bright,
When all around is dark as night;
To look upon the scene abroad,
And say we're *still* beloved of God!

Through dark and light, through sun and shade,
Those for whom such a price He paid
He'll keep—and they shall ever be
"Beloved of God" eternally.

A. S. O.

WHICH ARE YOU LOOKING AT, SELF, OR CHRIST?

WHAT a vast difference there is in the experience of those who are looking at themselves for peace, and those who are looking wholly and simply to the Lord Jesus Christ! The former *never* get peace; it is impossible that they could, because they are not on the true ground of peace; whereas, the latter always *have* peace, for they are looking straight to Him who has *finished* the work the Father gave Him to do, and has *made peace* by the blood of His cross. Those who are looking at themselves in any measure for peace, are constantly thinking of themselves, and talking of themselves; it may be their feelings, their sins, their experience, their attainments, or their doings—self in some shape; but those who give the Lord Jesus Christ the full glory of their eternal salvation, think of Him—His love, sufferings, death, blood-shedding, triumphant resurrection and ascension, intercession and coming. This is the secret of true happiness, for we have, as scripture says, joy and peace in believing.

In a time of great religious profession, like the present, we constantly come in contact with souls who are thus occupied with themselves. The fact is that men are very slow to accept God's verdict as to their thoroughly bad and ruined state that "they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God." When the soul is really taught by the Spirit of God to bow to this truth, then it becomes a simple necessity to look wholly to another for deliverance from the wrath to come.

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We subjoin an account of a couple of cases which we have lately read, as shewing the difference between a soul looking at self and looking only and wholly to the Lord Jesus. The writer says,

“On going to a military hospital one evening, I was requested to see a dying man, who was hardly expected to live till morning. I went to his bedside, and spoke to him of Jesus.

“Oh, yes, Jesus!” he exclaimed in a tone of the deepest feeling; “he has had mercy on me, and has filled my soul with joy.”

“But are you not in pain?” I asked.

“Yes, great pain—but I am so happy.”

“Where are your friends?”

“Away in the West; but Jesus is my friend, and *He* is here.”

Here was a rough soldier, dying, far from home and friends, among strangers in an hospital where suffering and death were all around him, exclaiming, in broken, half-uttered sentences—“I am so happy. I am not afraid to die. Jesus has saved me. I trust in His blood.” It was a scene not to be forgotten. I spoke to him of the many mansions which Jesus had gone to prepare; and as I did so, he grasped my hand in his, now growing cold in death, and showed his assent by tears of joy, and the most heavenly smile I ever beheld. The realized *present* possession of eternal life and communion with Jesus shone in that smile.

On leaving him, I was requested to see another man in the same ward. A noble-looking soldier lay there prostrated by a temporary illness.

“I want to speak to you about *religion*,” he said, as

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I stood by his bed. "I have made up my mind with an earnest resolve to serve God and do my duty—not with the feeble resolution of a boy, but with man's determined purpose, that henceforward I will do what is right." At some length he told me what he was going to do—*his* vows, *his* purposes, *his* plans. All was about *himself*—not one word about Christ the Saviour.

Having listened to him quietly, I said at last—"Then you are at peace, my friend."

"Oh, no," said he; "my agony of mind only increases."

"Why so? Have you not kept your vows?"

"No, I cannot," he answered despairingly.

"Had you not better, then, try again?" I asked; "or can you think of no way of making up the account?"

He shook his head hopelessly. "I know not what to do," he said.

I could not but think what a contrast was this scene to the one I had just witnessed. *There* Jesus, and what he had done, was everything, and all was perfect peace. *Here*, the poor sinner's thoughts and words were only of himself, and what he was to do, and nothing but sorrow and despair were the result. I turned to the poor unhappy soldier with a silent prayer that God would open his eyes to see the glorious truth which I was about to unfold to him.

"My friend," said I, "stop your vowing. Satan has enticed you on to one of his quicksands, where you are fast sinking down to hell. Your house is on the sand. You cannot be your own Saviour. Listen

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to God's way of saving sinners. Jesus Christ—God manifested in the flesh—came into the world to *save* sinners, not to *help* them to save themselves. His work was 'finished' on the Cross eighteen hundred years ago, and he has left you nothing to do but to receive the benefits of what He has done. 'He that *believeth* hath eternal life.' '*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'"

"But must I not *do* something?" he asked, "Can I believe on Christ and become a child of God, and to-morrow go back to the world and live as the other soldiers? An easy way, truly!"

"Stop, stop, Sir!" I cried; "when you see a lamb rolling in the mire as the swine do, then, and not till then, may Christ's sheep, who know His voice and follow him, roll in the world's mire. Nay, Sir, you know that though the lamb may stumble into the mud, he does not love it; his very nature shrinks from it. But the swine loves and revels in the filth. Take Jesus at His word. Trust Him as your Saviour, and you will soon join Paul in saying, 'Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?' When you become a child of God by faith in Jesus, God gives you the heart of a child, so that you no longer love the sins you once delighted in."

"But you say 'only believe;' how am I to know that I do believe?" he asked.

"Not by looking into your own heart, and fixing your thoughts there," I answered, "any more than you can tell whether you have sight by closing your eyes to all around you, and then trying to discover, by

PRAISE THE SAVIOUR.

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self-examination, whether you can see. Look at this lantern. Do you see its brightness? Then do you not know that you have sight? It is not by shutting out all but your own feelings, that you can tell whether you have faith. Look at the light that shines on the Cross at Calvary, and see Jesus there, your Saviour, your Substitute, who, having no sin of His own, bore the punishment of sin 'in His own body on the tree.' 'He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.'"

"I see it! I see it!" he exclaimed, with a wondering joy. "I have been all wrong; I have been placing all my hopes of salvation on myself and what I could do, and not on the Saviour and His work for me. Yes, He *is* a Saviour—not merely a helper. He came into the world to *save* sinners. I see it!"

PRAISE THE SAVIOUR.

PRAISE thy Saviour, O my soul,
He hath drank the bitter gall,
Paid thy ransom, set thee free;
Praise Him, Praise Him cheerfully.

Lovely Jesus, lovely Jesus,
Thou art precious unto me,
Lovely Jesus, O my Saviour,
Thou art precious unto me.

Oh the wonders of His love!
In His coming from above,
To atone and die for Thee;
Praise Him, Praise Him cheerfully.

See the waves and billows roll,
O'er His sinless, spotless soul,
Oh! my soul, it was for thee;
Praise Him, Praise Him cheerfully.

Yes! we'll try to praise Him now,
Till with saints above we bow,
And to all eternity,
Praise Him, praise Him cheerfully.

“IN CHRIST JESUS.”

SUCH the believer *is*. He *was* simply a child of Adam, involved in total ruin and guilt, under sin, death, and judgment—far from God, and unable to please Him. But *now* he is in Christ Jesus—a new creation—made nigh by the blood of Jesus (Eph. ii. 13), having fruit unto holiness. What an amazing difference! How wonderful the transition! It is really having passed from death unto life. But how very few seem to know this blessed standing in Christ Jesus, and to *rejoice* in this new creation position; yet it is frequently brought before us in scripture. It could not have been set forth in Old Testament teaching (except in type), because then God for the most part was dealing with people under law, which addressed itself to man in the flesh, and recognized him as of the world. But the death of Jesus the Son of God has made all the difference; for it proved the dire enmity of man's heart to God, and that he so hated His beloved Son, without a cause, as to crucify and slay Him. In the death of the cross God judged sin, and so set aside man in the flesh as to pronounce him unfit for anything in His sight but judgment. God is no longer then demanding claims *from* men, but carrying out the eternal purposes of His loving heart in bringing blessings to men, and calling those who believe into fellowship with His Son in the heavenlies, giving life in Him, and uniting to Him by the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is therefore in Christ that all our blessings are, and in Him we stand before God—“in Christ,” and, as scripture says, “not

in the flesh.” (Rom. viii. 9.) Our old man having been crucified with Christ, we have died with Christ, and are made alive in Christ risen, raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places in Christ, in whom we *are* blessed with all spiritual blessings. Can anything be more comforting or rejoicing to our hearts!

It is unaccountable how this precious truth has been lost, notwithstanding its frequent mention in scripture. To refer only to a few quotations, we have in Romans viii., “Ye are *not in the flesh*,” and there is now no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*.” In 1 Cor. i. 30: “Of Him are ye *in Christ Jesus*, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” In 2 Cor. xii.: “A man *in Christ*.” In Galatians: “*In Christ Jesus* neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature” (new creation). In Ephesians, chosen *in Christ*, blessed *in Christ*, seated in heavenly places *in Christ*, &c. In Philippians the saints are addressed as “*in Christ Jesus*.” In Colossians, “Ye are complete *in Him*,” “who is Head of all principality and power,” &c. It is impossible that any doctrine can be more plainly taught in scripture than the believer’s present standing in Christ in heavenly places. But if the thorough ruin of man in the flesh as connected with the first Adam be not apprehended, there will of necessity be the effort to improve *it*, and the vain attempt to make *it* fit for God; and consequently there can neither be true peace with God, nor liberty of soul to serve and follow Christ.

The vital question for an anxious soul is not, Am I getting better? or, Is my old Adam nature improving?

but am I in Christ Jesus? For, if you have received Jesus, the Son of God, as your Saviour, you are in Christ: for "he that hath the Son of God hath *life*." And not only life, but liberty: for "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.) The bloodshedding and death of Christ the foundation of all, of course.

How many true souls are in bondage because they do not enter by faith into this liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free, and being what they call "at the foot of the cross," instead of knowing Christ risen and ascended, and rejoicing that God has given them life and righteousness *in Him*. A beloved servant of Christ says: "How was it that I was for seventeen years kept in the seventh of Romans? I always sat under what was called evangelical ministry. Why, then, was I crying continually, in the first place separately to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and then, as though that were not enough, to them as the Trinity, "Have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," and at last, when I got delivered, how was it? Need I tell you? Surely not; it is a common story—the story of most of us. We crossed the path of a Christian, who told us that there was now, at this present time, something to be had in virtue of the *resurrection* of the Lord Jesus. In my own case it further happened that about the time I was hearing of my present interest *in resurrection*, the Lord was taking home a young man who was in communion. I called on him by request, and took my clergyman with me. He began to talk to the young man about his dying. "Oh,

sir,” he replied, “I have died,” and yet there he was alive and speaking. This was a greater wonder to me than my getting something in resurrection. I noted it, and by reading the Word soon found what it all meant, and found myself to be a dead, risen, and ascended man in the glorified Christ. Now, of all the clergymen and other ministers that I have ever known (and I have known a goodly number) not one has ever told me of my *present* death and resurrection in Christ. For seventeen years was I interested in the things of God, and yet never did I hear of such a thing. Of course, one heard of Christ’s resurrection, but it was a mere historical fact that was spoken of, and that only once a year.”

No doubt, as I have said, the cross of Christ is the foundation of all our blessings, but we now know Jesus risen, Jesus exalted and glorified, at the right hand of God. It is thus, I repeat, we now know Him, on the other side of death, and crowned with glory and honour. As another has well said according to the teaching of Scripture, “If we are alive, we are alive now on a new footing, before God, alive in Christ. The old things are passed away; we are created again in Christ Jesus.

Our place, our standing, before God is no longer in flesh. It is in Christ. Christ, as man, has taken quite a new place that neither Adam innocent, or Adam-sinner, *had anything to say to*. The best robe formed no part of the prodigal’s first inheritance at all; it was in the father’s possession—quite a new thing. Christ has taken this place consequent upon putting away our sins, on having glorified God as to them, and finishing the work. He has taken it in righteousness, and man in Him has got a new place in righteousness with God. When quickened, he is quickened with the life in which Christ lives, the second Adam, and submitting to God’s righteousness.

Knowing that he is totally lost in the first and old man, and having bowed to this solemn truth as shown and learned in the cross, he is sealed with the Holy Ghost, and livingly united to the Lord, one spirit: he is a man in Christ—not in the flesh, or in the first Adam. All *that* is closed for him in the cross, when Christ made Himself responsible for him in respect of it and died unto sin *once*, and he is alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. He belongs to a new creation, having the life of the Head of it as his life. Where he learnt the utter total condemnation of what he was, he learnt its total and eternal putting away. The cross is for him, that impassable Red Sea, that Jordan, which he has now gone through, and is his deliverance from Egypt for ever, and now he has realized it, his entrance into Canaan in Christ. If Jordan and the power of death overflowed all his banks, for him the ark of the covenant passed in. It is just his way into Canaan. That which, if he had himself assayed to go through as the Egyptians, would have been his destruction, has been a wall on the right hand and the left, and only destroyed all that was against him. He *was* a man in the flesh; he *is* a man in Christ. Amazing and total change from the whole condition and standing of the first Adam, responsible for his own sins, into that of Christ, who, having borne the whole consequence of that responsibility in his place, has given him, in the power of that, to us, new life in which He rose from the dead, a place in and with Himself, as He now is as man before God. It is to this position the apostle refers, only that he was given in a very extraordinary manner to enjoy the full fruit and glory of it during the period of his existence here below. His language as to this truth is remarkably plain, and therefore powerful. “When we were in the flesh,” he says. Thus it is we speak when we refer to a clearly bygone state of things in which we are no longer. “When we were in the

flesh," that is, we are no longer in that position at all. "But," he says, "ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you." We are now alive in Christ. "If ye be *dead*," says he elsewhere, "to the rudiments of the world, why as though living (*i.e.*, alive) in the world are ye subject to ordinances?" "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."

Because many Christians have not seized the force of this truth, nor of the expressions of the apostle, they use Christ's death as a remedy for the old man, or at least only learn forgiveness of past sins by it, instead of learning that they have by it passed out of the old man as to their place before God, and into the new in the power of that life which is in Christ.

RUTH.

A LITTLE book abounding with typical instruction concerning Israel, and presenting the line of genealogical descent as to Messiah from Phares of Judah to David. (Chap. iv. 18-22.)

It well follows Judges, as it opens with Israel in a time of famine, but plenty and blessing are ultimately brought in by Boaz, type of Him who will by and by bring the ruined, scattered, and impoverished nation into permanent blessing, not on the principle of nature or *law*, but in the way of *grace*, through redemption. *Then* it will be truly seen that it was expedient "that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." (John xi. 50.)

I. SAMUEL.

ISRAEL's history is still more humbling. The high priest's sons are the sons of Belial. The ark of God

is taken by the Philistines. Eli the priest dies, and his daughter-in-law on her death bed names her newly born offspring "Ichabod," saying, "the glory of God has departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken." Thus under law, and with priesthood, Israel entirely fails.

God however has resources, and He comes in with another order of things—He raises up the child Samuel as a prophet, who is for the time the connecting link between God and His people.

Again, Israel's failure is manifest, for they get weary of the government of Jehovah and ask for a king like the heathen round about them. (ch. viii. 6-9.) God granted their request, and, as He afterwards said by the prophet Hosea, "I gave them a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath." (Hosea xiii. 11.) Again, there is failure, King Saul rejected the word of the Lord, and God rejected him from being king. (chapter xv. 26.) David then is, under divine guidance, anointed by Samuel as the king whom God chose, a man after God's own heart. (ch. xvi.) Another referring to Saul speaks of him as "A splendid gift in an unclean vessel, and much showy exercise of affection without a subject heart."

David was a man of faith and therefore of power; and of suffering too, seeing he stood for God and was hated and hunted as a partridge in the mountain by the mere official professor. He trusted in God, therefore God was remarkably with him. Jonathan too was a man of faith and of power, but he clung to the nominal thing, instead of to God and His David, and therefore died with Saul under the hand of the enemies of Israel. Those who clung to David were greatly honoured of God.

It is worthy of remark that though David honoured Saul because he was the Lord's anointed, yet we never find him taking a place of communion with him. An important principle in divine truth.

“’TIS WHAT I FEEL.”

“’Tis what I feel so distresses me; I often think it is impossible that I can be a Christian, and that I am only deceiving myself. Such misery as I often feel, such cleaving to things of time and sense, so little enjoyment of divine things, and when I would desire to live a good life and do good, I feel such evil springing up within me, that I often say, Can I be a Christian? So different are my feelings to many I know and have heard of, that I sometimes feel ready to despond altogether.” Such is the language of not a few. Many go on for several years thus looking at themselves and their feelings, imagining that peace with God is a high attainment, and only the privilege of a very few. But let the reader observe, that in all the utterances above quoted, there is not the least reference to Christ, and therefore not one word of faith. It is all self, self, self, trying to find something to rest in there, where no rest can be.

Very little is said in the New Testament about feelings, because it pronounces man to be utterly corrupt—“dead in trespasses and sins”—and God in His rich mercy, so loving us when dead in sins, as to redeem us unto Himself, at the costly price of the bloodshedding and death of His beloved Son. The sacrifice of Christ, then, must be the alone ground of peace, and the spring of all real enjoyment and happiness. Joy and peace, therefore, are only *in believing*. How simple this is! And yet how many are troubled and distressed—true, earnest souls too—because they have

not judged themselves according to the divine verdict, “In me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing.” How is it possible they could linger over this evil nature, and expect happy feelings in connection with it, if they, through grace, honestly bowed to the true judgment of God as to what man in the flesh is? But more than this, they need to see that God has in judgment delivered them from it—that God has been on their side in dealing with this evil nature. Not only did He lay on Jesus, His beloved Son, our sins, and in judgment and death put them all away by the cross, but He judged too the evil nature that did the sin, this old corrupt thing from whence spring those lusts and pride, and every other form of evil, which distress the soul that has been quickened by the Spirit of God. Well, that evil nature has been dealt with by God judicially in the cross of His Son—our *old man* has been crucified *with Christ*. (Rom. vi. 6.) Thus, though I feel (and every Spirit-taught soul must feel) that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, so that if I looked at it in the light of God’s holy presence, I must cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” and feel miserable indeed, but looking to what God has done in judging and delivering me from it by the cross of Christ, I can look up to God and say, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is faith, therefore, simply believing God’s word about what He says He has done for every believer in the cross of His beloved Son,—that is the *sole* spring of all Christian happiness; and if this be lost sight of, and the eye turned in upon self and its feelings, it

will have to learn by, it may be, a long and tedious process, that “in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” and thus be beaten out of self and self’s feelings, to look only to God’s wondrous mercy to us in the blood-shedding and death of Jesus; “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.” (Rom. viii. 3.) Observe, not sins forgiven merely, but sin in the flesh condemned—the old man judged, condemned, and crucified. Hence it is that we are thus cleared of everything that could possibly condemn us, and having eternal life *in Christ* freely given to us of God—for the gift of God is eternal life, through (or in) Christ Jesus our Lord—there is now no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*. O the blessedness of being thus delivered from guilt and condemnation, death and judgment, by Him, the holy One, who was made sin for us, and of having a new nature (created in Christ Jesus) in Him who is the Head of all principality and power. What peace! what security! and what worship, joy, and gladness must accompany the simple apprehension of this new and heavenly standing which God, in the riches of His grace, has given us in Him who is at His right hand. How naturally, as it were, the heart then sings,

“No condemnation, O my soul,
 ’Tis God that speaks the word;
 Perfect in comeliness art thou,
 In Christ the risen Lord.”

Feelings, then, there will be, there must be, yea, happy, joyful feelings in such believing souls, but

Christ is the spring of all. Hence we “rejoice in the Lord always,” “stand fast in the Lord,” “trust in the Lord,” are “strong in the Lord,” and “glory in the Lord;” for the Lord is everything to us, and for us. The Lord Himself is our peace, our life, our High Priest, our Advocate with the Father, our hope, “who, of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,” and who assures us that He is coming quickly to receive us unto Himself, that where He is there we may be also.

Happy indeed are those who have thus found Christ to be all their salvation, and all their desire.

“Had I ten thousand gifts beside,
I’d cleave to Jesus crucified,
And build on Him alone;
For no foundation is there given,
On which to place a hope of heaven,
But Christ the corner-stone.

“Bold in His name, I have drawn nigh,
Before the Ruler of the sky,
His justice all is met.
Possessing Christ, I all possess,
Wisdom, and strength, and righteousness,
And sanctity complete.”

GOD CHOSE TO SEND JESUS.

[AN EXTRACT.]

SOME little time ago, after the conclusion of one of Mr. N.’s addresses in Edinburgh, a young man came into the room where he was receiving persons anxious for private conversation, and said to him, “I have heard you preach three times, sir, and I neither care

for you nor your preaching, unless you can tell me, Why did God permit sin?"

"I will do that with pleasure," was the immediate reply: "*because He chose it.*"

The young man, apparently taken by surprise, stood speechless; and Mr. N. again repeated, "*Because He chose it; and,*" added he, "if you continue to question and cavil at God's dealings, and, vainly puffed up by your carnal mind, strive to be wise above what is written; I will tell you something more that God will do; *He will some day put you in hell-fire.* It is vain for you to strive with your Maker—you cannot resist Him; and neither your opinion of His dealings, nor your blasphemous expression of them, will in the least lessen the pain of your everlasting damnation, which I again tell you will most certainly be your portion, if you go on in your present spirit. There were such questioners as you in Paul's time; and how did the apostle answer them? '*Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*'"

The young man here interrupted Mr. N., and said, "Is there such a text as that in the Bible?" "Yes, there is," was the reply, "in the 9th chapter of the Romans; and I recommend you to go home and read that chapter, and after you have read it, and seen there how God claims for Himself the right to do *whatever He chooses*, without permitting the thing formed to say to Him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Remember that besides permitting sin, there is another thing *God has chosen to do—God chose to send Jesus.* Of His own free and sovereign grace, God gave His only-begotten Son *to die for sinners, in their stead,*

in their place, so that, though they are sinners, and have done things worthy of death, *not one* of them shall ever be cast into hell for his sins who will accept Jesus as his only Saviour, and believe in Him, and rest in His word. I have no time to say more to you now; others are waiting to see me. Go home, attend to what I have told you, and may God the Holy Spirit bless it for Jesus Christ's sake.

This conversation took place on Sunday evening. On the following Friday, Mr. N. was sitting in a friend's drawing-room, when the servant announced that a young man wanted to speak to him. On being shewn up stairs, he said, "Do you remember me?" "No." "Do you not remember the young man who, on Sunday night, asked you to tell him, "Why did God permit sin?" "Yes, perfectly." "Well, sir, I am that young man, and you said, that God permitted sin *because He chose it*; and you told me to go home and read the ninth chapter of the Romans; and also that *God chose to send Jesus* to die for such sinners as I am; and I did, sir, what you told me, and afterwards I fell down at God's feet, and asked Him to forgive my sins, because Jesus died for me, and to give me His Holy Spirit to put all wicked thoughts out of my head, and He did, and now I am happy—oh, so, so happy, sir; and though the devil still comes sometimes to tempt me with my old thoughts, and to ask me what *reason* I have to think that God has forgiven me, I have always managed to get him away, by telling him that I do not want to judge things by my own *reason*, *but by God's Word*, and that the only reason why I know I am forgiven is, that *for Christ's sake God chose to*

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pardon me." The changed expression of the young man's countenance was quite sufficient to account for Mr. N.'s not knowing him again. It was radiant with joy and peace.

Dear reader, the *first lesson* a poor sinner has to learn, is to trust in the Lord with all his heart, and not to his own understanding,—to trust God not only for what he *does* understand, and for what *is* explained, but for what he does not understand, and for what is not explained. This is faith; and such faith honours God and saves the soul. This is receiving the kingdom of God as a little child, who always believes that *things must be right, if father says them, and father does them*; and let us ever remember that it is written (and the Scripture cannot be broken), that unless "we receive the kingdom of God as a little child, we shall in no wise enter therein."

YET THERE IS ROOM.

WHAT millions have been sav'd
 From Gentiles and from Jews!
 The gospel banner o'er them wav'd,
 And they believ'd the news.
 They're kept, in boundless grace,
 For endless bliss and bloom;
 For them has Christ prepared a place,
 And yet there's room.

The message issues forth
 Far as the world extends,
 To west and east, to south and north,
 Its joyous way it wends;
 It bears its heav'nly light
 To realms of night and gloom,
 And hosts are sav'd for glory bright;
 And yet there's room.

YET THERE IS ROOM.

In Britain's favoured land,
 The glad and cheerful sound
 Is echoed loud on ev'ry hand,
 And welcomes all around.
 But though it flows like waves,
 Let no one dare presume ;
 Not hearing, but *believing*, saves,
 While yet there's room.

Thou mayst be hoar and old,
 And speak with trembling tongue ;
 Or be with manly vigour bold ;
 Or blithesome, frail, and young.
 Whate'er thine age or state,
 Death claims thee for the tomb ;
 But mercy still on thee doth wait,
 For yet there's room.

The Lord will quickly come,
 Salvation's day be o'er,
 Despisers be with terror dumb,
 And perish evermore.
 But *now*, while call'd *to-day*,
 Flee far from grief and gloom,
 To Jesus haste, make no delay ;
 For yet there's room.

Dost thou thyself excuse,
 As once was done by some ;
 The proffer'd blessing still refuse,
 And say, thou canst not come ?
 Then judgment thou dost take,
 And dreadful is thy doom ;
 But, oh ! from thy delusion wake,
 While yet there's room.

T.

“IGNORANCE is generally confident because it is ignorant; and such is the mind of man in dealing with the things of God.”

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

God is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. He cannot excuse sin, but must righteously condemn it. He abhors that which is evil, and yet He loves man—"His delights were with the sons of men." But man is a sinner, an enemy to God by wicked works—under sin, a transgressor—and righteousness calls for vengeance. "How then," it was asked, "can man be just with God?" In no way, unless God's righteous judgment of sin could be met. How then can man be saved and justified, and yet all God's righteous claims be vindicated? The crucified Son of God is the answer—the Holy One made sin for us, and God condemning "sin in the flesh" in Him instead of in us.

Christ having thus, in grace, taken our place, God spared not His own Son, and having answered every claim of divine righteousness for us, thus vindicating the throne of God and glorifying God about our sin, by bearing its righteous judgment unto death—even the death of the cross—God, in His righteousness, raised Him from the dead, in righteousness gave Him all power and glory at His own right hand, and is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to justify us from all things by His blood. As another has said, Man has no righteousness for God. God has one in His grace for man, sinful and wretched man. Who can stand before the law of God? Who can say, "I have not transgressed it?" How can a man justify himself by a law he has transgressed? "By the law is the

knowledge of sin." What is to be done? Hear what the apostle says, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is made manifest, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even *the righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ* unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood." It is the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, which is the only answer (which God Himself has furnished to us) to the demands of the justice which condemns the sinner. It is the righteousness of God by Jesus that makes righteous the man who has no righteousness to present to God, so that God is just in justifying them that have faith in Jesus. What grace, what a blessing for the poor sinner who has a heart broken enough and cleansed, sufficiently true for him to condemn himself! "Boasting is excluded through faith in Jesus."

II. SAMUEL.

THIS book gives us the life and times of David from the death of Saul.

David judges the Amalekite for slaying the Lord's anointed, and most tenderly mourns over Saul and Jonathan having fallen in battle under the hand of the uncircumcised Philistines. (Chap. i.)

After this, war continued long between the house of Saul and David; but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and

weaker (chap. iii. 1). In a few years David's kingdom is established—he becomes king over all Israel (chap. v. 3). The ark of the Lord is brought up from Baale of Judah to a place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it (chap. vi.). David then desires to build a house for the ark, but God tells him that cannot be, and assures David that He will build him an house, and establish everything in the One who should proceed out of David's bowels, thus intimating that nothing could be really established but in connection with Him who is the greater than Solomon, whom God would raise from the dead. (Chap. vii.)

It was after all these precious promises, and after David's wondrous success, that we find him, instead of going out to war, indulging in idleness at home, when he falls into most grievous sins in connection with Uriah and his wife Bathsheba. (Chap. xi.) How often in God's people terrible failure follows the most marked blessing of the Lord! How needful to constantly remember that He only is able to keep us from falling!

The subsequent chapters tell us how deeply David smarted for his sins under God's chastisement by sore troubles in his family, some of them strikingly shewing that "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." In the end we find him singing and making melody in his heart to the Lord. (Chap. xxii. 1.)

David (the man after God's own heart) in his days of humiliation and rejection, as found in the first book of Samuel, illustrates Christ as "a man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men;" those, therefore, who

attached themselves to David instead of to Saul, as at Adullam (1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2), owning subjection to him as their captain, and fighting his battles, come out at the end of this second book of Samuel, each one being honoured then, when David is established in his kingdom, according to their real devotedness to Him. Most of chapter xxiii. enters very particularly into this. Two things are to be noticed. First, not the smallest service of love to David is omitted. It may be taking a piece of lentiles out of the hands of the Philistines (verse 12), or *hazarding their lives to refresh David with the waters of Bethlehem*. Uriah's name is there, for he was true to David. Secondly, the absence of those names from the list of David's worthies that might have been expected to be there. For instance, Joab is not there, though his armour-bearer and brothers are; Ahithophel is not there, though his son is. The Scriptures shew that although Joab was very mighty, and Ahithophel very wise, yet in time of real trial both acted as traitors, and sided with those who opposed the throne of David. Surely these facts read to our souls solemn and serious lessons!

The last chapter shews that God was displeased with David's numbering Israel. No doubt pride was at work. Chapter xxi. plainly tells us that Satan provoked him to do it. This again brought chastisement upon the king, and the Lord sent a pestilence which destroyed seventy thousand men (verse 15). Burnt-offerings and peace-offerings were offered, and we are told, "So the Lord was entreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel" (verse 25).

A CONVERSATION ON ETERNAL LIFE.

“HAVE you got eternal life?” said a servant of Christ, lately, to an aged woman.

“No, sir; but I hope I shall.”

“How long before you expect to get it, for I suppose you are more than seventy years old?”

“O yes, sir; I am far beyond seventy.”

“Then when, may I ask, do you expect to get eternal life?”

“I do not know, sir; but my grandson says I must come and have it now; and though I tell him there is a great deal to be done first, he always says there is nothing to do for it, but I must come at once.”

“That is quite right. The truth is, that Jesus the Son of God has come down from heaven, and done a finished work. Did you never hear that He said when He died upon the cross, ‘It is finished?’ Well, how can there be anything for you to do, if He has finished the work of eternal redemption, and God now *gives* eternal life to all who believe in His name? God is now, then, giving people eternal life. He says, “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Eternal life, then, is God’s gift; and you surely do not require to do anything to obtain a gift, for if you did anything for it, it would be what you had earned, and not a gift. But I repeat that Scripture says, ‘The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.’ You have only, therefore, to come to Jesus the Son of God by faith, and you will receive eternal life as God’s free gift.” (Rom. vi. 25.)

“So my grandson says, sir.”

“Ah, but you must see that God says so in His blessed Word, and rest on what God says, because God says it, for that is faith. Take God, therefore, at His word. Believe He means what He says, that “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Rely upon His faithfulness to His own word, and you will be happy. You will then know that all your sins are forgiven, and that you have eternal life, and will never perish. There is no time to be lost, for Jesus is quickly coming, and God says, ‘Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.’ So refuse no longer this gift, but come to Jesus at once; come just as you are; come with all your sins and guilt; and remember, if you do not receive Jesus the Son of God as your Saviour, you must go to hell, and be lost for ever.”

“O sir, that would be terrible. But, sir, have you got eternal life?”

“Yes, my dear woman, through the grace of God, I have had eternal life for more than thirty years. Think, then, again of these precious words, ‘The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord;’ and may God bless this conversation to the saving of your soul.”

Dear reader, have you thus come to Jesus, and received this marvellous gift of God — eternal life? Do you not know that Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and *I give unto them eternal life*; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand?” (John x. 27, 28.) Have you heard the sweet voice of

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Jesus the Son of God in the word of His blessed gospel? Did not He lovingly say, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" (Matt. xi. 28.) Can you resist the claim upon your heart of such a voice of wondrous unutterable mercy? To think of the Son of God coming down from heaven, and, unasked and unsought, in a world that only returned Him hatred for His love, that He should freely present eternal life and peace to every one that received Him, and heard His words. Again He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that *heareth my word*, and *believeth* on Him that sent me, *hath everlasting life*, and shall not come into condemnation, or judgment; but is passed from death unto life." Oh, the preciousness of knowing, feeble and failing as we are, that we have eternal life in Christ as a present possession.

"The soul that to Jesus hath fled for repose,
He will not, He cannot desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake
He'll never—no, never—no, never forsake."

SAVED BY GRACE.

A TRUE STORY.

"For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that BELIEVETH.*"—ROMANS x. 2-4.

I HAVE been one of the most self-righteous men that ever lived. For years I groined under my folly, expecting to find peace by regulating my life according to the word of God. I could not but believe the Bible true which told so plainly the secret evils of my heart. So

I sought carefully for all the commandments of the New Testament, but I found no commandments as I understood the word. Oh! yes, I read, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer," or "For every idle word which men speak, they shall be brought into judgment," and others of the same character, but they terrified me. I sought quickly to forget them. I read also,

"Seek not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink," but it did not seem to be for me; my daily labour brought in abundantly. I read also,

"Sell what ye have, and give to the poor," and then I wished, oh! that I were only rich, that I might sacrifice all.

Then I found baptism, and the Lord's supper; and, in my anxiety to *do* everything, I took them for commandments. But after doing all, and living an irreproachable church-life, I got no settled peace. The "rejoice evermore" of the Bible was a mockery to me. When I was baptized, I expected some mysterious change, but there was none. I wept at the Lord's table; but there was no peace. I prayed in secret and in public, often so earnestly that others thought me mighty in prayer; but yet there was no peace. "O Lord!" I cried in my agony, "why hast Thou not been plain in Thy word, that I might know exactly what to do? I would run and do it even at the peril of my life." But there was no answer. I now visited the sick, and spent much time in reading the word of God, and still more time in prayer. I preached, too—yes, dear reader, I *preached*—I pretended to be a bearer of glad tidings, while my own heart writhed in agony.

What did I preach? What others had preached to me: "Do thy best, give all the glory to God; be a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, and then He will save thee." But no peace! no peace!! In spite of all this supposed duty fulfilled, there was no peace!!!

One day I called on a sick man, and quickly introduced the subject of religion, as that was my object in calling. "Ah! sir," he said, "they used to tell me to do my best, and I tried and tried, until I found there was no best to be reached. When I examined myself, I found I was still the same old sinner. Then I watched my instructors, to see if I could detect in them what I found in myself; and they failed so visibly to live up to what they taught and professed that I set them all down as hypocrites, and turned infidel. But here, read this;" and he passed to me a Testament open at Romans iii. I had often read it before, but now the declaration, "There is none righteous, no, not one," was strangely solemn to me. I read on: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." And as I read, the Holy Ghost opened my blinded heart, and I beheld it all. Then and there, in that log-cabin, I got what Cornelius got, when Peter told him that remission of sins was by believing in Jesus. (Acts x. 43.) But oh the shameful pride of the natural heart! I felt like breaking forth in "Glory, glory, glory to the Son who has met all the requirements of justice against me, and has given me eternal life by simply believing that 'it is finished.'" Yet I

stifled it. What! I, who had been a church member for years, and a good one too—I acknowledge that I was then only brought to the knowledge of the truth! It was too humiliating: it is not so *now*. Jesus the mighty Saviour is also a sweet and meek teacher; and when we get acquainted with Him, we learn the sweetness of hiding our poor, mean self, and showing Him only.

And you, dear reader, where are you? Are you praying too? Are you seeking after the commandments, to do them? Are you proposing to make Jesus your model before you know Him as your Saviour, your peace, your righteousness, your sanctification, your all? You may try and try again, but at last you will look back and say with me, “What a bottomless pit this doing is!”

But I have a brother whom I loved as my own soul. My soul went after him. My treasure was too great to be hoarded. I wrote to him, and told him that I had been blind, but now I saw. I told him of that Man that is called Jesus, of the work which He finished on the cross, and of the wonderful results of simply believing on Him. He replied “that he was in great distress sometimes, and did not know whom to believe. One said, do this; another said, do that; and all seemed earnest; it was very puzzling.” I blessed God for this, for it showed that the Holy Ghost was dealing with his soul.

One day he wrote, “All you tell me is true. I have compared it with the Word. One thing only I cannot understand: you say, ‘It is useless to try to better that which cannot be bettered,’ and add, ‘That which

is born of the flesh is flesh.' Surely you do not mean to say we must not strive to improve ourselves, else how could the Lord have said, 'Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven'?"

I prayed to the Lord that He would guide me in my answer, and thought of the joy of being made the instrument in bringing my dear brother to Jesus. I then replied: "Yes, that is just what I meant to say. I meant that it is useless and even folly to strive to better what cannot be bettered. 'Ye must be BORN AGAIN.' We are completely lost, without hope, desperately wicked. Nor does the Lord anywhere promise, as so many pretend, the strength needed to do anything toward our own salvation, and you have no right to pray for it. You certainly have never understood the words, 'For by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight,' or you could not expect ever to accomplish more in that way than the Scribes and Pharisees. The Lord takes them for examples because they were the leaders of the people. You will never be able to accomplish more than they did, pray and strive as you may. Your only hope is in what another, even Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has done for us. This is humiliating, but there is no other way. 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' This is the testimony of the whole word. Believe, and you are saved."

A few days after I received his answer: "Give glory to God, my beloved brother (doubly so now). I see! I see!! Jesus and Jesus *alone* saves me. He is now my all. Since yesterday it seems I understand

more than half the word which before was all darkness. I received your letter yesterday morning, and, as usual, I read it over and over. I read the passages you mentioned, and they were there; I could not deny it. But I was miserable. I went to my task heartlessly and insensible. Towards evening a gleam of hope reached me. I fell on my knees and prayed, and while there the whole redemption which is through Christ Jesus was opened up to me. I desired to see and feel it with such force that my heart might leap high for joy; but I got only a deep, solemn, strange peace within. My wonder is that in view of such a salvation I can remain so calm. I almost tremble lest I should lose such a precious rest."

Yes, glory to Thee, O my God! glory to Thee for such a salvation. Glory be to Thy name for ever that in Jesus my brother also is safe. *We are safe for evermore!*

Dear reader, are you safe? Some will say, "I think so," when they have undergone some strong emotion or excitement. But can you say "Yes" in the depth of your soul—a quiet, happy "Yes" in the presence of Him who has seen you from your first breath, and has known your most secret thoughts, because you know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin? Alas! how many there are who, in the face of the repeated declarations of God's word that they are not only "condemned already," but are "dead in sins," go about to establish their own righteousness. Conscious that they cannot render a perfect obedience even according to their own estimate of it, they make up a code of their own, and call it their duty. And

in doing what they call their duty they are smoothly, religiously sliding to hell. Reader, have you ceased from your own works, and taken the place of "him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly"? Then also do you assuredly know "the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works." L.

1 KINGS.

THE first book of Kings embraces the period extending from David to Ahaziah, son of Ahab. It presents to us the establishment of a king over God's people, in glory, power, and peace; but, through the king's unfaithfulness, the rapid fall and ruin of the kingdom. The history of the kings of Israel is here taken up, with some allusion to those of Judah. The book strikingly gives us a further proof of man's failure whenever placed under responsibility to God.

The throne is established by Solomon in righteousness and judgment, thus typifying the introduction of the kingdom by the Lord Himself. The self-willed Adonijah, who said, "I will be king" (chap. i. 5), is the first that is destroyed; and Joab, the mighty one, in league with him, soon shares the same fate. (Chap. ii.)

Solomon is humble and dependent at first (chap. iii. 7-11), but when his heart is turned away from the Lord God of Israel by his many wives, and he sacrifices to strange gods, he so provokes the Lord God of Israel to anger that the kingdom was rent. (Chap. xi. 1-9). Two tribes continued under the name of "the house of Judah," and ten tribes under the name

of "the house of Israel." (Chap. xii. 21.) This was the fall and ruin of the kingdom of the twelve tribes; and, though there were afterwards occasional times of revival and special blessing, yet the kingdom was never restored to its former unity and glory, nor will it be until a greater than Solomon come whose right it is.

The apostate course of the house of Israel was very rapid. King after king chose a path of infidelity. Jeroboam, the first king after the division of the kingdom, set up idols, and brought in a totally false character of worship. He made calves of gold, which he placed in Bethel, and sacrificed to them, and made priests of the lowest of the people. (Chap. xii. 28-33.) God protested against it to the king by sending a man of God to Bethel, but he returned not from his evil way. (Chap. xiii. 1-33.)

Jeroboam was succeeded by Nadab, who also "did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of his father, who made Israel to sin." (Chap. xv. 25, 26.) Baasha reigned after him, who also "did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin." (Verse 34.) This so provoked God to anger, that He declared that "him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat." (Chap. xvi. 4.) Elah his son succeeded him, but only for two years; for his servant Zimri conspired against him, and killed him, and reigned in his stead. Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, but afterwards he went into the palace of the king's house, and burnt the king's house

over him with fire, that he died for the sins which he sinned in doing evil in the sight of the Lord. (Verse 19.) Half of the people then followed Tibni to make him king, and half followed Omri. Tibni, however, was prevailed against, and Omri reigned. But we are told that “Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the Lord, and *did worse than all that* were before him. (Verse 25.) After him Ahab his son reigned over Israel; but Ahab “did evil in the sight of the Lord *above all* that were before him.” (Verse 30.)

At this time, after all this long-continued infidelity, Elijah the prophet is raised up to testify for the living God, the Lord God of Israel, the Lord of hosts, who declares that there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to His word. (Chap. xvii. 1.) After proving the power of God with him in retirement, he is sent to meet Ahab King of Israel face to face; but notwithstanding God's answer from heaven in sending fire to consume the burnt sacrifice, and the summary execution of judgment upon the priests of Baal, the wicked king still pursues his evil course, so that Elijah is sent to him again to protest against his evil ways, and those of his wicked wife Jezebel. Scripture tells us that “there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.” (Chap. xxi. 20–25.) Ahab, however, was killed in battle (chap. xxii. 34), and was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, and his also is a dark history, for “he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; for he served Baal, and worshipped him, and

provoked to anger the Lord God of Israel, *according to all that his father had done.*" (Chap. xxii. 52, 53.)

What a dark picture the history of these kings of Israel presents! What a bitter and an evil thing sin is, and what terrible consequences are connected with departing from the living God! This book, however, also makes some mention of the kings of Judah, who lived at this time. Here also there is failure, but the heart is afterwards relieved by seeing faithfulness to God, which we have not seen in the kings of the house of Israel. In the days of Rehoboam the son of Solomon, we are told that "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and provoked Him to jealousy with their sins which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done." (Chap. xiv. 22.) Again we read that the heart of Abijam, the son of Rehoboam, was not perfect with the Lord his God as the heart of David his father, yet we find it recorded, "*Nevertheless for David's sake* did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem." (Chap. xv. 4.) Hence we read of Asa who succeeded him, that "Asa did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, as did David his father (verse 11). He was emphatically a man of faith, and devoted to the service of God. So also was his son Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, though his league with wicked Ahab, nearly cost him his life. (Chapter xxii.) It is, however, remarkable, even with such faithfulness as these kings showed, that neither by Jehoshaphat nor by Asa his father were the high places taken away; for the people offered and burnt incense still in high places. (See chap. xv. 14, and xxii. 43.) Alas! what is man when placed in responsibility to God!

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE NOT SALVATION.

ON one of the fine autumnal mornings we have lately had, I was seated alone in a second-class carriage, on my way to York, when at one of the small stations a respectable country-looking man entered the carriage. He readily began to talk about matters of local interest, and as soon as a fitting opportunity presented itself, I asked him kindly and plainly if he had ever been anxious about his soul, and if he had salvation?

“I know a great deal of Scripture, sir.”

“But have you ever been distressed about your state as a sinner before God?”

“No, sir, I have always felt very comfortable.”

“But that may be a false peace, my friend; so opening my Bible I read, ‘God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Now, my friend, you see here that those who believe on the Son whom God hath sent have salvation, that is, they will not perish, but have everlasting life. And again in Rom. v. 1, we read, ‘Being justified by faith, we have (not we shall have when we die, but have now) peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ A present peace, arising from the knowledge that we are justified; and all through the work of Christ.”

“O yes, I know Scripture very well. I have been a great reader of the Bible ever since I was fourteen years of age, and there is no part of it with which I

am not acquainted. You cannot name a portion of it that I do not know."

"And yet with all your knowledge of Scripture you are not saved!"

"No, I cannot say that I am."

"Then of what use is all your Bible knowledge?"

"Why, sir, there are so many sects that I do not know which to believe; one says one thing, and another quite the opposite."

"But, my friend, you are not called on to believe men, but to believe God. It is God's word about His beloved Son, you do not believe, though you have read it so much, and for so many years."

"Yes there is not a day that I do not read the Bible."

"Very likely, but you have not yet believed on the Son whom God hath sent into the world to save sinners."

"I want you to see that if there were ten thousand more sects, and they were all preaching different things, that you still have not to look to what they say, but to what God says in His word. And in His word He points you to His Son crucified as the only ground of peace, the only way of salvation. Why not then now take God at His word, and rest only and entirely on the finished work of Jesus, the all-cleansing blood of Jesus, which alone can purge you from sins, and make you fit for God's holy presence?"

At this time, our train drew up, and my fellow-passenger and I parted, perhaps never to meet again.

I call attention to this conversation, because I have no doubt that many more are alike deluded, thinking

because they read a certain portion of the Scriptures daily, and diligently attend to some other duties, that it must be well with them as to eternity. One is always thankful that any read the Scriptures of eternal truth, and it is sorrowful to think how much they are despised; but to rest in duties of any kind, with hope of salvation thereby, is to refuse God's gospel and to set at nought the value of the atoning work of the Son of God; for “He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but *he that believeth not* is condemned already, because *he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*” (John iii. 18.)

“SHALL WE MEET IN HEAVEN?”

“As I am leaving this neighbourhood, Mrs. S——, and am not likely to see you again, may I ask you one question? It is this, Shall we meet in heaven?”

“Oh, I hope so, sir, indeed, but then we must pray for forgiveness of sins first.”

“Where in Scripture do you read that a sinner must pray to be forgiven?”

“I cannot say, sir; but of course we must pray for it.”

“I know that many say so, but the truth is that God comes to you in the gospel, and tells you that Christ His Son has made such a just atonement for sin, that he can freely pardon, and save for ever, those who accept Him as their Saviour; that is, believe in Him, or come to God by Him. So that instead of your asking God to forgive you, He preaches peace, and proclaims forgiveness of sins to you. He says, ‘Unto you is preached the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all

that believe *are* justified from all things.' (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) So that instead of your beseeching God to be reconciled to you, God is in His gospel beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Him."

"Believe then, what God says. Take Christ as your Saviour, hearken to God's proclamation of forgiveness of sins to every one that believeth, and then you will know peace with God, and we shall meet in heaven. Farewell! May God bless these few words to you."

CONVERSION OF W. B. AT THE AGE OF FOURTEEN.

RELATED BY HIMSELF.

[An Extract.]

"FROM a child I knew myself to be a sinner, but for a year or two I felt myself one. I knew that if I died I must go to hell; but these convictions came and went off again, and my prayer was, 'O God, create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.'

"I used to feel that I never could be saved, that it was impossible, for that nobody had such a heart as I had. I used to make resolutions to serve God, but I found that, like the early cloud and the morning dew, they passed away.

"While under these convictions, I had two narrow escapes from drowning. On one of these occasions I was bathing one morning, unknown to my parents, in a deep part of the river Douglas, in Lancashire, when I sank, and I had all the horrors of death by drowning. I felt I was going to hell. Then I was mercifully rescued by my cousin swimming to me, and drawing me to the bank. There, while I lay gasping for breath, I felt such love to God, my very soul seemed full of

love and gratitude, and I thought I would love and serve Him all my days; but this was, I believe, all nature, for I knew nothing of God in Christ, and when I recovered, all my love and joy evaporated like smoke, leaving not a trace behind.

“This I take to be like the stony-ground hearer; it had nothing to do with the pardon of sins; but my prayer continued to be, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.’ After this, I was ill for some months, and one day my mother was reading aloud to me the sixth chapter of John. I took no notice of what she read till she came to the thirty-seventh verse, ‘All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.’ The latter part of the verse darted through my mind like a flash of lightning. ‘Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.’ I thought, is it possible? what murderers, and thieves, and liars! But it kept coming again and again. When night came, I went to bed, and kneeled down, and pleaded it over with God. What, murderers, and thieves, and liars! and it kept coming, ‘in no wise cast out,’ and I pleaded again and again, what ‘in no wise;’ what, the vilest! and then the dear Lord seemed to shew it all to me; and I had a view of Christ on the cross, as if I could actually see Him hanging there, with the eyes of my mind, as clear as if it were with my bodily eyes, and the word kept coming again and again, ‘Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out;’ and all my sins were instantaneously removed. They were all gone; all my sins swept away, and I looked to see if there were none left; no—all swept

away! I was so full of joy and gladness as I could be. In the morning when I awoke, I thought it was a dream. I rubbed my eyes to see whether it was so; no, it was a reality. The same joy was there, and I hugged my pillow and the bed clothes, feeling I had Christ in my arms; it was all things new. I was then not quite fourteen years of age. I think I wanted one month to my birthday."

THE BLIND BEGGAR.

JOHN ix.

LIKE to the man whom Jesus heal'd,
That from his birth was blind,
Are souls in utter darkness seal'd,
In conscience, heart, and mind.
This blindness was not loss of sight;
For he had never seen the light
Till Jesus on him shined:
Nor has the soul a single beam,
Till heav'nly light from Christ doth gleam.

A suppliant too, as well as blind,
He begg'd his daily bread;
And as the donors were inclined,
He well or ill was fed.
And God His bounties day by day
Bestows on those who've nought to pay,
And doth their table spread:
With ready hand His gifts they take;
But who gives thanks for Jesus' sake?

Physicians' skill could not avail
To ope his sightless eyes,
Or move from them the stony scale,
Or bid their curtain rise.
And none but Jesus can give sight,
Or turn from darkness unto light
The soul, in rapt surprise;

THE BLIND BEGGAR.

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But when He speaks in pow'r divine,
Then glorious light from Him doth shine.

Those, darkness once, now light in Him,
Are children of the day;
Nor shall His brightness e'er be dim,
But shine through all the way.
And while they in His love confide,
And, bless'd in Him, in Him abide,
His will and word obey,
Their souls will ne'er be dark or dim—
They'll spend their days in praising Him.

This man, born blind, who now could see,
Was faithful to the light;
Though far, far less he had than we,
His loyalty was bright.
He boldly Jesus' name confess'd,
And, sorely tested, stood the test,
And bore the foes' despite;
And when by them he was revil'd,
He neither fear'd, nor was beguil'd.

O happy man! to be cast out
For Jesus' worthy name,
To bear unmoved the sneering shout
For His reproach and shame.
Did Jesus let him suffer loss?
Oh, no! He came his path across,
As well His grace became,
And taught him how, with feet unshod,
To worship Him, the Son of God.

May we who live in brighter days
Than this dear faithful man
But live as truly to the praise
Of Christ as he began;
Reflect upon this world of night,
The clear, unclouded, heav'nly light,
Throughout our little span;
And may we bend in worship too
As we in Christ God's image view.

T.

II. KINGS.

WE have four very important points brought before us in the second Book of Kings. 1. The history of the Kings of Israel from Ahaziah till the people were taken captives for their sin by Shalmanezzer, king of Assyria. 2. The history of the Kings of Judah till their captivity into Babylon. 3. The conclusion of Elijah's course and his translation. 4. The ministry and death of Elisha.

The book opens with King Ahaziah appealing on account of his disease to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, and he died, according to Elijah's word, for thus despising the God of Israel. He was succeeded by Jehoram the son of Ahab, who did evil in the sight of the Lord; for though he put away the image of Baal, which his father had made, still he clave to the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat (ch. iii. 1-3). He was slain by Jehu, who had been anointed king by one of the prophets, who, according to the word of the Lord, was to smite the house of Ahab, and avenge the blood of all the servants of the Lord at the hand of Jezebel (ch. ix. 1-10, 22-24). Jehu trode Jezebel under foot (32-37). Ahab's seventy sons were slain also at the word of Jehu; he slew also the worshippers of Baal, brake down the image of Baal, in fact destroyed Baal out of Israel. Still Jehu reads us a most solemn lesson, for with all his boasted zeal for the Lord (ch. x. 16), the Holy Ghost tells us that "Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin" (v. 31). After a reign of 28 years

Jehu was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz. Sad, however, it is to find that "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and followed the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, who delivered them into the hand of Hazael, king of Syria." The king, however, besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him, for He saw the oppression of Israel. (How compassionate was the heart of God to these sinful people!) But, though God delivered them, they turned not from their evil ways, and departed not from the sins of Jeroboam. Jehoahaz reigned 17 years, and was succeeded by Joash, his son (ch. xiii. 1-10). Again, however, the terrible record is given that Joash "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat" (v. 11). His son Jeroboam succeeded him, and of him also it is said that "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (ch. xiv. 24). In his reign, we are told that "God saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter; for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but He saved them by the hand of Jeroboam, the son of Joash" (vv. 26, 27). After his death Zachariah, his son, reigned in his stead, and though only for six months, he also did that which was evil as his fathers had done, "he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to

sin" (ch. xv. 9). Shallum, the son of Jabesh, however, conspired against him and slew him, and reigned in his stead, but only one month; for Menahem, the son of Gadi, smote Shallum, slew him, and reigned in his stead for ten years. Still, of him also, it is said that, "he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (v. 18). After his death Pekahiah, his son, reigned in his stead, of whom it is also said that he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, and he reigned only two years; for Pekah, a captain, conspired against him and slew him, and reigned in his room. He reigned 20 years, but "did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin" (v. 28). Hoshea, however, conspired against Pekah, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, and of him it is said that he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him (ch. xvii. 2). In the ninth year of Hoshea, Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria; "for the children of Israel had so sinned against the Lord, that the Lord was very angry, and rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hands of spoilers . . . for the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, which he did; they departed not from them until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight . . . So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day" (v. 18-23).

With regard to the kings of Judah, the first mentioned in this second book of Kings is Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, who married the daughter of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord. His son Ahaziah succeeded him, and he also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the Lord (chap. viii. 18, 27). He was slain by Jehu (ix. 27). Athaliah, his mother, also was afterwards slain with the sword (xi. 20). Jehoash reigned forty years in Jerusalem, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days wherein Jehoiada, the priest, instructed him (xii. 2). Of Amaziah too, his son, who succeeded him, it is said that "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not like David his father" (xiv. 3). His son also, Azariah (or Uzziah), did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done, save that the high places were not removed, &c. Jotham, his son, also did that which was right in the sight of the Lord; he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done (xv. 3, 34). Ahaz, his son, succeeded him, of whom it is said that he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord his God, like David his father, but he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, &c. (xvi. 1-3). Hezekiah, his son, succeeded him, and of him it is said that "he trusted in the Lord God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the Lord," &c. (xviii. 5, 6). Very different, however, was his son Manasseh, who reigned after him, for he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, after the

abominations of the heathen whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel (xxi. 2). His son Amon also did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, as his father Manasseh did (20). His own servants slew him, and Josiah his son reigned in his stead. We are told that Josiah "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (xxii. 2). "Notwithstanding, the Lord turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked Him withal. And the Lord said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel," &c. (xxiii. 26, 27). The son of Josiah, Jehoahaz, succeeded him, but he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. After three months he was deposed by Pharaoh-nechoh, who made his brother Jehoiakim king in his room, who also did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and in his days Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, took Jerusalem, and carried Judah captive to Babylon, as well as all the treasures and golden vessels out of the temple of the Lord. God removed Judah "out of His sight for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did."

In this book we see also that God sent forth His servants Elijah and Elisha to testify to the people of Israel; and also in the days of Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, Jonah, Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Nahum prophesied. It was in the face of all this prophetic testimony and frequent intervention of the compassion and power of God that Israel and Judah so sinned.

NO MENDING.

God is not now mending or curing the bad qualities of an evil nature. He has tried man over and over again, and always proved him to be very bad—"only evil and that continually." Not only is he a sinner by practice, never having done any good, for "there is none that doeth good, no, not one," but his nature is irremediably bad, and cannot be made better. Yet how few believe this,—how many entirely deny it! What multitudes are trying to make themselves better as they say, hoping to be good, and to get fit at last for God's presence, by what they can do, adding, that they look to God for *His help*, in order to do it. What a soul-destroying delusion! What vast numbers are victimized by this net of Satan's! They work, and work, and work, and boast too of their good intentions and sincerity, notwithstanding it is most plainly declared by the living God, and written in His most true and infallible word, that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.) Can any thing be plainer? How sad the thought, that so many are setting at naught this divine declaration, and Pharisee-like working hard to "cleanse the outside of the cup and platter," vainly trying to commend themselves to God by their good works; only, in our day, the delusion is more refined, because they acknowledge that they need God's *help* to accomplish it, or, that they need the Saviour to be a patch, a new piece, to mend the old rotten garment of the natural man. The Scripture, however, meets all this, for it assures us that the old garment cannot be mended. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the old, and the rent is made worse." (Matt. ix. 16.) Observe, dear reader, "the rent is made worse"—the garment is not really mended with

all the well-meant attempts, but "the rent is made worse;" that is, a man is in a worse state before God, who uses Christ as a patch to mend up his own rags of self-righteousness, than, a man simply in his sins; and, for this reason, he is taken in the Devil's snare, under a special delusion, caught in the fowler's net, like the fly in the spider's web.

Oh! dear reader, be assured that God will have no mending. He pronounces man to be so bad that do what he will, he "*cannot please God.*" His case then is utterly hopeless as to mending, or trying to make the old nature better, or seeking to use Christ to fill up the rent, or to a mere make-weight of human deficiencies. Oh no! What you want, dear reader, to enable you to stand in peace in God's presence is the knowledge that your sins have been judged, and put away, and that He has given you a perfect righteousness in which to stand in acceptability before Him. And blessed be God, these two things the Lord Jesus has secured for us. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) There is no patching here—it is deliverance in judgment from the old guilty state and standing, and being brought into a new state and standing in perfect acceptance in Christ, before God.

Christ died for sinners. On the cross He bare our sins, "suffered for sins the just for the unjust;" sins were thus judged upon Him instead of us, and so unsparingly judged by God in righteousness, that we are not only told that He "purged our sins," but that God was so satisfied with that work as to say of us, "Their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." The believer's sins then having been judged on Christ, how can they ever be judged again? But more than this, the old nature, not being capable of bringing forth good fruit, has been judged. The old, rotten, filthy garment of self-righteousness, being found too bad to be mended, God declares that in the death of His Son, He "con-

demned sin in the flesh," that is, He judged the root of evil, the "old man," in the cross where Christ was our substitute—"made sin for us." Thus our "old man"—the nature from which all evil fruit proceeds—"is crucified with Christ." Precious deliverance! There is no mending here, but righteous judgment, thus vindicating all the just and holy claims of the throne of God. Well might Paul say, "I am crucified with Christ"—"dead to the law"—"dead to sin"—"dead with Christ." But this is not all. He gives us, so to speak, a new garment—a new life—a new nature—a new standing in righteousness and peace before God. Christ is risen from the dead, and gone into heaven; and *in Him God gives* us eternal life: "The gift of God is eternal life." Observe, it is a gift; and being "born of God" we have a new nature, and Christ being our righteousness as well as our life and peace, it can now be most truly said of the believer, "But now *in* Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off ARE made made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. ii. 13.) It is all *in* Christ, and *by* His precious blood. What a salvation! What a standing! What nearness to God! Oh! dear reader, There is no mending here. Blessed be God, the vilest sinner who receives Jesus the Son of God as His Saviour, is *now* in Christ, "made nigh," "accepted in the beloved;" for "Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 4.)

The believer then is now spoken of in Scripture as "not in the flesh," but as "in Christ Jesus;" but while having a new nature, "that which is born of the Spirit," he still has the old nature, "that which is born of the flesh;" but instead of hoping in any amendment of it, he is told "through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body," to reckon himself to be dead, and to know all His springs and strength in a risen and ascended Christ. This is not mending, but mortifying. How very different!

“GOD SAYS I AM SAVED.”

Not long since, I was asked to visit a young girl, about 17 years of age, who had met with an injury, and was thought to be dying. I had known her for some time, and was aware she was very delicate, but, on calling, learned she had fallen out of bed, and received an injury to the back of her head, which would eventually prove fatal, it was judged. Being under the care of another surgeon, I had nothing to do with her treatment, so after making a few enquiries as to her bodily suffering, which was great (especially when moved by others, for she was almost completely paralysed), I began to speak to her about the state of her soul.

“Are you quite happy?” I said.

“No, sir.”

“Why? Are you not saved?”

“I am not sure.”

“But why are you not sure? do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“Yes, but I don't *feel* saved.”

“Do you feel *lost*?”

“Yes, I do,” and she now began to weep.

“Why do you know you are lost?”

“Because I am a sinner, and God's Word says so.”

“Then you believe His Word, do you?”

“Oh, yes, sir, indeed I do.”

“Well, then, His Word says, ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved;’ do you believe that?”

“Yes.”

“But are you looking to Jesus?”

“Yes, sir, but I don't *feel* that I should like to.”

“Granted; but does it not say, ‘Look unto me and *feel* saved?’”

“No.”

“What then?”

“Be ye saved.”

"What?"

"Be ye saved."

"When is that, to-day or to-morrow?"

"When I *look*."

"But are you looking?"

"Yes, I am really looking to Jesus."

"Then, are you saved?" She paused a moment, and then firmly replied,

"I don't *feel* it, but *God says I am saved*. I see it now." The next moment her eye lit up, and her pallid face told the tale of a new spring of joy having been opened to her.

"Well," I said, "if any one were to come in and ask you now if you were saved, what would you say?"

"I would say 'Yes.'"

"And if they asked you how you knew it and were sure of it, what would you say?"

"I would say that I do believe in Jesus, and God says in His Word, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life; and though I don't *feel* it, I do believe what God says."

"Then you rest your soul on Jesus and on God's Word?"

"Yes, sir, I do; and I could die happy now. I'd like to go at once to Jesus."

"You have no fears?"

"No, none."

"No doubts?"

"No; why should I? I see it all clearly. I'm only a poor sinner—and *Jesus died for me*—and *I believe* in Him—and *God says I'm saved*—and so *I know* I am."

I had a little more conversation, and called two days after to find her truly filled with joy and peace in believing. Her face shone with a joy which the knowledge of God alone can impart. Leaving town for a few weeks, I found, on my return, that she had lingered about a month, giving a constant bright testimony of Christ to all about her, and, full of quiet, calm rest

and joy in Christ until the end, had at length passed away to be for ever with Him.

And now, dear reader, a word with you about the state of *your* soul. Are you *saved*—or *lost*? Which? Don't shirk the question. It must be answered soon. The longest life has its end. Who has given you a lease of long life? A long eternity you shall have. Where will you spend it? Another day may find you in it. Gone for ever from earth, where Christ died, "suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." Gone where? With Christ? Or without Him? Would it be without Him? You tremble to say "Yes." Stop—listen! Your future is awful. *Forgotten* by man—*forsaken* by God—for ever in hell. Oh! pause a moment in your downward course. Listen to the voice of love speaking to *you*—speaking from heaven—"Come unto me"—"Look unto me"—"I am Jesus"—"By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved."

You have naught to do but take your true place as a *lost* sinner *now* before God. Acknowledge *your sin*. Justify Him—He'll justify you. It is all summed up in the sweet confession of the dying girl. May you this day be able to say like her, "*I'm only a poor sinner—Jesus died for me—I believe in Him—God says I am saved, and so I know I am.*" W.

"Rise, my soul! behold 'tis *Jesus*,
Jesus fills my wondering eyes;
 See Him now, in glory seated,
 Where thy sins no more can rise."

CHRONICLES.

THE books of Chronicles give us the establishment of the kingdom under David and Solomon, and the history of the kings of Judah, with some allusion to the kings of Israel, until the captivity and destruction of Jerusalem. We have no history of the prophets Elijah and Elisha as the books of Kings give us, neither have we

particular mention of the sins of the kings as have been heretofore recorded. The Chronicles also go further back, tracing Israel's history from Adam, and also go beyond the books of Kings, as speaking of the return of the people to their own land in the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia. (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23.)

I. CHRONICLES.

As before noticed, this book begins with a genealogical account from Adam to David and Solomon. In fact, the first eight chapters give us little more than genealogies, beginning from Adam through Noah and his sons; then Abraham through Shem, and his son Isaac, who begat Esau and Israel. After Esau's descendants are looked at, the sons of Israel come before us, so as to bring out David, the son of Jesse. (Chap. ii. 1-15.) The third chapter gives us David's sons, and the five following chapters take up more particularly the sons of Israel and their descendants. In the ninth chapter we have Jerusalem brought before us, and the children of Israel, the Priests and Levites that dwelt in it, with the variety of offices they filled. At the end of this chapter Saul's origin and family are brought out, followed in the tenth chapter with Saul's overthrow and death; thus clearing the way for David to be brought out more distinctly in his kingly office. We are told that Saul died for his transgression. (13, 14.)

The next chapter, therefore, introduces David to us as king over all Israel, who overcomes the Jebusites, and dwells at Jerusalem, which is called "the city of David." This is followed with details of David's mighty men. (Chapters xi., xii.)

The death of Uzza in bringing up the ark because they did it not according to the due order, the victory of David over the Philistines, followed by the removal of the ark according to God's order, with the gladness and thanksgiving connected with it, occupy the next four chapters. David then desires to build a house for God, but God tells him that cannot be because he had

been a man of war and had shed blood (*compare chap. xxviii. 3*), and promises to build him a house and to establish the kingdom in the hands of his son for ever, which bows David's heart in worship before God. (Chapter xvii.) David's victories over the Philistines, Moabites, the king of Tobah, and the Syrians are then recorded, and the spoil we are told he dedicated to the Lord. (Chapter xviii.) In the next chapter we see that the Ammonites and Syrians are again overcome; which is followed by the destruction of Rabbah, and of the Philistine giants. (Chapters xix., xx.)

The twenty-first chapter gives us David's failure in numbering the people, and God's chastisement on account of it; at the end, David learns the place where the temple is to be built. Afterwards we see him preparing abundance of materials for its construction, and giving Solomon a most solemn charge and directions about it. (Chapter xxii.) Hence the twenty-third chapter opens with, "So when David was old and full of days, he made Solomon his son king over Israel." We then get the numbering of the Levites and their offices; the divisions of the priests, the sons of Aaron, into twenty-four courses; the number of singers and their courses; the divisions of the porters; the keepers of the treasures; the captains of thousands and hundreds that served the king in any matter throughout each of the months of the year; the princes of the tribes, and David's several officers. (Chap. xxiii.--xxvii.)

The last two chapters give us David's oration to the general assembly of all the princes, captains, stewards, officers, and mighty men at Jerusalem, and his solemn charge to Solomon; also instructions about building the house of the Lord, with the precise pattern, and the exact weight of all vessels of gold and silver; the book concluding with David's dedication of presents to the temple, and rejoicings and willing offerings of all the people, and David and all the people blessing their God, and sacrificing sacrifices unto Jehovah.