WORDS OF HELP

FROM THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

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WORDS OF HELP

from the

SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH

Martin Boos—2.

IN a former issue of this magazine the account has been given of the conversion of this remarkable man. And the story of his powerful preaching and its success has been alluded to. But there is another side to the history of his life which must be given, lest any of the servants of the Lord who read of the power of his preaching should be discouraged because they fail to find equal results attending the preaching of the word of God in their own experience. The fact is that Martin Boos, though greatly used of the Lord, had his times of depression and of apparent uselessness. Not only so, it was his to know the full power of persecution; for wherever the Spirit of the Lord is visibly at work, and there is a shaking among the dry bones, there Satan stirs up opposition, for he feels that his kingdom is threatened. With dead formalism, or with a round of stated observances under the name of religion, he has no controversy; but when any indications of spiritual *life* are manifested he stirs up his legions to the assault.

On New Year's day, 1797, about 18 years after his conversion and the commencement of his doing the work of an evangelist, a hot persecution broke out against those who had, with him, proclaimed their new-found joy—the "Jesus-preachers," as they were called. "They were driven from their parishes, and the converts were mocked, stoned, imprisoned, and thrust out of their homes."

The fearful tribunal of the Inquisition stirred itself up to crush the heretics. Boos found refuge with his

friend Fenneberg, but his vicarage was ransacked, and they were both taken into custody. During his imprisonment God made use of him for the conversion of the jailer. Fenneberg's answer to the question, "Do you know why you have been cited here?" sufficed for both. "Yes," he replied fearlessly; "Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, has fulfilled to me, a poor sinner, and to more than a hundred others, His precious word—'He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.' "

Though released at this time, persecution still followed Boos. Like some early Christians, it might have been said of him, he had "no certain dwelling-place"; for he fled from one spot to another like a hunted outlaw. "Destitute, afflicted, tormented,"—such has been, from age to age, the lot of those "of whom the world was not worthy."

The Emperor of Austria tried to defend him, but in vain; and Vienna, whither he had gone, proved no resting-place for the sole of his foot.

Still his spirit was sustained by Divine consolation, as the following extract from a letter written after severe illness clearly indicates.

After alluding to his apparently approaching dissolution, he says: "But after the lapse of two hours I recovered, through Divine mercy, both in body and soul so far that I began to rejoice aloud, to exult and sing, to praise and thank God for all that I had preached and suffered in the east and in the west, and was ready, with all joyfulness, to enter into eternity. I also prayed and wept for joy day and night, and, in spite of all the world, should have expired in the same faith for which it had persecuted me, and to this moment I am lying in the same joy and blessedness. Hallelujah!"

At length in 1819 the living of Sayn, on the Rhine, was given him, and in this quiet spot, shut in with God and nature, he lived unmolested.

From his seclusion, however, he still kept in touch

with the evangelical movement that was going on, and aided the cause by his "noble letters," which might probably never have been written had he remained in the turmoil of more active life. The endeavour to extinguish God's truth often proves the surest way of spreading it.

Yet it is not surprising that he should often have felt his life at Sayn to be unprofitably spent. The apathy of the people distressed him, and he grieved at not beholding more fruit of his labours. "There is scarcely a spot on these hills," he says, "where I have not flung myself down and wept, and prayed that the Lord would give me again the grace to open my mouth with joy, and to preach His word to the awakening of the heart."

Nevertheless, he continued unremittingly to sow the seed, and who can doubt that the harvest, though unseen by the sower, will yet be found "unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"? "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

In the latter part of 1826 his last illness, which was accompanied by intense suffering, commenced. Like many others of God's dear children, his bodily weakness seemed for a time to impair his clear view of his Saviour, but faith ultimately triumphed. "I live very solitarily," he wrote about this time, "but because and as long as I again possess God I have consolation enough in Him."

On the 29th of August, 1826, in the 64th year of his age, after pronouncing the words, "Lord Jesus, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," he expired gently and peacefully. The tempest-tossed life which thus ended in a calm, is well depicted in the beautiful lines from the pen of Dean Alford:

"One Who has known in storms to sail
I have on board,
Above the raging of the gale
I hear my Lord.

He holds me when the billows smite—
I shall not fall.
If sharp, 'tis short; if long, 'tis light,
He tempers all.

Safe to the land! Safe to the land!
The end is this!
And then with Him go hand in hand,
Far into bliss." *Selected.*

Safety in Flight—2.

FLEE FORNICATION.

SOMEONE has said: All evil can be overcome by fighting, but lewdness only by flight.

So God's word judges this evil. And when scripture says to believers, "Flee fornication" (1 Cor. vi. 18), it means we should flee from everything that can lead to this evil. *All* moral evil, therefore. If we watch against the first, we are kept from the second.

In Joseph's history in Potiphar's house, we have a beautiful proof of how we can only escape this moral evil by hasty flight, when it threatens, while in Samson's history we have a striking warning not to think we can play with this sin and that we can go just as far as we like with it. No, it is an evil which will play with us if we do not flee from it, and will finally consume us. "Can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals and his feet not be burned?" (Prov. vi. 27, 28). Pure, true love is a holy fire that warms, but unclean passion is a fire that destroys. And the way of uncleanness is to go upon hot coals.

Ambrose, one of the church fathers, said on this subject, "Evil desires have a nature of fire."

Perhaps the young man in Proverbs vii. was not so very bad, but he was idle. Idleness is the devil's pillow, and often a first link in the chain of unclean actions. We see this in David's history. Then the young man was in bad company. And the word tells

us, "Be not deceived! Evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Cor. xv. 33). He is thus driven by sinful curiosity to know more about the evil for which he has made room in his inmost thoughts and heart. He seeks the evil out, and sin found him as a defenceless bird and caught him in her snare. He goes as if to the slaughter; the sin caught him in fetters forged by himself; pierced with many sorrows, he finds his end in the snare. His feet take the way to the grave, going down to the chambers of death! This is truth about this sin and its results.

There is much of this moral evil in the world, and the source of it is the human heart. When the Searcher of hearts lays the human heart bare, He names as one of the first things moral evil. This makes it clear how particularly dangerous this evil is. Mere unwatchfulness is sufficient to give this evil a place in my heart. And if the lust which has conceived is not judged, then "it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James i. 15). How much moral evil is commended in our day under beautiful conceptions and fine words! We have to be very careful as to this and to let God's word speak in all these matters. Then only shall we walk in sincerity.

We may here mention birth control, an evil which is defended even in Christian circles by considerations of necessity and fine-sounding motives. Let us only read what is written about it in 1 Cor. vii. 5. That is what God says, and what He says is the truth. And if men say something different they speak untruth.

Then there is so-called free love. People talk about an ideal friendship between the sexes, but in the meantime the flesh is active.

We read in Hosea iv. 11, "Whoredom takes away the heart." It is put in a class with drunkenness. Moral evil, like gluttony, dulls the senses. It weakens the strength of the soul (1 Pet. ii. 11), so that one loses the true knowledge of God and also the power of distinguishing truth from falsehood.

What an evil is lewdness! It is a sin against one's own body; it destroys the soul; it blunts the conscience, it consumes its prey as the fire of the stake consumes the condemned.

After his fall, David lived as one who "waxed old through his roaring all the day long"; he felt he had no communion with God and thus was his moisture turned into the drought of summer. And yet he did not understand that the parable used by the prophet was directed against him. The fire of passion had destroyed his feelings and dulled his understanding, so that after the severe judgment pronounced against the rich man, the prophet had to say, "Thou art the man!" God used that to open his eyes, so that he returned to the light. Then his heart was broken and in true humiliation before God, he obtained full forgiveness.

We may remark that the Psalms of David, with a few exceptions, were written before his fall, and that we do not find him again fully restored to spiritual power until the end of his life.

We must notice God's ways in government with David. God's grace is great. Whoever, even after the deepest fall, returns to Him with a broken heart, finds full forgiveness and restoration to communion with Him. The fruits of the recovery are not, however, seen at once. In Ps. li. David prays for the joy of salvation and for a free spirit. These things were still absent. Then he asks that the Lord will open his lips that his mouth may show forth His praise. This was also still lacking. This we find in Ps. lii. There was in David truth in the inward parts, and God made him to know wisdom in the hidden parts. Both truth and wisdom had been lacking through his sin, and were lacking for some time after his confession of guilt. And then—the sword should not depart from his house. God let the consequences of the evil remain. Let us not say: that was so under the old covenant, it is different now. We have the same God. We call as Father on Him Who, without

respect of persons, judges according to every man's work. Therefore, our life should be holy because He is holy (1 Pet. i. 13-17). In the Epistle to the Hebrews we read, "The Lord shall judge His people," and later, "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. x. 30; xii. 29). Darby comments on this, "Not as many say: God outside of Christ, but *our* God. The expression consuming fire, shows His character in holy majesty and in a righteous judgment on evil." We read also in 1 Thess. iv. 3-8, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification; that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour . . . because the Lord is the avenger of all such." And in Heb. xiii. 4, "Whoremongers and adulterers will God judge." Such passages teach us that moral evil is not only great as sin against our own body, but very great in the eyes of *our* God.

Let us flee fornication. Flee everything connected with this evil, or which can lead to it. Flee unclean reading, unclean talk, and talk with a double meaning, anything which by words or looks can arouse this evil. Let us seek grace and strength from God, that when the enemy advances to meet us, he may not find us defenceless, but as heroes, who overcome by hasty flight! *From the Dutch.*

Heaven—10.

BEFORE taking leave of these earlier Epistles, I would notice a passage in 2 Cor. xii., which teaches as much by what it omits, as others by what they declare: "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful (or

possible) for a man to utter." What must paradise, what must heaven be, when an inspired apostle heard and witnessed there what he could not communicate to others? Men who have pretended to heavenly visions and revelations, have been lavish of their communications as to what they pretend to have seen and heard and felt. The apostle, who really had such visions and revelations, keeps total silence as to them (for anything we know) for fourteen years; and when he does speak, it is to say, that what he had seen and heard it was impossible for man to utter. What a lesson this! — that while it is all-important for us vividly and distinctly to realise what is revealed of heaven, there is that there which, when it even has been witnessed and enjoyed, cannot in human language be expressed.

Philippians shows us that what made heaven so attractive to the heart of the apostle was the presence there of Christ Himself. Does he regard it as the abode of his disembodied spirit, in case he should fall asleep prior to the Lord's return? "Having a desire to depart, *and to be with Christ;* which is far better." Such is his language. Does he look forward to the coming of Christ, and to all the glory and blessedness for which he has been apprehended of Christ Jesus? It is still the same thing—"That I may win Christ." He had seen Christ in glory: the sight so affected him that his legal righteousness, his Jewish privileges, his worldly advantages and hopes, all became to him worthless dung and dross. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him . . . that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." The Christ he *had* seen, Christ risen and glorified, is the Christ he *still* sees at the end of his path of sorrow and priva-

tion here; and to be *with* Christ and *like* Him—to possess Him—to win Christ, as he says—this was what drew him onwards with an energy that nothing could divert, that nothing could abate. "This one thing I do." "Brethren," he says, "be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example . . . For our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." No wonder that in the next chapter we find him saying, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." With the heart fully set on Christ and heaven, earthly things become, in a certain sense, all alike. Such a one as Paul could say, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." The Lord grant us to know fully this heavenly secret of contentment in any earthly lot!

Colossians treats of heaven partly as Ephesians does, and partly as Philippians. Dead with Christ, and risen with Him, the things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, are those on which our minds are to be set. It is not, however, exactly as seated together in heavenly places in Christ, that this epistle regards us. We are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, we are to appear with Him in glory. There is the unity of the body,too; for we read of "the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands has nourishment ministered, and is knit together." Still heaven itself is our hope in this epistle; it is not entirely, as in Ephesians, the church calmly seated together in heavenly places in Christ, and with Him awaiting the inheritance of all things in heaven and in earth. Here, at least in some passages in this epistle, heaven itself is the hope. But what a hope! The mystery here,

too, is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." But what a mystery! How the apostle reckons on the certainty of this hope! He gives God thanks for it on their behalf, as though they had it already in possession. Ah! he knows in whose keeping it is. "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven." What is it, beloved, that can enable us thus to reckon with certainty on this hope—giving thanks for it, as though it had been already fulfilled? *Confidence in the Testifier by Whom it has been made known to us, and in His testimony*: "The hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before *in the word* of *the truth* of *the gospel.*" Ah, yes! if heaven is to be a reality to us, we must know on whose testimony it is we look forward to it. We need something solid and certain on which to base such expectations. Could heaven or earth afford us such a basis as "the word of the truth of the gospel"?

It is in this epistle we read of "the inheritance of the saints in light"; of being presented "holy, and unblameable, and unreproveable in God's sight"; and of "receiving of the Lord the reward of the inheritance." But we must hasten on.

1 and 2 Thessalonians treat rather of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, than of the details of that to which He introduces us. It is, however, the Son of God *from heaven* for Whom we wait; "the kingdom and glory" of God to which we are called; and in that kingdom, at the coming of Christ, each will receive the reward of his own labour. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy." The grand truth revealed in the first epistle is the descent of Christ into the air, whither the changed and risen saints shall be caught up to meet Him. But what as to us ensues on this event? "So shall we ever be with the Lord." Blessed hope!—a hope of salvation indeed, which may well serve as a helmet to resist the heaviest strokes aimed

at our heads amid the conflict which intervenes. What is there of hardship and of peril that we may not risk—what that we may not dare—with the certainty "that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us; that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him"?

The ideas presented to us in the second epistle, having any bearing on the subject before us, are—the being counted worthy of the kingdom of God—rest recompensed to the troubled and persecuted saints, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven — Christ's coming "to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe"—and God's having called us by the gospel "to the obtaining of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ." I need hardly say that departed saints have *entered* into rest, even as we all shall when we rise to meet the Lord in the air. Rest will be *recompensed*—publicly *adjudged* or *awarded*—when Christ is revealed.

2nd Timothy testifies of death abolished, and "life and immortality (or incorruption) brought to light by the gospel." In it Paul speaks of enduring all things for the elect's sakes, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ, "with eternal glory." "It is a faithful saying," we are told, that "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." The apostle himself exults in prospect of "the crown of righteousness, which the Lord," says he, "the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." He thus expresses his happy confidence: "And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me to His heavenly kingdom." Such is the light, as to the future portion of the saint, afforded by this epistle.

"Hope of eternal life," and "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," are the only expressions bearing on the subject in the Epistle to Titus.

(*To be continued, D.V.*) W.T.

Seven Papers on Worship.

4.—WITH WHOM DO YOU WORSHIP?

I GENERALLY go with the Presbyterians! I like their doctrine, and there are many nice Christians amongst them.

B. But, dear brother, where do you find such a name in scripture? Where do you find a people called Presbyterians?

A. But it is only a name; people must have a name, you know, in religion; they must belong to some church or other.

B. Pardon me, my dear friend, taking a name is not such a light matter. Satan has used these names to divide Christians one from another who are members of the one body of which Christ is the Head. It is distinctly forbidden in 1 Cor. iii. 4, when the Christians were saying: "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." They are said to be carnal and to walk as men.

A. But don't people call you by some name or other? One must belong to some church in this world.

B. There is *but* one body and one Spirit, and the name of Christ is written upon that body (Eph. iv. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 12). Those who meet on the basis of that one body cannot help being called names; but if they think the name of Christ is written upon them, they cannot help rejecting such names as Plymouth Brethren, etc., lest they should dishonour *the name of Christ.* Surely that name is sufficient to hold together Christians; for the Lord Jesus said Himself, "Where two or three are gathered together unto *My name,* there am I in the midst of them." You are not ashamed of that name when you think of it in regard to your salvation. Why should not the name of Christ, the Anointed, be as sufficient for the assembly as that of the Lord Jesus is for your individual salvation?

A. Well it does seem a beautiful theory, but it

seems to me in practice to be impossible. What could we do if we had no one to preach to us?

B. Why, come together to break bread every first day of the week, as the early Christians, whether a Paul was there or not (Acts xx. 7); and if no one uttered a word, except in silence, it would honour the Lord Jesus, Who has given authority thus to come together: "For where two or three are gathered together *unto My name,* there am I in the midst of them (Matt. xviii. 20). Remember, what God wants is the adoring *worship* of your heart, which is almost unknown in a corporate sense in Christendom. Worship is His due, and if you give Him His due, He will surely respond to your need by sending the needed ministry at the right time.

A. But with whom then am I to worship? I don't see clearly yet.

B. Because you don't see that Christ and the assembly, His body, are one. That is why I have dwelt more on His person and His name, that you might see that He is the life and sufficiency of the assembly, His body, and that you might see that I am not speaking of a sect, or of anything outside Christ. But this, of course, limits me to worshipping only with those who are the members of His body; and only those are members of that body who have been baptised by the Holy Ghost into it (see 1 Cor. xii. 12). They are members, not of Presbyterians or Methodists, or of any other sect, but of the body of Christ.

A. But where do we see that body now? I own to being a member of the body of Christ, but that is invisible.

B. Its invisibility proves that the church is in ruins; for, on the day of Pentecost, we read that all who repented, and were baptised, received the gift of the Holy Ghost, to the number of three thousand souls; and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, "*and all that believed were together*" (Acts ii. 38, 42, 44). This was a visible assembly, was it

not? and expressed by breaking the one bread (1 Cor. x. 16, 17). So the apostle, addressing the assembly of God at Corinth (1 Cor. i. 2), says, "Now ye are the body of Christ" (1 Cor. xii. 27). They were all together. A letter now addressed to the assembly of God at N—— would go into the dead-letter office.

A. But then if I owned the body of Christ as an existing thing, and that it was a visible assembly, it would separate me from all I love, and from many dear Christians; for if that membership is the only membership, then all sectarian membership must be wrong.

B. It would separate you, dear brother, but you would have Christ with you, even if you were alone, and you would be in a position whence you could truly love all the children of God, because you own that membership and the Holy Ghost as the only bond between Christians.

A. But did you say the other day that all Christians were priests, and that we ought to worship owning the truth? How does that bear on the subject?

B. Yes, dear brother, all Christians are priests, and it is *as priests* we draw near to worship God. The priests were separated in the Jewish economy for the service of the sanctuary, and their office was to offer the sacrifices on the altar, and to offer incense, a beautiful type of worship (see Ex. xxviii., xxix.; 2 Chron. xiii. 10, 11). In this dispensation all Christians are washed in Christ's blood, and made kings and priests to God (Rev. i. 5, 6; 1 Peter ii. 5), and a true worship-meeting should be composed of such worshippers, and their true attraction should be Christ, the Great High Priest, Who is set down on the right hand of the Majesty in heaven (Heb. viii. 1). The one man system of Christendom has destroyed this idea of worship-meeting. It is a going back more or less to Judaism, where the people were kept afar off, and only could approach God (Who was hid behind a veil) by the priests.

A. Oh, but that is not true of Protestants; that is only true of Romanists!

B. Then why, dear brother, supposing the minister should not come, is there no service? Surely any sensible man would say that that congregation could not worship God without a minister. Is this not after all a modified form of the Roman system? Why should not the Christians be satisfied with Christ? And, besides, the majority of worshippers in the churches are composed of unconverted people who have not a purged conscience. They do not know whether their sins are forgiven.

A. What is a purged conscience?

B. Why, dear brother, that is one of the chief contrasts brought forward in Heb. ix. x., between the worshippers of Judaism and those of Christianity. The sacrifices of Judaism could never make the comers thereunto perfect (Heb. ix. 9, 10; x. 1). So being imperfect themselves, they needed constant repetition and constant applications to the worshipper. But now the blood of Christ perfectly purges the conscience from dead works to worship the living God. Christ having offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, and that sacrifice applied to the conscience perfects it for ever (Heb. ix. 13, 14; x. 12-14). The Holy Ghost then testifies, "Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more." This gives the character of the worshippers of Christianity, who are to draw near with a true heart and full assurance of faith. Such are not to forsake the assembling of themselves together, but to exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching (Heb. x. 22-25).

A. But I always applied that text to those who talked to me about leaving my church. I see now it has a totally different meaning. Oh, how blind we all are!

B. The Lord give to you, dear brother, to enjoy communion *with blood-sprinkled* worshippers, and to be content with the Great High Priest as your Centre,

the Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

The Christian Divinely Pictured.

(John xii. 1-2.)

IN chapter eleven Lazarus was dead and corrupting, and the sisters Martha and Mary broken-hearted with sorrow.

Jesus, the resurrection and the life, comes into this scene of death and sorrow, and gives *life* and *liberty* to *dead* Lazarus, and *joy* and *peace* to the sorrowing sisters. Then, in chapter twelve, they *make Him a supper.*

There is not only life, but liberty; for when Lazarus heard the voice of the Son of God and came forth, he was bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and could not see, or walk, or move at all. But when the second word reached him, "Loose him and let him go," he gets liberty.

So it is with our souls, and we have in Lazarus, the man who was dead, sitting in *a new life* and *at liberty,* supping with Jesus, a picture of the believer. Indeed, Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, taken together, make up one Christian. If Christians, we are all Lazaruses, Marthas and Marys. Martha is seen here serving, and not now, as in Luke x., cumbered with it, and careful and troubled about many things, but here it is a picture of service flowing from *life, liberty,* and *communion* with the Son of God. Mary personifies worship, also flowing from the same, and a beautiful picture it is of worship. Mary pours out on the blessed Lord's feet, what (if she had not known and loved the Lord) she would have put on her own head—given to herself —and worship, i.e., praise, thanksgiving, and adoration, is just what we all like naturally to give and get for ourselves.

When, however, we get to know and love Him, we

gladly give Him what we used to give and like to get for ourselves. We adore and thank and praise Him. We thus break the box of spikenard on Him instead of ourselves, and the Lord's Table is the place where we should specially come together to make "Him a supper," in the outside place gathered to His blessed name, like the little group at Bethany which was outside Jerusalem and all the Temple worship there.

But we must not think to find a box of spikenard all ready to hand because we have come to the Lord's Table on the first day of the week. Just as Mary's box of spikenard cost her something (it was very costly), so it will cost us something to have a box of spikenard to pour out upon Him. It will cost watchfulness, prayerfulness and self-denial during the week in order to keep near the Lord and walk with Him, else on Lord's Day there will be no spikenard to give to Him—no worship in us.

"And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." God smells a sweet smell when we make much of His dear Son; when we pour out on Him our adoration, praises and thanksgiving as we remember Him together. Men, and even Christians like the disciples (carried away by the "good words and fair speeches" of a Judas), call this waste, waste of time, etc., getting together for a whole hour or more and spending it all in making much of God's Son, but doing nothing for man. But though service, too, is all right in its place, as in Martha, and will not be neglected if we are in communion with the Lord, yet the highest thing of all is to make much of, to adore, God's dear Son, giving praise, thanksgiving and adoration to Him.

But there is another point in this picture: we not only have worship and service flowing from life, liberty and communion with the Lord; we have testimony, too. The man with a new life in communion with the Son of God is a *testimony* (see verses 9, 10, 11). Much people of the Jews came not only to see Jesus but Lazarus also, whom He had raised from the

dead, and many of them went away and believed on Jesus, from just seeing the man with a new life, sitting, feeding with Jesus. This draws out the jealousy and opposition of the chief priests, who consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death, because that, by reason of him, many went away and believed on Jesus.

How blessed to know that if we are only going on in communion with the Lord, people will be attracted by it, and some of them will go away and believe on Jesus, too, through God's grace using those who have a new life and liberty from the Son of God, and are in communion with Him. And it is not here direct service, such as preaching and talking to people, at least we do not know that Lazarus preached to anybody, blessed as that is, but the new life being manifested and so soon in the ways, manners, business, everything, that others are led to think of and to believe in Jesus, too. This draws down religious opposition and the religious leaders try and kill the testimony.

J.N.D.

"Too big for God to use me"!
O Lord, forgive my sin,
And let the pride that hinders
Be taken from within.
So much of self in service
The blessing cannot come;
And thus the work is useless
Which I had thought well done.

"Too big for God to use me"!
May I this lesson learn
That eloquent orations
No soul to Christ will turn;
The people praise the learning,
The fluent pleasant speech,
Its poetry and pathos,
But these no heart will reach.

19

Nothing Like Him.

"THE value of revelation, of the word, increases for me daily, in a manner that I know not how to express. What a precious thing to have God revealed in Christ! How the Person of Christ stands out alone against the background of the scene of this world, to attract our gaze, and associate us in heart with God. In this respect the commencement of the Gospel of John has been of much blessing to me of late. Christ is unfolded there in so complete a manner! He gathers around Himself; He must be God, otherwise He would be turning us away from Him. He says 'Follow Me.' He is the Man who makes the way, the only way across the desert; for, for man there is none, since he is separated from God. On the Man Christ heaven is open; He is, as Man, the object of heaven, and of the service of the angels of God. John (a beautiful example of the absence of all selfishness and of all self-regard) receives a testimony from above, but he speaks of that which is earthly. Now that is but a testimony; but He who *came* from above bears witness of what He has seen, and *in Himself He reveals heaven.* He gives—He is—the eternal life, in order that we may enjoy it. What a thing to say—that heaven, its nature, its joys, what it is should be revealed to us by the word and *by the presence of Him* Who dwells there, Who is its centre and glory! Now, without doubt, man has entered into heaven, but it is none the less precious that God should have come down to earth. Man admitted into heaven is the subject of Paul; God, and the life manifested upon earth, that of John. The one is heavenly, as to man, the other divine. This is why John has such attractions for the heart. There is nothing like *Him.* J.N.D.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."—1 John v. 4.

Jesus.

(Rev. ii. 28.)

O NAME, the psalm and the music
That fills the heavenly place—
O Name, by which there I enter
And see Thee face to face—

O Name, that art here the music,
And here the sweetness and song,
Though the sea and the waves are roaring,
And though the night is long.

The night—but a night of glory,
For there in the heavens I see
The Morning Star in its brightness,
Thy gift of love to me.

I have the pledge of the dawning,
The glow of the golden Day,
For Thou, O my Lord, hast arisen,
The Guide Star of my way.

The light of the Star outshining
The myriad suns is mine—
Oh, sure is the glorious morning,
The morn of joy divine;

Of joy and of gladness and singing,
When deep unto deep shall call;
The sweetness shall answer the sorrow,
The vinegar and the gall;

The depth of the glorious music,
The depth of the bitter cry
Of Him in the darkness abandoned,
Unsolaced, alone, to die.

To the blackness of darkness shall answer
The light as a jasper stone,
The rainbow of glory encircling
Christ on His radiant throne.

C. P. C.

Etienne De Grellet's Conversion.

ETIENNE DE GRELLET, known more commonly as Stephen Grellet, was born in 1773, of Roman Catholic parents, who ranked high amongst the French nobility. His early life was passed in the midst of wealth and luxury.

Yet, while only a little boy of five or six years old, the God Who spoke to Samuel spoke to his infant heart. He tells us that, having a hard Latin exercise, beyond his power to master, he felt quite discouraged; but looking alone from his room on the glories of creation, the thought occurred to him, "Cannot the same God Who created all these wonders give me memory too?" He knelt down at the foot of his bed and poured out his difficulty, receiving immediately the power he needed. The opening words of the prayer our Lord taught His disciples, "*Our Father*, Which art in heaven," touched his young heart; but he had none at home to water the good seed, and though from time to time during his residence at college his religious impressions were renewed, it was for a time like the seed sown by the wayside, which was devoured by the fowls of the air. "I soon lost my religious convictions," he writes, "after I had returned to my father's house. I sought after happiness in the world's delight. I expected to find it. I went in pursuit of it from one party of pleasure to another; but I did *not* find it, and I wondered that the name of pleasure could be given to anything of the kind."

The truth was, that the Holy Spirit had revealed truths to his soul which, though "trodden under foot," could never be crushed out. He had taught him that none can forgive sins but God alone. He had shown him that unless he experienced "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" he could have no part in the dear Son of God. And he remarks, "I had never heard of such things before, and I greatly wondered that, having been baptised with water, and having also received what they call the sacrament of confirmation, I should have to pass through such a purification. At a very early age I learnt that neither priests nor bishops could do the work for me."

But the great change had not yet passed over Grellet, and a time of thick darkness, politically in the land, and also in his own soul, was to intervene before the light overspread his horizon "as a morning without cloud."

Before he was sixteen the stormy period of the French Revolution set in. Etienne and his brothers joined the Royalist party, to which they were allied, if not by blood, yet by friendship and position.

Recurring to this time, he says: "I shudder when I remember the state of insensibility I was in. I was not the least moved when surrounded by people and soldiers, who lavished their abuses upon us and threatened to hang me to the lamp-post. I concluded to wait and see what they would do, and resolved, after destroying as many of them as I could with my pistols to reserve the last shot for myself. No thought of eternity was then before me—no sense or remembrance that there is a God!"

Etienne was in the king's Horse Guards, and was present in many engagements. At one time he and his brothers were made prisoners of war, and momentarily expected to be shot; but some sudden commotion in the hostile army gave them the opportunity to escape, and they fled to Holland, and subsequently two of them—Etienne and Joseph—went to Demerara.

It might almost be said that he had left one infidel land for another, for he says: "I do not recollect, during the whole time I was there, that I saw anything in anyone that indicated a feeling of religious sensibility. There was no place of worship, no priest of any kind, except one who had been there but a few years, who was a dissolute, drunken man. It was of the Lord's mercy that I and the whole land were not destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. At that time the Prince of the power of the air, who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, had obtained such a victory over me that I had become one of the number of those infatuated ones who call good evil and evil good, darkness light and light darkness, to so daring a pitch as to say, 'There is no God!' I had become a complete disciple of Voltaire and of writers of that class."

After a stay of two years in this demoralised city, Etienne

and his brother, in consequence of a report of threatened danger, hastily took passage for New York, and after a voyage of imminent peril, reached their destination safely.

We are now upon the verge of the turning point in the young Frenchman's career, which took place soon after, when he was about twenty-two years of age, and we pause as if treading on hallowed ground. The words of the great apostle fitly describe his experience: "God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

We give the memorable account of his conversion, with some abbreviation, in his own words:

"One evening, as I was walking in the fields alone, not being in the least excited by anything I had heard or thought of, I was suddenly arrested by what seemed to be an awful voice proclaiming the words, 'Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!'

"It reached my very soul—my whole man shook—it brought me like Saul of Tarsus to the ground. The great depravity and sinfulness of my heart were set open before me, and the gulf of everlasting destruction to which I was verging. I was made bitterly to cry out, 'If there is no God, doubtless there is a hell!' I found myself as if in the midst of it. For a long time it seemed as if the thundering proclamation were yet heard.

"After that I remained almost whole days and nights exercised in prayer that the Lord would have mercy upon me, expecting that He would give me some evidence that He heard my supplication. At that time I began to read the Bible with the aid of my dictionary, for I had none then in French. I was much of a stranger to the inspired records. I had not even seen them before that I remember. What I had heard of any part of their contents was only detached portions in prayer-books.

Stephen Grellet (for he went by that name in English-speaking countries) then relates how he was brought into contact with some of the Society of Friends through whose instrumentality the serious impressions made upon his

heart were deepened. He says : "I was like Lydia—my heart was opened : I felt the power of Him Who had the key of David. Oh, what sweetness did I then feel ! It was indeed a memorable day. I was like one introduced into a new world : the creation and all things around me bore a different aspect—my heart glowed with love to all.. . . . I have been as one plucked from the burning—rescued from the brink of a horrible pit. Oh, how can the extent of the Lord's love, mercy, pity, and compassion be fathomed ! "

But he had yet deeper experiences of his sinfulness and of the fulness of salvation in Christ to be brought through. Sitting one day in a meeting for worship he writes : "Very soon after sitting down great was the awfulness and the reverence that came over me. It was succeeded by such a view and sense of my sinful life that I was like one crushed under the millstones. My misery was great ; my cry was not unlike that of Isaiah, '*Woe is me, for I am undone!*' The nearer I was then favoured to approach to Him Who dwelleth in the light the more I saw my uncleanness and my wretchedness. But how can I set forth the fulness of heavenly joy that filled me when the hope was again raised that there was One, even He Whom I had pierced, Jesus Christ the Redeemer, that was able to save me ? I saw Him to be the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world ; Who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification ; Who is our propitiatory sacrifice, our Advocate with the Father, our Intercessor with God. I felt faith in His atoning blood quickening my soul, giving me to believe that it was He Who could wash me from my many pollutions, and deliver me from death and destruction, which I felt to be my just desert for my many sins and transgressions.

"On my earnest petition being put up to Him, the language was proclaimed : 'Thy sins are forgiven, thy iniquities are pardoned.' Floods of tears of joy and gratitude gave vent to the fulness of my heart ! Then I thought I heard a sweet voice saying, 'Proclaim unto others what the Lord hath done for thy soul.' " M.E.B.

Notes of an Address on Lord's Day, 3rd March, 1917.

(The Scriptures read were John xvii. and Heb. i.)

LET us consider these two chapters, not only as to the contents of each chapter by itself, but also in their combination. Taken together thus, they are very instructive. Let us ever remember and value increasingly the gospel which God has sent to us of the Gentiles. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, describes his mission in this twofold way: he preached on the one hand "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures and that he was buried and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). He also states that he was sent to "preach (the word means, preach as gospel) among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. iii. 8), or, as he says, in another place, that it pleased God "to reveal His Son in me that I should preach (same word) Him among the Gentiles" (Gal. i. 16). That is, the gospel which has come to us is concerning God's Son, both as to His Person and His work. Blessed indeed it is to be told of His work and its result, but blessed also, yea exceeding precious, to be told of the glories of His Person.

And these two chapters shine out divinely, and therefore perfectly, the effulgence of His glory: each from a different aspect, but each bringing before us the same Person and both forming together an harmonious whole. Hebrews i. declaring to be God—God the Son—Who became Man, not surrendering His Godhead, but God manifested in flesh; yet, when man and because man, having those with Him who are His fellows. John xvii. shows Him in His personal relationship as Son of the Father and in the glory of that relationship as one with the Father: a relationship which was before the foundation of the world, and which, as to the love of it and glory of it, was in no wise changed, when He was found in fashion as man in the world. And as in Hebrews the Man of Whom God is mindful and the Son of Man Whom He visits has His fellows, so in John

the Son has those whom the Father has given Him, and in whom He has been glorified.

Let us trace a little His varied glories in these two chapters read : The Man of God's purpose and the Son of the Father's love : both shining out in Him when manifested in flesh, for it was only thus that the glory could be seen (Heb. i. 3, and Jno. i. 14). Precious are these glories which give us the knowledge of Himself in answer to the question : Who is this Son of man ? as well as the knowledge of Him that is true Whom He came to reveal (1 Jno. v. 20) and Whom we know now as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews i. begins with the important truth that God has spoken to us Himself and direct in the person of God the Son. He is the Creator-God Who made the worlds and is consequently the purposed Heir of all. He is the Preserver-God, upholding all, not destroying. And when all was defiled by sin, He shows Himself to be the Redeemer-God, making *by Himself* (i.e., alone and efficaciously) purgation for sins. He is the Victor-God, Who has sat down (i.e., in His own right) on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Thus we have in verses 1-3 His divine glories ; God the Son with titles and attributes which acclaim His divinity, yet with distinction from the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is the Creator of the Universe, its Sustainer and Redeemer on the one hand ; and on the other hand the Revealer-God. He is God manifest, God seen and heard after a personal sort, which is not stated of the Father nor of the Holy Spirit.

And He Who is God, to become a Revealer and Redeemer became in time Man, and as such takes His place in the scene of His own creation. Clearly His place as Man must be unique : angels excel in power, but *He* is made better than the angels. And God has taken care to mark out the uniqueness of Him as Man. At His birth God said : "Thou art My Son ; this day have I begotten Thee." Throughout His life He lived with God and for God, He was God's delight as expressed by God's testimony : "I will be to Him a Father, He shall be to Me a Son." And so He is marked out in resurrection to be Son of God with power.

And when He shall come again to enter into possession as the appointed Heir, and God brings Him again into the world, His fiat is: "Let all the angels of God worship Him." And having assumed His place, as Man in authority over all creation, God predicates *His* government to be without failure: "Thy throne is for ever and ever, etc." Lastly, when the true state of creation shall end, when heavens shall be folded up and earth be changed, when the eternal state and God's day shall begin (cf. 2 Pet. iii. 12; Rev. xx. 11; xxi. 1) God's word as to Him is: "Thou art the same and Thy years fail not." Thus we are led through the whole history of Him as Man: from birth through life and resurrection, His return and reign on to eternity. He never ceases to be God, but having once assumed manhood He never gives it up. This is emphatically declared in the last testimony of His wonderful history: "Thou, *Jehovah*, in the beginning, etc. Thou art the same and *Thy years* (i.e., as Man) shall not fail." And the God Who thus testifies of Him again and again in this chapter is the God of *our Lord* Jesus Christ.

In John xvii. He is the same, though presented to us in another view and with another glory: not as the Man of God's purpose, set over all the works of His hands, but as the Son of the Father's love: with authority indeed over all flesh, but in order that He might give eternal life. He is the Son of the Father, and as such speaks of a glory with the Father as of a love of the Father—both before the foundation of the world, vv. 5, 24. He is seen on earth as Son of man, but even so He is the One Who is in heaven, and speaks, though on earth, "Where I *am*" (not, shall be) (v. 24, cf. ch. xiv. 4; cf. also ch. iii. 13). Sent into the world, He is seen not as Heir of all things as in Hebrews, but glorifying the Father and finishing the work given Him by the Father to do. The things given to Him are the things from the Father (v. 7) to be enjoyed in communion with the Father: "For they are Thine, and all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine." The end of the story in Hebrews presents Him as supreme over all the works of His hands; in John shows Him in the glory with the Father, as He said: "Now I come to Thee."

And, oh ! the wonders of the grace ! In whatever view we see Him, we are found with Him : whether as those given to Him of the Father (in John) or as His fellows (in Hebrews), for in every aspect of Him we are called unto the fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ : His Father is our Father and His God is our God.

May God grant as the effect of this gospel of the unsearchable riches of Christ which is preached among us the Gentiles :

"That Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, being rooted and grounded in love." O.H.

(*Transcribed by the speaker for the help of some very deaf and aged persons.*)

Heaven—II.

PASSING by Philemon, we come to the Epistle to the Hebrews, on which we may well bestow a more lengthened notice. The expression, "heavenly calling," occurs but once in Scripture ; and it is in this Epistle that it is found. But first let us see how the subject is introduced. God has spoken at sundry times and in divers manners to the fathers by the prophets ; but in these last days He hath spoken to us by His Son. Thus we have at the outset a Divine, heavenly Messenger : this Messenger is He "Whom He (God) hath appointed Heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds ; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power." Such are the titles and acts and dignities of the One by Whom God hath in these last days spoken to us. But He has fulfilled a work, and taken a place, for man, as well as brought a message from God. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Thus is He a heavenly Priest, as well as a heavenly Messenger ; and it is in these two characters He is presented to us throughout this Epistle. His Godhead, His Sonship, His glory as Creator, His eternity, and His session at the right hand of the Majesty on high, are further dwelt upon in chapter i., and His

superiority in all these respects to angels, the most exalted of God's creatures, solemnly pointed out. We are *therefore* to give the more earnest heed. The law had been given by the ministry or disposition of angels (compare Acts vii. 53 and Ps. lxviii. 17), and escape was impossible for the transgressor. "How then shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation," spoken at first, not by angels, but by the Lord, "and confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also attesting their word by signs and wonders, with miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost?" Such is the commencement of chap. ii.; and here ends the opening argument of the apostle.

But the contrast between Christ and angels very naturally introduces another subject, viz., that the world to come—that is, the millennial earth—is not subjected to angels, but to man; *i.e.*, to Christ, and to others of the human family associated with Him in this dignity. To associate us thus with Himself, He to Whom all those glories belong which are enumerated in chap. i., and by which He is so infinitely exalted above the angels, had to be "made a little lower than the angels," that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man. The fact was, that both the inheritance and the predestinated co-heirs were, by the just judgment of God against sin, under the power of the adversary and usurper, who had the power of death. To possess Himself of the inheritance, and associate the co-heirs with Himself in the enjoyment of it, Christ had to endure atoningly the judgment of God against sin, and He had thus to encounter and overcome the adversary. Thus He sustains the characters not only of Priest and Messenger—inasmuch as a messenger may be sent to do a work, as well as to deliver a communication. Thus Joshua, who victoriously led Israel into Canaan, was an apostle or messenger as well as Moses, who delivered to them the law; indeed, Moses himself conducted them out of Egypt and through the desert, as well as gave them the laws and ordinances with which he had been charged. Hence Christ is only spoken of as Apostle and High Priest—Aaron being His type as the latter, Moses and Joshua as the former. How affecting the testimony in chap. ii!—"For

it became Him, for Whom are all things, and by Whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Nor is it only as Captain of our salvation He has thus been made perfect through sufferings, but as High Priest also. "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." Such is the doctrine of chap. ii.

It is at the commencement of chap. iii. that the inference is drawn from all that has preceded it. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." Brethren of Christ, and holy brethren too! Yes, holy brethren! "for both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." It is not because Christ partook of our nature that this is said, but because He has in resurrection made us partakers of His. It is not the unity of the body here, as in Ephesians and Colossians: it is family unity—Christ the Son of God owning as His brethren the many sons of God through grace made partakers of His nature, and by Him, the Captain of their salvation, brought through suffering triumphantly to glory. Holy brethren, called of God their Father, speaking to them by His Son from heaven, to find in heaven their present place of worship, where their High Priest is—and their future home and dwelling-place, whither the Forerunner hath for them entered, and whither He will not fail to conduct them at the close of their present sojourn in the wilderness. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." It is in considering Him, we shall learn both what our calling is, and what the spirit and walk suited to it while here below.

It must already have been evident, that in this Epistle heaven is set forth under two typical representations—the land of Canaan, in which case our entrance is by traversing

the wilderness—and the Jewish sanctuary, and then our access is by sacrifice and priesthood. Chapters iii. and iv. down to verse 13, are occupied with the former, as well as part of chap. vi. The rest of the Epistle, to verse 22 of chap. x., is occupied with the latter; the part that still remains being a diverse practical application and use of both.

In respect to both these representations of heaven, and the corresponding types of our Lord Jesus Christ—viz., Moses, Joshua and Aaron—the instruction conveyed is quite as much by way of contrast as comparison, or even more. Moses was faithful in all God's house as a servant—Christ as a Son over His house. Joshua did not give them rest; for then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. In Israel's passage from Egypt to Canaan, there was no anticipative entrance of the commander while the congregation was yet toiling in the wilderness. Here we see Jesus crowned with glory and honour, while as yet all things are not seen to be put under Him: and in chap. vi. we read of the "hope which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." The grand lesson in all this part of the Epistle is, "that we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." Those whose carcases fell in the wilderness, perished because they had no better thoughts of God than that He would bring His redeemed nation out of Egypt, without bringing them safely into the land of promise. Those who were actually brought in were Joshua and Caleb, who assuredly trusted God to bring them in, and the little ones that the unbelievers said should be a prey. God grant us to know His ways, beloved, as to connect thus, by faith, redemption out of Egypt and entrance into the land! Unbelief forfeits, as in the case of Esau, the blessing, the birthright title which it profanely despises; it brings upon itself the destruction it dishonours God by anticipating. May we learn the solemn, salutary lesson, as well as feel the full comfort of the assurance that there "remaineth a rest for the people of God"! Into that rest we are in the act of entering. Just

as Israel's whole passage across the desert might be said to be their entering into Canaan, so is our entire course, from the reception of the good tidings, to our actual participation in the rest which remains. "For we which have believed do enter (rather, are entering) into rest." "For unto us was the gospel (or, good tidings) preached, as well as unto them." What were these tidings preached to the Israelites? Not, surely, that God would bring His people out of Egypt to let them perish ; no, but that He would bring them into the land promised to their fathers. And God did bring them in. Caleb and Joshua, who believed the good tidings, were brought in : the little ones, as we have seen, were also, when they had grown up, put in possession of the land. None fell but those who cared so little for the land, and had such unworthy thoughts of God—who, in short, so disbelieved His word and distrusted Him, as, in utter and sullen despair, to refuse to go up into the land. What are the good tidings preached to us ? That God has redeemed us to Himself, by the precious blood of Christ, to let us perish by the way ? No, surely ; but that we may enter into His rest, and be in His presence in glory for ever. Well, then, we who have believed are entering into rest. God, in His grace, has called us. We, through grace, have heard the call, responded to it, and are on our way, through toils, and hardships, and conflicts, and sorrows, to the "rest which remaineth for the people of God." "Let us labour, therefore, to enter into that rest." Never let us despond. Never let us grow weary. Never let us think the way too long, the trial too great, or the result uncertain. It was Caleb's undoubting certainty of entering and possessing the land, that supported him through all the forty years he had to wander in the wilderness with his unbelieving brethren. It was this gave him courage, at fourscore years and five, to encounter and to vanquish the tall sons of Anak, and to take possession of the very fortress which, five-and-forty years before, was assigned to him by Moses. Let us, in like confidence, and with like constancy, labour to enter into that rest, of which the earthly Canaan was but a feeble and imperfect type. W.T.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

33

Safety in Flight—3.

FLEE YOUTHFUL LUSTS

WHEN Paul, arriving at Lystra for the second time, came to know of Timothy there, the latter must have been very young. Years later, Paul wrote about his youth (1 Tim. iv. 12). But he was not, when Paul first met him, too young to have already given a good testimony by his walk to the brethren at Lystra and Iconium and also he was of an age that Paul could take him with him as a help to serve him in the gospel. Some years later, Paul could write to the Corinthians, "He worketh the work of the Lord, even as I also do" (1 Cor. xvi. 10). No one must despise him for his youth. There was a danger of that especially among the Greeks. They preferred teachers who commanded respect by their years and appearance. Timothy was, in contrast with such teachers, very young and might easily have been looked down upon with contempt.

But when Paul wrote to Timothy in his first letter about his youth, he was no longer so young as one might think. At least twelve years had elapsed since he had been called to the Lord's work. Paul wrote the second letter to Timothy some years later. We may therefore certainly assume that he was then not far from forty years old. His first youth lay far behind him and he was reaching the meridian of life And yet Paul warns him against the lusts of youth, and even admonishes him to *flee* from them.

Not long ago it was pointed out in this magazine that when it speaks of youthful lusts in 2 Tim. ii. 22, we ought not at once to think of moral evil. The Scripture also speaks of the trespasses and sins of youth, and we must certainly reckon moral evil amongst these sins. Alas, how often it is found among the young. But the lusts of youth also include all that youth yearns for and that it seeks after: spiritual independence, taking special interest in all that professes to be novel and unknown; liking to join in disputes and contention about doctrine; desire for honour and renown; desire to exhibit knowledge and such like. All this is included in youthful lusts. We see especially in

these days that the followers of those who bring something new and seek change are found among the young.

There is a great spiritual danger here for believers. Youth is the time when one has to take an independent place in social life, and it is so easy to wish to do the same in spiritual things. This leads to *independence*.

Further, youth stands for the expression of freedom and happiness. This easily leads to thoughtlessness. We like to walk in the ways of our heart and in the sight of our eyes. The Scripture says this is good, but . . . know thou that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment. This keeps us from heedlessness, into which the desires of the young heart so easily lead. For want of experience, the ideas of parents or of brethren who have gone before, are often called old-fashioned by the young; they want to remove the landmarks made by the fathers and to take a broader view, because the old is too narrow. All these things are very dangerous and may easily make us unfit for the Lord's service.

The second epistle to Timothy is a prophetic epistle. What Christendom has become through the unfaithfulness of the assembly is there described to us.

The portion in 2 Timothy ii. 19-22 is well known to us. In the midst of the ruin, it teaches us, we are to cleanse ourselves from vessels to dishonour, from unbelievers, but also from those who bring wrong doctrines and practices. Then the Master will be able to use us in His service as prepared unto every good work. In 2 Tim. iii. 17 we read "throughly furnished unto all good works." Then we can fight for the truth of God. Throughly furnished with the instructions of Scripture and formed by them, the man of God can fight for the truth in a way that is well-pleasing to God, both offensive and defensive. Here we are seen as vessels in the Master's service, and He can use us to every good work when we have purged ourselves. And if we wish to remain fit for this service, we must flee youthful lusts and unite ourselves with all who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

This warning is not only for young brethren and sisters. These lusts are a great danger to older people and if a man

like Timothy, who followed in the steps of Paul in faith and fellowship (Phil. ii. 20) had to get this warning from an inspired writer, every worker in the Lord's service ought especially to take the word to heart and to *flee* youthful lusts.

Many a one who once embraced the truth with youthful fire, has later been lost to the truth through striving for independence or other youthful lusts. Many a gifted brother has come to grief in this way.

Let us all hearken to the warning and flee these lusts, so that fleeing from the danger we may follow after righteousness, faith, charity, peace with those that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

To follow after righteousness, is not to require righteousness in others, but rather to practise righteousness one's self in everything, going on the way in the confidence of faith, exercising love towards all; love which gives and gives and asks nothing.

And then, following after peace as we read in Hebrews xii. 14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." No peace, therefore, at the expense of holiness, of separation to God, but a peace which often goes hand in hand with sacrifice of one's own interests and desires.

How important all this is! We cannot emphasise it too much. The danger of yielding is too great. If this were not so we should not read "Flee!" Let us flee from all these dangers and follow after the things that are of God. In Him there is grace to keep in the greatest danger. He will ever keep us. But ours is the responsibility to hearken and in the consciousness of our own helplessness to seek grace from Him to stand in the hour of temptation and even, if necessary, to show His power in us by a hasty flight.

From the Dutch.

"Christ revealed God and blessed man, and this not bv glossing over his state and sins but by suffering for them on the cross, so that God was glorified as much about evil in His death as about good in His life. He was thus made unto us wisdom from God. Not merely was the world's wisdom flesh's wisdom set aside, but God's wisdom shewn and given us in Him."

Seven Papers on Worship.

5. WHAT IS YOUR PLACE OF WORSHIP?

ISRAEL'S place of worship was the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the temple in Jerusalem.

The Christian's place of worship is heaven, into which Christ has passed, and of which the holy places of the tabernacle were faint pictures (see Heb. ix. 23, 24). But the shadows and figures are beautiful; they are often God's picture-books for His young children, to instruct them in His truth.

Let us look, then, for one moment at Israel's history. It was not till they were redeemed out of Egypt, and brought to God at Mount Sinai, that the tabernacle—their place of worship—was set up. Has this no lesson for us, dear young Christian? Does not this at once shut out from the worship of God all, except those who are brought to God?

But there were three great steps in Israel's history before their place of worship was set up. What were they? First, they were set right with God (Exod. xii.), and saved from the judgment of the Egyptian first-born, by the blood of the Passover lamb.

Secondly, they were delivered from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, by the passage of the Red Sea, and sung the song of redemption and salvation outside Egypt (Exod. xiv., xv.).

Thirdly, they were brought to God at Mount Sinai (Ex. xix. 4).

Are not these wondrous types of God's dealing with your soul?

First. As a needy, ungodly sinner, you found the value of the blood of the Lamb slain, and were justified by His blood (Rom. iv. 5; v. 6-9).

Second. You found that your greatest enemy was an evil principle of sin within you, and which pursued you, as it were, after you were justified, till you found deliverance from sin, the world and Satan, by the death and resurrection of Christ. Now as having died with Christ, and Christ living in you, you sing the song of salvation outside the world (Rom. v. 12—viii. 39).

Third. You have found that Christ died, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring you to God (1 Peter iii. 18). You stand now in God's presence without fear, because in a new creation (2 Cor. v. 17), in the light as God is in the light (1 John i. 7). You are not come, however, to a mount burning with fire, etc., as Mount Sinai was ; but to a God of grace, of which Mount Sion is a picture (Heb. xii. 18-24). Neither are you come to Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, holding the tables of the law in his hand, requiring from you what you ought to do, under the penalty of death, but you are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, Who has fulfilled in Himself all demands of the law, died to it in His death, and has taken His seat in the glory, the Mediator of a new covenant entirely of grace, the High Priest of the Sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord has pitched, and not man.

Now, dear young Christian, God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but in heaven itself, as Stephen told the Jews. There is your place of worship. There the Great High Priest, the centre of Christian worship, ministers. There is your sanctuary and the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

This place of worship (Heb. ix. 11, 24) is put in direct contrast to the Jewish tabernacle (Heb. ix. 1, 2), of which it is said, "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made," divided into two parts : the outer tabernacle was called the holy place, and the inner chamber the holiest of all. Inside this inner chamber Jehovah's presence was manifested, and a veil shut Him in. No one could approach but Aaron, the high priest, and that only once a year, with blood and a cloud of incense. Outside the tabernacle was the brazen altar, on which the daily sacrifices were offered up, in view of all the people. But these applied to the conscience could not satisfy or cleanse it. Under the law, dear young Christian, there was no approach to God, no perfect conscience (Heb. ix. 6-9).

Still, what a beautiful figure of the way in which the

Christian approaches God. The first step is to the altar, but that altar signifies Christ's death, which is the step out of Judaism, and all worldly religion suited to the flesh (the camp was a type of this); for He was put to death outside the gate of Jerusalem. But then we enter by Christ into the true tabernacle (Heb. xiii. 10-15). The veil is rent by His death, we enter in by Christ Himself, and our place is in the holiest by virtue of that same blood (Heb. ix. 24; x. 19), with a perfect conscience cleansed from all sin. Dear young Christian, what beauties do you now see in Christ? Outside, the tabernacle looked plain with its badger's skin covering, but inside all was gold (see Ex. xxv., xxvi.) To the sinner outside there is no beauty in Christ. He is despised and rejected of men; but to the worshipper inside, oh, what glories do we see in His person, the Son of God, the Creator of the worlds, yet the perfect Man Who has opened up for us this place in the very presence of God!

It is related of the Queen of Sheba (2 Chron. ix. 1-9), that when she had seen the wisdom of Solomon, and the house he had built, and the meat at his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel; his cup-bearers also, and their apparel; and his ascent, by which he went up into the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit left within her. In the light of the glory of Solomon, all that she was became nothing; and immediately her tongue was loosed to praise Solomon, and to praise the God of Solomon.

Dear young Christian, the way to have the spirit of worship is to be so in communion with the Lord's death, as the fruit of coming into the presence of God, that, nature being in the place of judgment, the life of Jesus may flow out in worship, adoration, and praise. If consciously dwelling and walking in the light of God's presence, this will be so. And this is your place of worship.

In Heb. x. the altar and the tabernacle are again reproduced: Christ's death setting aside the old altar and sacrifices of Judaism, and the heavenly sanctuary setting aside the earthly one. Our title to go in the presence of God is the blood of Jesus; our way is the Lord Jesus Himself through the rent veil; that is to say, His flesh;

our Centre of worship, when inside, the Lord Jesus Himself, the High Priest over the House of God (verses 19-21).

The blood, applied to us, causes the heart to be sprinkled from an evil conscience as regards *our sins*; Christ's flesh (or the veil rent), applied to us, causes our bodies to be washed with pure water (verse 22). We have died to *sin*, and we approach God in a new nature by the power of the Spirit; and knowing we have a Great High Priest Who is soon coming out to bless us, we hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering (Heb. x. 19-25). There, as brought outside the religious world or camp by the death of Christ, yet brought into the holiest of all, by Him let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name (Heb. xiii. 10-15).

Let us there anticipate the worship of heaven as pictured to us in Rev. iv., v., and there in company with the four living creatures and four-and-twenty elders, with the angels, and every living creature in heaven and earth, fall down and worship Him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb, and say, "Thou art worthy." Let us own Christ as the alone Centre of worship, and sing together the new song, the peculiar portion of the redeemed, saying "Thou art worthy: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign over the earth."

"The veil is rent—our souls draw near
  Unto a throne of grace;
The merits of the Lord appear,
  They fill the holy place.

"His precious blood has spoken there,
  Before and on the throne;
And His own wounds in heaven declare
  The atoning work is done.

"Within the holiest of all,
  Cleansed by His precious blood,
Before the throne we prostrate fall,
  And worship Thee, O God!"

"To Whom Shall We Go?"

WE long for more light and more wisdom ;
But, Master, to whom shall we go ?
Shall we seek the worn gods of the pagans,
Who see not, and hear not, nor know ?
The spoil of the poor in their houses
Grows rusty with blood and with tears,
And their chambers of pitiless silence
Are built on the wrongs of the years.

Shall we eat of the new Tree of Knowledge ?—
"No evil, no pain—all is good ;
No sin and no Saviour for sinners,
No need of the cross and the blood."
Nay, nay ; the old serpent, beguiling,
Tells over once more the old lie ;
"Eat of this and your eyes shall be opened ;
As gods ye shall live, and not die."

Men tear the old faith into fragments,
And build on the truth they deny,
Strange towers of fancy and fable,
And deem they can mount to the sky.
Away with "New Thought" and "New Knowledge"
That voice the old lies of the past ;
That only perplex and bewilder,
To leave us in doubt at the last.

To Thee, the Life-Bringer, Life-Giver,—
To Thee, the one Truth, the one Way,
The one Light that lightens our darkness,
The one God Who hears when we pray ;
Who looseth the chains of the captives,
And setteth the prisoners free ;
Lord Jesus, Thou Son of the Father,
To whom shall we go, but to Thee ?

A.J.F.

Heaven—12.

HEAVEN, as our present place of worship, in contrast with the earthly Jewish tabernacle, is perhaps even a more prominent subject in this epistle than the one just glanced at. But though heaven, with the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ, be contrasted with the Jewish tabernacle, and its sacrifices, and priesthood, the latter are distinctly declared to have been types or figures of the former. "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for see, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices." "While as the first tabernacle was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present." The Jewish tabernacle, with its services, sacrifices and priesthood, is thus at once a figure to illustrate and a foil to set off by way of contrast, the heavenly realities into which we are introduced. We have then a sacrifice which has once and for ever taken away sin; which has purged the conscience and made the repetition of it equally unnecessary and impossible. We have a great High-Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. He was not self-ordained to this office, glorious as He is in His person, in Himself. He glorified not Himself to be made an high-priest; but He that said unto Him, "Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee." Called of God a High-Priest after the order of Melchisedec, He is *really* what Melchisedec was *mystically*, and *according to the import of his name.* Melchisedec's name being interpreted, means king of righteousness and king of Salem, or king of peace. Our High-Priest is really this—not yet manifested as such, indeed—but not the less really so. Melchisedec was *mystically*, as to what is recorded of him and his priesthood in scripture, without father, without

mother, without pedigree, having neither beginning of days nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually. But He to Whom Melchisedec was made like is a Priest and is actually, in His own person and priesthood, all that the other thus mystically represented. He has no successor in His priesthood as Aaron had, and each of his descendants, but is made priest, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. They were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but Christ, because He continueth ever, hath an untransferable priesthood and is able to save evermore them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Such a High-Priest became us, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He needs not daily, as they, to offer sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's; for this He did once when He offered up Himself. Those high-priests were men who had infirmities; this One, made Priest by the word of the oath, is the Son, consecrated for evermore.

When the apostle has proceeded thus far with his subject, he pauses to sum up what has been stated. Let us hear his summary:—

"Now, of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a High-Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." He goes on to show how His is a more excellent ministry, He being the Mediator of a better covenant, established on better promises. Then he returns to his summary, speaking of the worldly sanctuary, with its ordinances of divine service. The first tabernacle, with its candlestick, table and shewbread, into which the priests always entered, accomplishing the service. Then the holiest of all, with its sacred furniture, into which the high-priest alone went once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors

of the people. This was when the way into the Holiest was not yet made manifest. But Christ being come, a High-Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption. The holy place into which He has gone is thus described. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Nor is entrance there confined to Him, while a veil separates His place of service from that in which the priests daily serve. No; that veil, which once divided thus the Jewish tabernacle, was a type of Christ's flesh. And when the real veil was rent upon the cross, the typical one also was rent from top to bottom. Mark, from top to bottom. It was not from the bottom upwards, as though man on earth had done it; it was from the top downwards; and now the exhortation is, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high-priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith (literally and really our hope, *elpis*) without wavering; for He is faithful that promised." The remainder of the epistle is filled with exhortations to faith, and hope, and patience, based on all that has now so rapidly passed under review.

Some things, however, in these concluding chapters, we must not pass by. The apostle reminds his brethren, to whom he writes, of some former period in their history as Christians. "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Not only had they been persecuted for their own profession of Christianity,

but they had voluntarily shared the afflictions of others. What was the secret of their power thus to endure affliction for Christ's sake? Hear the answer. "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, *knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance.*" Ah, yes! it is the certainty of heaven that makes the heart willing, yea, glad, to let go its hold of earth. This is the confidence which the apostle would have the Hebrew believers to hold fast and never cast away. It has great recompense of reward. True, patience is needed, that after we have done the will of God, we may receive the promise. But the promise is unfailing, and its fulfilment hastens on. Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry. The just shall live by faith; and while it is true that God says if any draw back, His soul shall have no pleasure in them, the apostle expresses his confidence that they, to whom he writes, are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. This leads him, in the well-known eleventh chapter, to treat of faith itself, and all the notable instances of it there enumerated. Things not seen are the proper objects of faith; objects as to the existence and character of which it has the firmest convictions, based on the testimony of God. Things hoped for come thus to have a kind of present subsistence to the soul. Faith, like God, Whom it believes, reckons on things which as yet are not, as though they were. Thus it was that Enoch walked with God; thus it was that "Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." How simple, and yet how precious a testimony is here borne of those ancient heirs of heavenly promises and a heavenly hope! "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on

the earth." And how God appreciated and honoured their faith! "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned; but now they desire a better country; that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city." Whether you regard this latter statement as meaning that God was not ashamed to be called the God of a people who looked beyond everything on earth for a country and a city in heaven; or whether you understand by it that God was not ashamed to be called the God of those for whom He had made such provision, having prepared for them a city—in either case, how precious, how full of encouragement, is such a statement.

But further, Moses had respect to the recompense of reward in practically esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. It was in like faith and hope that "others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." The world, indeed, esteemed them worthy of no better lot than to have trial of mockings and scourgings, bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented. But what was God's estimate of them? How it is told out in these words: "Of whom the world was not worthy!" And if God has provided some better thing for us, that they, without us, should not be made perfect in that resurrection for which they looked, and in hope of which they suffered and died; if we are all to rise together, or be changed at Christ's coming, oh, shall we not, stimulated by this still better hope, follow in their self-renouncing, and earth-renouncing steps? Seeing that we are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus: yes, looking unto Jesus.

He is a nobler example still of this patient, victorious faith. He is the Beginner and Perfecter of faith. He has run the whole course. Yea, and He has reached the goal and obtained the prize. The witnesses of chap. xi. are yet waiting for the resurrection. Jesus, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Mystery of mysteries! The One Whose glory is set forth in the first chapter of this epistle; the One Who for us stooped so low, as in the days of His flesh to offer up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death; also stooped so low as to act while here with a regard to the joy set before Him: "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross." Oh, let us consider Him! Looking unto Jesus, we shall, indeed, both learn what the heavenly calling is, and be drawn onwards and upwards by the force of His wondrous example, as well as by the attraction of His love. W.T.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The Dumb Piano.

THE dumb piano has keys but gives no sound. It is used in music schools in order to teach pupils finger practice. The lack of sound during such playing spares the ears of others in the building, a proof that consideration for people's feelings has not yet gone out of fashion; but we shall learn a lesson for ourselves from the dumb piano.

How often life itself plays on a person and no sound comes out! The need of fellow human beings strikes, yes, often it is so sad and terrible that it hammers on the keys of feelings and conscience, but on a dumb piano; and there is no note of sympathy, of love or of active compassion from the heart. Such silence, properly considered, is almost worse than the need which strikes on the keys! What a solemn word for us all is this:—

"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John iii. 17).

From the German.

Seven Papers on Worship.

6.—WHO IS YOUR CENTRE OF WORSHIP?

CHRIST, of course, you will reply. But I want you seriously to think before God whether you are intelligent in the knowledge of this. Many of the Christians even in Paul's day were not intelligent in the knowledge of Christ being Head of His body the church, and of the power which put Him in this position, which is toward us who believe (see Eph. i. 19-23), that we might walk together as members of that body. He had great conflict for the Colossian and Laodicean saints, that they might come to the full knowledge of this mystery (see Col. ii. 1, 2). And this was when the church was outwardly one, and all walked together. Still what the apostle desired was intelligence in the matter, and the want of this was the real secret of the departure of the church from God, and its original standpoint.

How much more need is there now to be intelligent in this wondrous truth, in order that we may walk together, living as we do in the midst of a fallen church, that has forgotten her anointed Head and Lord, and yielded herself to worldliness and sectarianism. A return to the confession of the headship of Christ is the alone remedy; and as this is impossible with the mass, it is for each individual to consider whether his position in the professing church gives a true witness to Christ as Head of His one body the church, who can neither be joined to the world nor be head of a sect.

Perhaps some dear brother or sister answers to these remarks with indignation, "But I do confess

Christ to be my Saviour and Lord; I know I am saved, and what do you want more?" This thought, dear brother, just shows me that you do not understand the headship of Christ. You confound it with the thought of Jesus being your Saviour, and your own individual salvation; but the headship of Christ is more. The disciples were perfectly safe in that room where we find them gathered in John xx., when Jesus came into their midst, proclaimed peace to them, and breathed His own Spirit of life into them. But they were not yet united to Him as members of His body. Christ had died and risen for them, true. All their sins had been put away, the sin of their nature condemned by His death on the cross, and they were justified, and had life in Him the risen Head of the new creation. But two other events had to take place before their full corporate position could be established. The first was, Christ had to be glorified; and second the Holy Spirit had to come down from heaven, to baptise all who had already believed into one body. These two great events we read of in Acts i. 9; ii. 1-4. The Gospels tell us the glad tidings of the eternal Son born in the world, living, dying and rising again for our salvation. The Acts tell us the additional fact of the formation of the assembly of God, by the ascension of Christ as Man to the right hand of God, and the descent of the Holy Spirit. This gives us our full corporate position, and those who are intelligent in the truth are bound to confess together the headship of Christ. He is the alone centre of worship, the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord hath pitched, and not man (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

Now let us remember, dear reader, that our subject is worship, and Christ as the true centre of worship. I own ministry after God's order, but the evil thing is to mix up the two subjects together, which Christendom has done.

So in all the places of the New Testament where we have our rules for worship, such as Eph. ii. 18; Heb.

ix. x.; and 1 Peter ii. 4, 5, there is no idea of ministry entering into them. In the former passage we worship on the basis that Christ has been exalted as Man to God's right hand, and made Head of His body, the church (*Eph. i. 20-23*). We who were dead in trespasses and sins have been quickened together with Him, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Him (chap. ii. 1-7). Saved by grace, there is no difference now between Jew and Gentile. The middle wall of partition, consisting of the law and its ordinances, has been broken down by the cross. Jew and Gentile believers see the end of their enmity there, and in resurrection are formed into one new man, peace being made in Christ. He is in heaven the Head, and through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father (ver. 18). What a blessed centre of worship to have! If the saints only knew their calling, how could they wish for any other basis of worship or centre but Christ? He fills the body. He is the life of the assembly. The members are linked to Him and to one another by the Holy Spirit, Who draws every member to Him by a common attraction and power.

In Heb. ix., x., we are shown, in direct contrast to Judaism, that we need no one to come between us and God in His worship but Christ. Under Judaism the people were not allowed to approach God. The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God for them (chap. ix. 6). But even they could not enter into the holiest. A veil shut God out from them. The high priest could only enter once a year (ver. 7). Thus it was a system keeping God and the people apart from one another. It was a worshipping afar off (Ex. xxiv.). What did it all mean? Why, that the way into the presence of God was not made manifest under that economy (Heb. ix. 8). The sacrifices too that were offered up could not give a perfect conscience (ver. 9). There was no approach to God, no perfect conscience. An imperfect high priest was their centre of worship too, who had to offer for himself

as well as for the people. But now, blessed be God, the sacrifice of Christ has put away sins once and for all; the blood applied to the conscience perfects us for ever (Heb. x. 12-14). Christ by His death and resurrection and ascension is the open way into our place of worship. The veil is rent by His death. We enter in with boldness by His blood, and find in Him our great High Priest, our perfect, worthy, and all-sufficient centre of worship, through Whom we approach God without fear (Heb. x. 19-21).

He is the living Stone and Foundation Stone of the building to which we come. Rejected of the Jewish builders, He is laid in death and resurrection a sure foundation. He ascends to heaven, the topmost Stone of the building, thus uniting heaven and earth together. We come to Him, the rejected Christ of the world, but chosen of God and precious, and are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Where is there an idea of ministry in these passages? In the one case, it is the figure of a body united to a Head. Such is the church; Christ, as Head of His body, is its all-sufficient centre of worship. 2nd. It is the figure of a great High Priest in the midst of a family of priests all on a level. All approach God on a common basis. 3rd. It is the figure of a building, Christ, the Foundation and Corner Stone, uniting all the living stones together, as well as heaven and earth. With no veil between them and God, the true Aaron and his sons (Christ and believers) worship inside, offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Oh, my dear fellow-believer, I pray you consider Him under these varied aspects! Consider what He is as the risen and ascended Man, placed in heaven by God, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come"; how that God "hath put all things under His feet, and given Him to be the Head over all things to the church which is His body" (Eph. i. 18-20). Consider Him as the Man

of God's purpose, set up from everlasting or ever the world was (Prov. viii. 23); born in due time into the world, accomplishing redemption, and in Whom God hath purposed in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to gather together in one all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in Him (Eph. i. 9, 10). In that millennial glory all in heaven shall be centred around Him, and shall cry, "Worthy is the Lamb" (Rev. v.). All things on earth likewise; for He shall be King over all the earth, with Israel in the centre (see Zech. xiv. 9-17). Oh, fellow-believer! have you entered into the thought of God's purpose thus to have Christ as the Centre of all things in heaven and earth in the ages to come, know that *now*—that is, between His rejection and coming again to take the kingdom—He is carrying out those purposes by setting Him up in heaven as Head, and gathering out of the world His church, which is to be His Bride, in His heavenly glory; and that now every believer's place is to be a member of that body, to be attracted to Him as the Head as to a common centre, and to find in that Head the source from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God (Col. ii. 19).

Consider Him, likewise, as the Son of the living God, the One over Whom the gates of Hades have not prevailed, the foundation-stone and chief corner-stone of God's spiritual house, as He said, "Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18). Who is this wonderful Person? "The brightness of God's glory, the express image of His Person," Whom the angels worshipped when He was born in this world, of Whom one said, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail" (Heb. i. 3, 6, 10-12). Yes, before the found-

ation of the world, set up from everlasting, He was there, and when the heavens and earth are all rolled up as a scroll, He shall be there. Well might the apostle find a refuge in such a Person, as the foundation of the church, when it had all outwardly gone to ruin, and say, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure" (2 Tim. ii. 19-21). Lastly, consider Him as the great High Priest of our profession. Read Exodus xxviii., see in the High Priest, clothed in his garments of glory and beauty, a faint shadow of the Person Who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens (Heb. viii. 1). See Him clothed in the garments of righteousness and salvation. See Him holding His people on His strong shoulders, and bearing them on His loving heart; and see there your Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man (ver. 2).

Dear fellow-believer, is this Christ your sufficient basis and centre of worship?

The Deity of the Son.

"Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever"—(Heb. i. 8).

INFIDELITY has become very bold. Taking advantage of the slumbering state of Christians, it is most active at this time. In all directions its fiery darts are being hurled, and as the thin end of the wedge easily enters when an opening is presented, so by its vast machinery now active in Christendom, the authenticity of Scripture if not wholly denied, yet certain parts are selected as objects of attack by different agents. The onslaughts of opponents to the truth are made in such manifold modes, from so many points and by such different instruments, that there is scarcely a doctrine of Christianity, or any revelation of God concerning the personal glory of the Son, such as His Godhead, perfect manhood, accomplished redemption, official glories, and second coming, but what, at this moment,

is being sedulously undermined in Christendom by its being either denied or corrupted.

It is into the great mystery of the Deity of the Son, as revealed in Scripture, that we have now to look; and may we who love Him approach the solemn subject with worshipping hearts and unfeigned dependence on the teaching of the Holy Ghost; for we remember it is said, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father." It is against the personal glory of the only-begotten Son of God that the efforts of some in our day are daringly directed.

One thing is perfectly clear, that if the Son be God, He must have been in the glory with the Father before the world was. We hear Him, therefore, thus addressing the Father just before the work of the cross: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John xvii. 4, 5). And with these precious utterances other parts of divine truth agree. When the Father is spoken of as having loved us and blessed us in Christ, we are told it is "according as He (the Father) hath chosen us in Him (Christ the Son) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before Him in love" (Eph. i. 3, 4). Again the doctrine of eternal sonship is brought out by the apostle John, when he refers to "that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us" (1 John, i. 2). Father and Son being relative terms, *there cannot be one without the other*. Looking at this passage then and comparing it with other scriptures, "that eternal life which was with the Father" could be none other than the Son who had glory with the Father before the world was. And so, in this remarkable treatise on the eternal Godhead of the Son,—the first chapter of Hebrews,—the Son is at once introduced as the One by Whom the worlds were made (Heb. i. 2).

Nor is this fundamental doctrine of Holy Scripture found only in the passages already quoted. Speaking

of Him as "the Word," which in due time "was made flesh and dwelt among us," John emphatically declares that He not only "was with God," but "was God"; and so truly was He the Maker of all things, that "without Him was not anything made that was made."

In the epistle to the saints at Colosse also, where the Holy Ghost by Paul is speaking of the Father and the Son, the Son is declared to be "the image of the invisible God," and so eternal and omnipotent is He that it is added, "By Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers: all things" (observe *all* things) "were created by Him and for Him." And lest there should be any ground to question the Deity of the One here spoken of (the Son), it is added, "and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." If an apostle speaks of the Son as the Creator of everything, a prophet declares that "The Creator of the ends of the earth" is "the everlasting God" (Isaiah xl. 28). Who could be before all things, create all things, and uphold all things, but One Who was eternally divine? Could any testimony more clearly set forth the Deity of the Son?

And further, a glance at the testimony of the ancient prophets is enough not only to show that the Messiah they foretold would be a sinless man, the woman's seed, the seed of Abraham, and from the loins of David, but the same prophet, Isaiah, gives us particulars also as to the eternally divine person of Messiah. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel" (Immanu—with us; El—God) "God with us." Is it possible that words could more forcibly set before us the Deity of the Messiah? And further, the prophet says, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

The memorable passage of the Psalmist which our

Lord used to silence the cavilling Pharisees is also strictly in keeping with this essential truth of Christianity. David said, "The Lord (Jehovah) said unto my Lord (Adon), sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool" (Psalm cx. 1). "If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?" (Matt. xxii. 45). The Deity of the Son is the only answer. He is David's Lord as Creator; He is David's Son as having miraculously become man through the Virgin Mary. In this way He is elsewhere spoken of as "The Root and Offspring of David," and also as "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David." Who but the Son could then truthfully say, "Before Abraham was I am!"

The wise man is not silent in the book of Proverbs on this foundation truth of divine revelation. Wisdom says, looking back before time began, "The Lord (Jehovah) possessed me in the beginning of his way, before His works of old. I was set up (or anointed) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was . . . while as yet He had not made the earth or the fields. . . . When He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Nor is this all; for in another chapter where the words of Agur are given and some of the ways of God referred to, he inquires if any could tell His name or the name of His Son. "Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment: Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Proverbs viii., xxx.).

Can anyone who receives these scriptures as "given by inspiration of God," fail to see plurality of persons in the Godhead and the Deity of the Son? And, in sweetest harmony with Psalm ii., where the Anointed or Messiah, the King set in Zion, is also said to be the Son of God, we have seen most clearly brought out that the Virgin's child is also Immanuel, God with

us. (Compare Psalm ii. with Acts xiii. 23, Isaiah vii. 14, ix. 6.) We may look at another text which predicted the place of the Messiah's birth, where we find further testimony to His being eternal, "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be Ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah v. 2). Who could go forth from everlasting but He Who is Himself eternal? And as we have seen that Israel's King-Messiah is the Son, we could not have more distinct testimonies than those we have been considering as to His eternal Sonship and Deity.

By the late H. H. SNELL.

Reformation—Transformation—Conformation.

THE three words written above are found but infrequently in our English Bibles, but we think the passages of scriptures in which they occur, and the truths they teach, will well repay our consideration.

The word *reformation* occurs only once in the New Testament (Heb. ix. 10) and speaks of the gifts and sacrifices connected with the first tabernacle of the Mosaic economy imposed on Israel until the time of reformation, or as it might be read—"the time of setting things right." As in this passage the word refers to no doctrine or truth essentially Christian, but to the great change from Judaism to Christianity it need not detain us. Christianity is not a religous system of reforming something that went before, but is the true explanation of our Lord's parable recorded in Matthew ix. 16 and 17, etc. It is not a piece of new cloth sewn upon an old garment, or new wine put into old bottles, but new wine in new bottles that both may be preserved.

Its fundamental principle is new birth by the word and spirit of God. A new nature in the believer, and a new power in and with him are its primary essentials. "But this spoke He of the Spirit which they that believe

on Him should receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet (given) because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 39).

No Christian can think of *transformation* apart from the marvellous incident recorded in each of the three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke, so well known to us as the transfiguration of Jesus Christ. The difference in the meaning of the two words, transfiguration and transformation, need not detain us; they are so closely allied that the word in the original for transfigured is translated "transformed" in Romans xii. 2. Peter speaks of this event in the ever-memorable words, "For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased" (2 Peter i. 16, 17).

This scripture stamps the incident as the great confirmative proof that the word of God is not a cunningly devised fable, but given by holy men under the direct inspiration of God the Holy Spirit.

The two words "conformation" and "transformation" are found together in the second verse of Romans xii., "and be not *conformed* to this world, but be ye *transformed* by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." What is the power that can transform Christians into this place of acceptable service to make their life "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God"?

Every conversion is a transformation by divine power and is thus described by the Lord Himself—speaking to the apostle Paul from heaven—"To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me (Acts xxxi. 18). Although there may be little to mark this change in the outward life and circumstances of the subject of it, in the eyes of their fellow men, it is more remarkable as

the power of God than when the gaily-painted butterfly emerges from the apparently lifeless chrysalis. It transformed the blustering impetuous fisherman, Simon, son of Jonas, into a meek and patient shepherd of the flock of Christ; and the bigoted Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, into an example for the persecuted disciples of Jesus of Nazareth.

Another passage of scripture claims our attention where the word transformation is not found in our Bibles, but is in the original and may be translated thus, "But we all looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory even as by the Lord the Spirit (2 Corinthians iii. 18, New Trans., J.N.D.).

This whole chapter gives us a striking and beautiful contrast between the old dispensation—a ministration of death written and engraved on stones, and the new ministration of the Spirit graven on the fleshy tablets of human hearts. And nowhere perhaps in the scriptures are we presented with a more exalted view of the character and effects of the true gospel of Christ.

Two great things are here presented to us as effected by Him in His death and resurrection. The full vindication of God's moral character in grace towards man by the atonement, and the coming in of power to bring us out of all the misery and wretchedness which are the effects of sin, and to set us in a new place before God.

In this present day there is much to be thankful for in the effort to awaken Christians to the true nature and privileges of the Christian life. We hear much of conventions for its deepening and the desire for Spirit-filled lives; but a serious question arises as to how it is to be effected. Is not the true power found in this scripture? A brief quotation from a well-known writer puts it as follows:

"Thus the effect of the triumph of our Lord Jesus, and of the testimony of the Holy Ghost, is to put us into present association with the glory of the Lord as the object before our souls; and this is what transforms us according to its own heavenly character."*

*W. Kelly.

Another scripture which has two of the words in our heading demands a brief notice before we close. It is found in Philippians iii. 20, 21. "For our citizenship (or commonwealth) has its existence in the heavens, from which we also await the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to His body of glory, according to the working of the power which He has even to subdue all things to Himself" (J.N.D., New Trans.).

Besides this passage there is another where in the original Greek the word *conformation* is found, viz., Rom. viii. 29. In Rom. xii. 2 and 1 Pet. i. 14 the word employed denotes a moral change; whereas in Rom. viii. 29, as in Phil. iii. 21, the word used implies a physical conformation whereby the Christian at the second coming of Christ is changed into the image of God's Son. Whilst *transformation* should always be going on, *conformation* takes place only at the coming of Christ for His own.

We might well ask ourselves in the light of these scriptures—"What manner of persons ought ye to be?"

T.R.

The Sympathy of Christ.

The sympathy of Christ is associated with His priesthood on high. He sympathises not with sin, not with sinners as such, but with the suffering saints of God. At the same time the Holy Ghost looks back upon Christ's own experience when He was upon earth. He was tempted, but then the temptation was not in any way from within. There was in Him no propensity to evil that answered to the trial of Satan; but, on the contrary, all that the enemy found was dependence on God, simple, unwavering faith in His word; never a carnal working, as in our hearts.

He "knew no sin." Hence, in order to guard against error on so holy and delicate a theme, it is necessary that we should hold fast the truth of Christ's Person as God has revealed it. W.K.

Found.

(Matt. xviii. 12.)

O GOD, through Christ the living way,
My Father and my God,
So near, and I so far astray,
Brought nigh Thee by His blood.

Myself, and this, and that, I sought
Behind, around, before—
And yet the nearest found I not,
Until I sought no more.

O Love, Thou deep eternal tide,
How dear are men to Thee!
The Father's heart is opened wide
By Jesus' blood to me.

It was Thyself, O God, Who sought,
With tender yearnings deep,
The loveless soul who sought Thee not,
The worthless, wandering sheep.

I come, yet leave myself behind,
And thus unfearing come,
For naught besides Thyself I find
In mine eternal home.

I come—Thine open arms enfold
And welcome me within—
Let others work to bring their gold,
I only bring my sin.

Thou bringest love and gladness forth
From Thine exhaustless store,
To me, deserving but Thy wrath,
The life for evermore.

And now by magnet force led on,
I reach the inmost rest—
The nameless rapture of the son
Upon the Father's breast.

GERHARDT TER STEEGEN.

Thoughts on Canticles—1.

OF all the Songs of Solomon, amounting to 1,005, there is only one that has come down to our day. Written by the Spirit of God and inserted in the volume of the Book, whilst some inspired communications have perished, this survives and will—may we not say it?—be a comfort and delight to the godly remnant of His people in the latter day, when the circumstances of the spouse, described in this song, will be found to delineate, as the prophetic word of God only can, the condition of the people, whose hearts have been turned to the Lord during the time of Jacob's trial and the domination of Antichrist. But as it gives us the exercises of the heart that seeks after an object which will satisfy it and the unchanging affection of the one it seeks after, we can read it with profit to ourselves, since, whilst illustrating the changing character of our affection towards the Lord, it brings out the abiding character of His love. To point out the unchanging character of His love as here brought out is the object of the present paper.

The words of the spouse commence the book. We hear her voice at the beginning, she breaks the silence as it were; and we hear her voice at the close. She speaks of her beloved and to him. He speaks to her and her only and manifests to her his love. She begins by declaring her desire to receive the proof of his affections, she knows what his love is. "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," she can say, assigning as a reason, "for thy love is better than wine."

It is no stranger that she thus addresses. "The virgins," she continues, "love thee." Under what circumstances there had been previous acquaintance is not related. Nothing of the past is told us about him, but she acquaints us with something of her previous history. She had been in trial, chap. i. 5 and 6. Her mother's children were angry with her and made her keeper of the vineyards. Of him we learn what offices he fills—he is king and shepherd, and Solomon is, as

such, the representative of the Blessed. At the outset of the Song she is occupied with two things, her beloved and herself. Throughout it he is occupied with but one object, his loved one. "I am black but comely." "I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley." To her companions she said the first, to her beloved she addressed the second. Her description is correct, it is no overstatement. He assures her she is comely (chap. i. 10) and tells out that as "the lily among thorns so is my love among the daughters" (chap. ii. 2.) He thus takes up her language about herself. She is all that in his eyes. He sees a comeliness in her, though she may have been exposed to the sun's rays. Why should she think of herself? Fair is she in his eyes, nor is that all; he would have her with him and she knows it, for she gives us the very words of his invitation (chap. ii. 8-13). He will not be satisfied without her, so he invites her to go forth with him. Her countenance too he would see, her voice he would hear. "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away," he says. What is her answer? "Until the day break and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved: and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether" (chap. ii., 17). She would have him with her, but does not respond to the invitation to go forth with him. The ordinary time of day for going out had not arrived, the suited hour, she thinks, had not approached. She would judge for herself of the fitness of the time to go forth, as he asked her, so does not find him with her, as she had requested. His absence draws out her heart after him and she goes out at an unseasonable hour to seek for him. Her question to the watchmen shows where her heart is, as, full of him she loves, she mentions not to them the name of her beloved (chap. iii. 3). She finds him and constrains him to return with her. In this she shows her love and in being thus constrained he proves his love to her. She had declined his invitation, he refuses not to go with her. He had been slighted by her, she should not know what it was to be slighted by him.

(To be continued. D.V.)

Seven Papers on Worship.

7.—THE BALANCE OF THE SANCTUARY AS TO WORSHIP.

NUMBERS vii. The tabernacle had been set up, the people numbered, each having brought his atonement money, each having told his pedigree, and each tribe having been gathered round their standards. The sacrifices, too, had been all ordered, as the ground of approach to God; the priests consecrated; Jehovah had taken His place in the midst of the people, in the cloud above the tabernacle; when the twelve princes, the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel, brought their offerings to Jehovah.

Is not this, my reader, a beautiful type of the order of Christian worship? *We* have an altar; we have a sanctuary; *we* have a priest as our way of approach to God, and to present our offerings of praise to God. But instead of a visible altar, a visible sanctuary, a visible priest, and a visible Presence, all ready to the eye, and all earthly; our altar is Christ offered up on Calvary's cross, a perfect, accomplished, finished work! Our sanctuary is heaven, into which Christ has passed! Our High Priest sits on the right hand of God! There God's presence is manifested! There we have perfect access to God, to present our sacrifices of praise on the ground of His finished sacrifice, and through Him Who has entered into heaven (see Heb. x.).

The twelve princes were the leaders of the twelve tribes, consequently the representatives of the unity of Israel as God's nation. With us there is but one Leader and Head, *i.e.,* the Christ in glory! and the Holy Ghost came down from Him on the day of Pentecost, and baptized all believers into one body, and builded them together to be God's habitation. This is the present ground of gathering. When the assembly of God approaches God for worship, as gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus, and breaks the one loaf on the Lord's table as the symbol of unity; the unity of the body is expressed (see 1 Cor. x. 17, compared with

xii. 12-27). When the Lord's table is ordered rightly, there is one loaf on the table, undivided, uncut. This is the symbol of unity. When broken it represents the Lord's body in death. Consequently, at the Lord's table two great truths are expressed, viz., first, the unity of the church; second, the Lord's death, as shown in 1 Cor. x., xi. As the table in any man's home expresses the family gathering, so the Lord's table is set up in the house of God, as the place where the church gathers to express its unity, and to remember the Lord's death, having communion there with it.

Whilst, therefore, as to our worship we approach God in the heavenly sanctuary, where the High Priest actually is; in our bodies we gather to the name of the Lord Jesus on earth, where the Lord's table is spread, and there He is (in spirit) in our midst.

When gathered to the Lord at His table, everything is calculated to lead our hearts to worship; and though the primary object is to break bread in remembrance of Christ, still the symbols on the table are in every way calculated to produce worship. The one loaf, to begin with, reminds us of God's eternal counsels of grace towards us in His Son; broken, we are reminded of His death. I believe the type in Numbers vii. gives the true balance of the sanctuary, as to worship.

The first thing presented by the princes was a silver charger full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat offering, and a silver bowl full of the same. Silver represents the blessed Lord working out redemption. It typifies the vessel of redemption; with a spotless life conceived by the Holy Ghost, presented to God.

Dear reader, think of this. The most precious part of the offering presented to God typifies Christ conceived by the Holy Ghost, and with a spotless life tested in every way, offering Himself as the vessel of redemption to do the will of God, to buy it all back to God by His own blood; the church being the special object of His counsels! (Heb. ii. 9, 10; x. 5-7). In His death the ransom has been paid; the work has been finished; God has been glorified in His character in every way, and the consequence is that this Man has

been put in the highest glory at God's right hand.

The next thing was the golden spoon full of sweet incense. Gold symbolises the divine nature of the Lord. He was the Son of the Father from all eternity, the creator of the worlds (1 John i. 2; Col. i. 16). No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John i. 1-18). The incense was a confection ordered by God, that no other man was to have. The Son, in all the sweetness of affection and love that appertains to the Father's bosom is expressed by it.

Thirdly: one young bullock, one ram, and lamb were presented for a burnt-offering. It is Christ offering Himself up in death without spot to God; He offered Himself, in all the willing strength of the ox, and the submission and gentleness of the lamb to do God's will. The burnt-offering was wholly for God, it was all burnt. It is the acceptableness and obedience of Christ unto death that is in question; at the same time it was propitiation (compare Lev. i.). I would have my reader consider this. In all the feasts and offerings of the Lord that I know of, except the day of atonement, and special offerings for sin, the burnt-offering took the first place (compare Numbers xxviii., xxix.). In worship God delights to have presented to Him this side of the offering of Christ.

Fourthly: the sin-offering was next offered; and a goat the expression of it. It was for sin in the abstract, and for the acts of sin (compare Lev. xvi., iv.; Rom. iii. 25; iv. 25; viii. 3). A goat in scripture has a thought connected with it in regard to evil and its judgment, which a bullock and a lamb have not (Ezek. xxxiv. 17; Matt. xxv. 32). It typifies the blessed Son of God meeting by His blood the righteous claims of God against sin! On the cross, during the three hours of darkness, God was dealing with sin! Oh, how that bitter cry, dear reader, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" tells it out! There sin in the flesh was condemned in the person of our adorable

Substitute; there "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree." In adoring gratitude in our worship meetings we hold fellowship with our God and Father, in these His thoughts about sin and its judgment, and bless Him that His Son is now out of it all in heaven, and that we by grace are made partakers of His salvation.

Fifthly: the peace-offering was the last sacrifice offered. The word in the Hebrew answers to that aspect of the atonement, by the consequence of which we who were enemies are reconciled to God, and brought nigh to Him in perfect peace; the result is communion. Christ having fully glorified God on the cross by doing perfectly His holy will, and having fully met the question of our sin and sins, cried, "It is finished." He offered up His soul in peace to His Father, as He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit" (Luke xxiii. 46). Perfect communion was thus restored in His soul before He died; the forsaking was over; and the result in peace was presented to God as the ground of our peace and communion.

In the peace-offering (Lev. iii.), the fat and the blood were God's part (see ver. 16, 17). The former was said to be God's food, and the blood typifies the ground of our peace and communion. In Lev. vii. 2-end, the peace-offering had the double aspect of a thanksgiving, or voluntary offering. The breast of the offering was for Aaron and his sons; the right shoulder for the priest who offered the fat and blood; the remainder remained to the person who brought the offering. Thus Jehovah had His part in the offering, the fat and the blood; Aaron and his sons had theirs, viz., the breast; and the priest who offered had his; and the person who brought the offering his. What a beautiful picture, beloved reader, of what the saints gathered in communion at the Lord's table enjoy! God enjoys there the best part of His Christ, typified by the fat; Christ and His saints have their portion, the blessed mutual affections of His own heart and love as typified in the breast; the Christian who offers, all the strength

of Him that is typified by the right shoulder; and the rest all feed together on the death of Christ. This do in remembrance of Me!" He says. "Is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. x., xi.). Beloved reader, are you gathered on God's ground, viz., the unity of the body, to Christ Himself as the Centre; and at His table, as the result of His accomplished work, are you enjoying all the blessed fruits of His sacrifice, feeding on the Lamb slain, and presenting your worship to the Father through Christ by the power of the Spirit, according to the true balance of the sanctuary? LORD A. P. CECIL.

Christian Baptism.

"GO ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

Wonderful words! They enable us to see distinctly what a great change had taken place.

In Mark xvi. 15, the disciples were sent into all the world with the mission to preach the gospel to every creature, to all, therefore, whether Jews or Gentiles. And in Luke xxiv. 47, where the good news was first to be preached at Jerusalem, we read that it was to go to all nations. While in the Acts, "And to the ends of the earth," is added after Jerusalem, Judæa and Samaria.

The last words of the Gospel of Matthew do not speak about God's eternal counsels, which are connected with the risen and glorified Son of man, and they do not mention the assembly which is gathered out of all nations of the earth, neither do they explain the full spiritual meaning of baptism; but still they are of quite unique value because they bring before us the great change to which we referred. The old system of law was ended! The dawn of a new day was breaking! Baptism is here set over against the Jewish

circumcision, and the name of God, in the full revelation of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, against the covenant name of Jehovah, the unchangeable, faithful, eternal God. The ambassadors of the Lord should make disciples, baptising them to a new name, not placing them under the law, but teaching them what Jesus, the Son of God, had commanded.

In the Acts of the Apostles baptism is nearly always connected with the Person of the Lord Jesus.

In chapter ii. 38, Peter says to the Jews: "Repent and be baptised every one of you in (*i.e.*, on the ground of) the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

Then in chapter viii. 16, where we read with regard to the believing Samaritans, "They were all baptised in (*i.e.*, to the confession of) the name of the Lord Jesus."

In the house of the centurion Cornelius, at Caesarea, Peter commanded that all who had accepted the word (and received the Holy Ghost) "should be baptised in the name of the Lord" (x. 48).

The disciples found by Paul at Ephesus were "baptised to (*i.e.*, to the confession of) the name of the Lord Jesus" (xix. 5).

Ananias encouraged Paul to be baptised and "wash away his sins,"* calling on His name, the name of Jesus, Who had appeared to him on the road to Damascus (xxii. 16).

In other places in the Acts we read simply, "He (they) was (were) baptised," or "He baptised him" (viii. 12, 38; xvi. 15; xviii. 8).

The scriptures quoted show that baptism is a picture of forgiveness and washing away sin.

Peter announced this forgiveness when those who heard him and to whom he had said, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," were pricked in their consciences and asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" For them, as Jews, all was lost as to their position with

* The words "wash away" undoubtedly indicate "immersion"; a complete washing of the whole person.

God, which they had held up to this time. The only thing left for this "untoward generation" was judgment. Only by a true, inward turning to God, by upright repentance and confession of sin, could they be saved from judgment.

Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, by them rejected, but raised by God to His right hand as Lord, baptism to the remission of sins, was the outward sign of this change of heart and of the earnest desire of the baptised ones to "save themselves" from the "untoward generation" of Israel, and be thus brought into communion with Christ to walk the new way God's grace had given in the assembly, His house. Holiness became that house and no one had lawful access to that house who had not received forgiveness of sins through the finished work of Christ and undergone the washing away of sins in baptism. It is remarkable that receiving the Holy Ghost in this case is promised as a confirmation of the forgiveness of sins obtained by faith and witnessed in baptism.

When, later, the first Gentile (apart from the chamberlain in Acts viii.) accepted the word of the cross by faith—Cornelius and those present in his house—the Holy Ghost fell on all who heard the word, and then afterwards Peter commanded that they should be baptised, because who can forbid water that these should not be baptised which have received the Holy Ghost (Acts x. 47)?

When we examine the further instructions on baptism in the letters of the apostle, the first, and perhaps the most important, to call our attention is in Romans vi. 3, 4.

In answering the question whether we, who are dead to sin, should live any longer therein, that the grace of God in forgiveness should much more abound—a question answered by the apostle with a decided "God forbid"—the apostle reminds the believers in Rome of the instruction they had undoubtedly received on baptism.

"Know ye not," he asks them, "that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into

His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." The fact could hardly be more definitely and decidedly settled, that Christian baptism is carried out on the ground of the death of Christ, that is, of a Saviour Who was crucified and died.

In verse 6 Paul says, making himself one with the believers, "We know that our old man is crucified with Him," *i.e.*, that God looks at us with regard to our former condition as dead with Christ,—"that the body of sin—the condition of man in the flesh—might be destroyed." What does one do with a dead man? He is always buried! Now that is just what happens in baptism. The descent of the baptised person into the grave of water, his disappearance beneath it, is the witness, the intelligible type of being dead and buried with Christ, just as the rising out of the water is the type of resurrection with Christ.

The apostle does not go so far here as to speak of believers as "risen with Christ," he only draws the obvious conclusion when he says in verse 5: "If we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection." If that is so, what are we to do? To continue in our old condition, to go on serving sin in its manifold forms?

"No, we answer with the apostle, "God forbid"!

We are called and given the ability to "walk in newness of life." And this is not laid upon us as a sort of command. But from the fact that Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, the apostle deduces the second fact that we, who were buried with Him by baptism into death, but of course did not remain in the grave, should henceforth walk as new, as risen persons. As the one is true, the other follows as a natural consequence. This great and glorious fact is expressed in baptism. That is the sign, the typical meaning of it, and this has not altered in the course of the ages. How far all believers indivi-

dually carry out this meaning of baptism in practical life is another question, which, however, is of inexpressible value. Anyone who asks, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"—who takes sin lightly and gives place to the old nature,—in a word, forgets that he has once for all died to sin, so that his former condition before God has come to an end and he now has to live before God in Christ Jesus—he needs, indeed, to be reminded of the meaning of his baptism. The believers in Rome needed it at any rate. May God give us again to remember the serious truth, which has its expression in baptism.

The baptised one sees everything which belongs to the old man, with its deceitful lusts, left behind in the grave of Christ. Buried with Christ through baptism into death, in which death all that he once was before God is exposed to judgment; he has to go on learning day by day what is comprised in a walk in newness of life. To learn this in the service of Him Whose he is and by Whom he may be taught, is truly blessed. The believer has become the property of Him, Who once for all died unto sin and Who, in that He liveth, liveth unto God. He has "put on Christ" in baptism, as the apostle expressed it so beautifully in Galatians iii. 27.

By the late RUDOLPH BROCKHAUS.

Our Standing in Peter's First Epistle.

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."—1 Peter ii. 9.

THERE is a dark background to Christianity; the gospel does not create the dark background, but reveals it.

In our unregenerate days our understanding was darkened; our desires were away from God; our conscience accused us, but was over-ridden by our desires; our will was that of a rebel; our spirit was closed to God. We were alive physically, mentally and morally, but spiritually we were "dead."

But the time came when God said, "Let there be light," and then,

"Out of our bondage, sorrow and night,
Into Thy freedom, gladness and light,
Jesus, we came to Thee."

In our text a parallel is maintained between Israel after the flesh and Christians. And it is not here a question of the individual believer but believers viewed collectively, and under four aspects.

1. We are a chosen race. The Jewish converts to Christianity, to whom the letter was addressed, would at once call to mind their natural descent from Abraham and would remember, not without a remnant of pride, that they had belonged to the most remarkable race the world has ever seen, who were, moreover, the custodians of the very oracles of God.

But their thoughts would rise on to a higher plane as they gratefully remembered that they now belonged to Christ and were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. We love Him because He has first loved us, and if we have chosen Him it is because He has first chosen us. And our blessings in Christ are spiritual and everlasting, for we were born, not of human descent, but of the eternal God.

2. We are a royal priesthood. The readers of the Epistle would bear in mind that to their forefathers God had given the most elaborate sacrificial system the world has ever known, the human centre of which was the priest.

They were now associated with a great Priest Who is also King of kings. Christianity knows nothing of any special order of men to stand between their fellows and God. The fact is that every Christian is a priest. And the Christian's worship is wholly spiritual. The singing of hymns of praise, the closing of the eyes when praying, the bowing of the head—are but the body's glad share in the worship that is essentially of the Spirit; the accompaniments of the inner attitude of soul towards the Lord; and as such they are not a hindrance but are often a help to true worship.

And as a royal priesthood Christians have the duty and the privilege of interceding for all men, "that we may

lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty."

3. We are a holy nation. Israel had originally been a theocracy; God was their King, and His palace was the tabernacle. But the people clamoured for a king like those of the other nations, and the demand on this occasion of that stiff-necked race was but one of the many sad declensions that have marked the tragic history of that extraordinary people.

When our Lord appeared, the people, with the Pharisees as the popular party, were filled with worldly Messianic hopes of earthly power and prosperity; and as their true Messiah was not a man after their own heart, they gave Him a cross instead of a throne. And it is most significant, in the records of God's retributive providence amongst nations, that the false, carnal, Messianic enthusiasm of the Jews, which was one of the causes for their rejection of the Christ, was permitted by God to grow in intensity until it precipitated a conflict with Rome, and so led to the destruction of the Holy City and the suppression of the last vestige of Jewish national independence. Since A.D. 70 the Jews have not been a *nation,* but a *race.*

But these dear Jewish converts belonged to a better nation than earthly Israel. They formed part of that "one new man" of which their brother Paul loved to speak. It consists of men and women of all nationalities, of all races, of all dispositions, of all classes and grades and occupations. One and the same Holy Spirit indwells all believers; therefore all believers are one; and as they "walk with the Lord in the light of His word," knowing they have "passed from death unto life because they love the brethren," they will seek to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

The Christian community is international; it has no physical frontiers; it has no armaments; its weapons of warfare are not carnal but spiritual; and it is essentially a holy nation, divinely called and set apart for God. And the true Christian acknowledges that his "citizenship is in heaven," where resides his real seat of government.

4. We are a purchased people. "Peculiar" derives from an old Roman word meaning property that lies entirely within its owner's control. And God's people belong to Him in various ways: by creator right they are His; they are His by purchase right; they are His by right of His indwelling; and they should acknowledge this eternal fact of the divine ownership by presenting themselves and all their faculties to the Lord as a living sacrifice—their reasonable service.

In view of all these mercies of God, which have conferred upon His people such a wonderful position, they are to "show forth His praises," or make known His perfections, His excellencies. And this they do as they abide in Christ, for then they carry about with them an influence, an atmosphere, that reflects something of the divine character; their worship will be spiritual, and their ministry will honour the Lord.

Nothing so fully stirs and stimulates a saved soul like the realisation that he is here in this world for the glory of God. E.A.

Heaven—13.

TOWARDS the close of Hebrews xii., we have a summary of all to which we Christians have come, in contrast with Sinai and its terrors and its law. We have not come to the latter; "but," says the apostle, "ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, a general assembly; and to the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." What an enumeration! And how stable is all that is here mentioned—how abiding! Once God spake on earth, and then His voice shook the earth. Now He speaks from heaven, and promises yet once more to shake not earth only, but also heaven. When He does so, everything that is shaken will be removed,

as of things that are made—things that only stand in creation, stability and strength—all such will be removed, "that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." Can any one of those be shaken to which we have come? "Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us hold fast grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." Let us never forget, however, that this kingdom which cannot be moved, is outside this earth and all that appertains to it. If there was any place on earth which God could have owned, it was Jerusalem, where He had placed His name, and where His sanctuary stood, and where all the solemn services of that sanctuary were celebrated. "But Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach." The blood of that sin-offering was not carried into any earthly sanctuary, or within any earthly veil. It was borne by Jesus into heaven itself, and there establishes, in immovable security, the acceptance and blessedness of everyone and everything which stands in its efficacy before God. Everything else must be removed. Everything else must perish. Let us then follow Him, bearing His reproach; "for here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come." O that we may seek it with earnest zeal, with patient faith, with steady, unwearied, undeviating step. In it we shall find that whatever we may have heard, or whatever we may have anticipated, "the half has not been told."

In James we have "the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

In opening the first Epistle of Peter, the impression one receives is that the apostle had been by faith surveying the heavenly country, contemplating its varied glories, and feasting his hopes on the prospect of its rich and endless blessedness, until his heart, full to overflowing, finds vent for its emotions in the words with which he commences: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a

lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Here the inheritance is in heaven; and the resurrection of Jesus Christ is that by which we have been, through the abundant mercy of God, begotten again to a lively hope of it. But what an inheritance this is—"incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away"! And how it is secured to us—the inheritance itself reserved for us in heaven!—while we, by the power of God, through faith, are kept for it while sojourning here below. So powerful was the influence of this hope on those to whom Peter wrote, that in it they greatly rejoiced, notwithstanding the heaviness, through manifold temptations, of which they were the subjects. The very trial of their faith was precious, in that it would surely be found to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And how what is here said of their present joys demonstrates what their and our future happiness must be! "Whom having not seen, ye love; in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." If faith can give such warmth of affection and such depths of holy joy in Christ, what must it be to see Him for ourselves—to behold Him face to face? And how forcible the exhortation—"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"! And if all our present joy be in Christ by faith, and our position that of waiting to behold Him in glory, how suitable the entreaty of the apostle in the next chapter! "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." It is this hope of an inheritance in heaven which makes us strangers and pilgrims on the earth; and it is in proportion as we maintain our strangership, our pilgrim-character, that the hope will glow brightly in our souls. Yea, and if fiery trials should overtake us, we need not be dismayed, as though

some strange thing had happened to us. Even in this case, says the apostle, "rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Peter, himself an elder, describes himself as a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, and exhorts those who are elders to feed the flock of God; urging, as a motive, "And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." In praying also for all those to whom he writes, the apostle thus speaks of God: "But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus." We are said, in Rom. v. 2, to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God." In Rom. viii., as we have seen, we are said to be "heirs of God." In 1 Thess. ii. 12, we read of "God, Who hath called us unto His kingdom and glory." And here the God of all grace is He Who has "called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus." We have not here the expression, "heavenly calling"; but surely it is the heavenly calling which is thus described.

The inducement held out in 2 Pet. i. 11 to diligence and faithfulness, is, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Then follows the allusion to the vision on the holy mount, which has been already considered as the Gospels passed under review. In the last chapter of this Epistle it is not heaven distinctively which the apostle anticipates; but the passing away, in the day of God, of *the heavens and earth* which now are, to be succeeded by that of which he says, "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." In this post-millennial heavens and earth evil will have no place; all things will then have been made new, and have become the dwelling-place of righteousness — "wherein dwelleth righteousness." But we must pass on.

The 1st Epistle of John, like the Gospel of John, is

most essentially heavenly in the character of the truth it unfolds; but it is rather the display of the heavenly, eternal life down here, than what specially relates to its existence above. The Gospel gives us the manifestation of the eternal life in Him of Whom it is said, "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men." The Epistle presents it in its varied characters and manifestations as existing derivatively in the saints. It commences, indeed, by adverting to its perfect manifestation in Jesus; so that John and the others had seen, and heard, and looked upon, and handled with their hands, and now declared unto the saints, that eternal life which was with the Father, and had been manifested to them: but all this is in order that we might have fellowship with them. "And truly," says the apostle, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." All this is most heavenly; but it is the enjoyment and display of the heavenly life on earth amid existing circumstances—not what will be distinctive of our enjoyment when that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part is done away. Still, this latter is not left out: "Beloved, now are we the sons (*lit.* children) of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." In what perfect harmony is this with all that has been considered! To see Christ as He is; to be, in consequence, like Him—this is what we know as to what we shall be, though it be not yet manifested openly. And mark the certainty with which the apostle writes: "We *know* that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him." Human reason and the unbelief of the heart would say that to be certain of heaven would tend to make us careless as to the way thither. But how does the apostle say this certainty of being with Christ and like Him acts on the soul? "And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." It is only to a new and heavenly nature that the certainty of being with Christ, and like Him, can afford enjoyment. And if, through grace, I am now partaker of a nature which rejoices in hope of this, as

the consummation of my happiness, it is impossible but that I seek present moral conformity to Him, Whose resemblance I hope to bear perfectly when He appears. What saint of God is there who cannot say in the brighter light of our own proper hopes, what the psalmist said in Old-Testament times? "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

The doxology with which the Epistle of Jude concludes, gives us one delightful view of the future blessedness of the saints. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, *and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,* to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." What a view both of God and of our own heavenly future, for those who in these last days have to wend their way through the intricate mazes with which the apostasy has surrounded the path of faith! That path, blessed be God! is as direct as ever. But the by-paths, right and left, are so multiplied and so seductive that it is unspeakable strength and comfort to the heart to know that we are cast on the care of Him Who is able to keep us from falling—able to lead us right on to the end; and then to present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Well may our hearts respond, "To Him be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen."

(*To be continued D.V.*) W.T.

FRAGMENT.

One foot often may strike the other, the tooth sometimes bites the tongue, and many a person has put his finger in his eye; and these things cause pain. But there is forgiveness, and each member has patience and sympathy for the other, or the body could not continue. There should also, therefore, amongst the children of God, be reconciliation, forgiveness, unity, love and goodwill. LUTHER.

Nothing Lacking.

"Lacked ye anything ? And they said nothing."—Luke xxii. 35.

ERE glory claims the Hope,
As earth's resources wane
The door of heaven about to ope—
Never to close again—
Upon the threshold boundless grace
Would bid our souls the way retrace.

A sympathising Hand
In discipline of love
Leads on a remnant band—
Their names enrolled above;
And now the wondrous hour has come
To take them to their heavenly home.

Nothing they lacked below,
The while His wisdom cared;
The meal and oil ne'er ceased to flow,
And all their griefs He shared.
Now God's deliverance is near,
And heaven's resources shall appear.

A desert land in time—
A hating world around!
Unless they know another clime,
How must their woes abound!
Ere yet He lifts His hands to bless,
Their lips must own His faithfulness.

Nothing they lacked when at the door;
Within—God's fulness evermore!

Extracted.

A Storm on the Lake,

OR, "IT SHALL NEVER BE SAID THAT I LEFT THE WORLD IN DEBT."

IN one of the towns situated upon the beautiful Lake of Geneva, where the writer of this narrative was staying, two men were talking together.

Words of dispute arose between them, leading to the remark that one of them would not be alive fifteen days hence.

Why and with what intent this was said, the writer cannot say. Speeches are usually made without meaning; nevertheless, God takes notice of hasty sayings and idle words. Moreover, He often orders the very circumstances to bring about what man chooses to say, as will be seen in this solemn and striking instance.

The man spoken of as soon to die was evidently moved by the statement, for shortly after, he went in a defiant manner into a shop, where he was in the habit of dealing, and with an oath, demanded his bill. He then repeated the words of his companion to the shop-keeper, and added, "It shall never be said that I left the world in debt." The bill was paid, and for the moment all passed as a mere tale that is told. The next day was Sunday.

It was a brilliant cloudless day, with the sun shining in all its splendour, and the heat, so much felt on the borders of the Swiss Lakes, was intense.

The lovely lake, of deep blue colour, appeared in all its beauty and looked like a fixed sea of glass. Despite its being the Lord's Day, the lake was all alive with pleasure seekers. The steamers were crowded, flags flying, and music playing, and even the smallest rowing boats were all engaged. At the height of its beauty and gaiety a warning voice (so to speak) suddenly was heard, as is often the case before a storm in the lake districts; a small cloud was seen peeping over the top of one of the grand mountains. It rapidly spread and grew blacker as it approached.

Within twenty minutes the distant thunder and

heavy rain had broken over the lake and town, and the calm waters had totally changed into the appearance of the troubled sea. It was quite in character with the storm encountered by the disciples when crossing the lake.

A small boat, containing a man, his wife, child, and friend, was seen battling with the waves. At length with difficulty the wife, child and friend were got on to the pier; but before the man could step out, the boat was dashed to pieces, and he sunk beneath the waves, to rise no more in this world.

That man, dear reader, was the very one who, only twenty-four hours before, had boastingly declared: "It shall never be said that I left the world in debt." The wife, though rescued, was in a most prostrate condition. She anxiously desired to know the fate of her husband, and when told that he was drowned, she immediately fell back and died. Thus both husband and wife passed into eternity.

The man who was anxious to pay his debts here has now to learn, if he did not in his closing moments, the solemn fact as to his sins against God. If, in his reckoning, he left out God, and His claims, together with the only and all sufficient remedy in Jesus and His precious blood, it was to his own peril, and will prove his eternal ruin and misery. Here we must leave his solemn case.

And now, dear reader, may I ask, should your end be within twenty-four hours, where are you as to your debts? Righteously straight you may be with man; but how is it with God? Remember, "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10). A guilty conscience with your sins upon you proves you not only to be in debt, but with no means or power to pay it.

It is useless saying, as to God and your sins, that you will at once go, and get your bill and settle it. Neither money nor works of your own will avail; for it is distinctly stated in the word of God that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22).

Have you seriously weighed this? If not, I pray

you to give attention to the fact that it is blood, and blood only, which atones for sin. This is what God claims; but neither you nor any sinner can give it.

If such are the holy and righteous demands of God, who can meet them? Blessed be God; what the sinner cannot provide himself, God has done for him. He Who hates sin loves the sinner, having given His only begotten Son as the everlasting proof of it. That holy and spotless Lamb settled at Calvary the question of sin. There sin's heavy debt was paid to the full; as it is written, "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

His precious blood was shed for the remission of sins, and in virtue of that same blood, He has entered heaven, "having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. ix. 12). Thus redemption is accomplished, God is satisfied, and the Redeemer, on account of His one sacrifice, has "for ever sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 12). What remains therefore but for God to tell it forth? The gospel of God proclaims to all, without distinction, a free and full forgiveness, through faith in the blood of Jesus. He declares His righteousness in clearing the poor guilty debtor. Precious gospel, making known a just God, yet a Saviour!

God could not pass the sinner by,
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save, yet righteous be.

The sin alights on Jesus' head,
'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid;
Stern justice can demand no more,
And mercy can dispense her store.

The sinner who believes is free—
Can say the Saviour died for me;
Can point to the atoning blood,
And say, This is my peace with God.

Have you this peace, dear reader, through the Saviour's blood? Are you justified by it? Is Jesus the precious Substitute for your sins? Can you take up the language at the end of the 4th chapter of Romans, and say, "Who was delivered for (my) our offences, and was raised again for our justification"?

If so, everlasting peace with God must follow; for "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). If you neglect the solemn question of your sins, and despise this pardon and peace, provided at such a cost, you will have to encounter a far worse storm than the one you have here read about on the lake.

The Saviour that died, Who is now in glory, will according to His own promise, soon come again, when all true believers, now called to wait for Him, will be caught up to meet Him in the air, to be with Him and like Him for ever. But those rejecting Him and God's message of love will be left behind to be overtaken by judgment, for "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8).

Mark the two things stated against those who will be punished when Jesus is revealed from heaven, "They know not God, and obey not the gospel." Consider it, and learn whether you are still a stranger to God and disobeying the gospel of salvation. If it be so, and you continue without Christ, there is no hope, save to meet the coming Jesus as your Judge. Delay not therefore to turn to Him Who declares, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," and thus you will escape the approaching storm of judgment and be ready for the glory of the Saviour's presence, instead of flaming fire.

"Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. xxiv. 44).

G.G.

Heaven—14.

REVELATION remains—a book which of itself, as to its bearing on our present subject, might well furnish matter for an essay as long again as that we must now draw to a close. The second and third chapters afford a sevenfold presentation of heavenly glory for the encouragement of those who, amid decline and apostasy and evil, seek in the strength of grace to overcome. To eat of the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God; to receive a crown of life, and not be hurt of the second death; to eat of the hidden manna, and to receive a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it; to have power given him over the nations, even as Christ has received of the Father; and to have given to him the morning-star; to be clothed in white raiment, and instead of having his name blotted out of the book of life, to have it confessed by Christ before His Father and His angels; to be kept from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth; to be made a pillar in the temple of Him of Whom Christ speaks as "My God," and to go no more out; to have written upon him the name of His God, and the name of the city of His God, the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from His God, and to have written upon him Christ's new name; to have granted to him to sit with Christ in His throne, as He has overcome and sat down with the Father in His throne—such are the promises of future rest, and fellowship, and triumph, and blessedness, and security, and stability, and glory, held out to him that overcometh.

After this, a door opens in heaven itself; and the prophet of Patmos relates to us both what he beheld there, and the course of events on earth which he was given to witness from this heavenly position. A throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne; and He that sat on it was to look upon like a jasper and a

sardine stone. Round about are four-and-twenty seats, and upon them four-and-twenty elders in white raiment, with crowns of gold on their heads. There is a rainbow, moreover, round about the throne, and before it a sea of glass, and seven lamps of fire burning, which, we are told, are the seven Spirits of God. Four living creatures are in the midst of the throne and round about it, who rest not day and night, saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." When they do thus give glory, and honour, and thanks to Him that sits on the throne, the four-and-twenty elders fall down and worship Him, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord." A book is seen by the apostle in the right hand of Him that sits on the throne, a seven-sealed book. The question is raised, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" But neither in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth, was one found able to open the book, or so much as to look thereon. John weeps, even though in the Spirit in heaven, because no one is found worthy to open and read the book, or to look thereon. But his tears are wiped away when he beholds, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the living creatures, and of the elders, stands a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God. He comes and takes the book out of the right hand of Him that sits upon the throne: this is the signal for prostrate worship and universal praise. The living creatures and elders fall down before the Lamb; they sing a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and has redeemed to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign over the earth." (See N.Tr.) To the chord thus struck by those who form the innermost circle around the throne, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands

of thousands of angels respond; and then, as it were by anticipation, "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, are heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." The strain of heavenly harmony thus raised in heaven's innermost circle of glory and of blessing having been caught from lip to lip, till it is echoed back by the utmost bounds of redeemed creation, returns as it were in full chorus to the centre from whence it proceeded: "and the four living creatures said, Amen; and the four-and-twenty elders fell down and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever."

I dwell not further on these, nor on the twelve succeeding chapters. The difference between heaven as exhibited in Hebrews, and heaven as exhibited in the Apocalypse in considerable. In the Apocalypse it is the place whence the judgments issue by which Christ's rights are asserted and vindicated, and by which the corrupters and destroyers of the earth are themselves destroyed. It is the place whence, as in chap. xix., Christ Himself, the Rider upon the white horse, and the armies which were in heaven—the saints previously caught up there, and seen in heaven again and again, from chap. iv. to chap. xix.—come forth to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. But one event in chap. xix must not be passed over: it is the marriage of the Lamb. Espoused on earth, as a chaste virgin, to Christ, knowing by faith that she is the object of the full affection of His heart, and nourished and cherished by Him according to Eph. v., she is still not the Lamb's wife till the period marked in this chapter. In expectancy she is so now; and forming for Christ under the hand of her Divine Fashioner, the Holy Ghost: but it is not until the church is completed, and in glory—and more than this, the false pretender judged—that the voice is heard, "as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of

many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Yes, it will be then that the mutual affections of Christ and His elect bride (always perfect and infinite on the part of the heavenly Bridegroom) will not only receive their perfect and mutual satisfaction, but the nuptials in which this is consummated will be publicly solemnised, and give occasion to those bursts of loudest praise and acclamation with which, as one reads the prophecy, one seems to hear the expanse of heaven resound. A voice comes out of the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great." And again, when the marriage has been spoken of: "and He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

The twentieth chapter gives us the thousand years' reign of Christ, and of all those who have part in the first resurrection—"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." At the close of this period, when Satan has been loosed for a little season to stir up the last revolt against God, and when judgment, final and overwhelming, has overtaken both him and those whom he deceives; when the judgment of the wicked dead before the great white throne has taken place, and heaven and earth have fled away from before the face of Him that sitteth on the throne; when, as John sees it in a vision, a new heaven and a new earth are made, in which there is no more sea; then does he see also, "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The last

glimpse afforded of her by inspiration, as she enters on those everlasting ages, which succeed not only her own travail and sorrow upon earth—*that* had closed a thousand years before — but which succeed the millennial dispensation, the period of the kingdom, which, at the end, is delivered up to God, even the Father, from which point, all dispensations having run their course, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is all in all—the very last glimpse we get of the church, is to see her in her full bridal glory, as when the marriage of the Lamb had just come, His wife having made herself ready! "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband!" It would seem too that in the new heavens and earth, which succeed the millennial state, she will still retain a peculiar place. The habitation of God through the Spirit even now, she will then retain this high and holy character. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is 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." The happy effects of this residence of God among men (the church being, as would appear, His tabernacle) are then described. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; (this He will have done, for the church long before): and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." All evil and evildoers, shut up for ever in the lake of fire, which is the second death: all things else made new: the whole of that new creation becomes the inheritance with Christ of those who have overcome. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things: and I will be his God, and he shall be My son."

It has just been said, that the last glimpse of the church, which inspiration affords, is at the commencement of the eternal ages, and that she still retains her full bridal character and glory. There is another view given us — not a later one — but another. It is a

detailed symbolic description of her glory, as connected with the millennial earth. All in it, however, which is essential to her own state, will remain for ever. And where is there a saint, whatever the amount of his intelligence as to the import of the symbols employed, whose heart has not been warmed and cheered and filled with holy joy in hope, as he has read this description of the heavenly city? Its golden street, its jasper walls, its gates of pearl, its foundations of precious stones—do they not impart to the soul an impression of magnificence and glory, which the tongue cannot utter, which human language is too poor and feeble to express? And then the relationship—the bride, the Lamb's wife. The corporate order, arrangement and stability. A city—the pilgrim and stranger state exchanged for eternal establishment and rest. The dimensions—that great city. No longer "a little flock," as the children of faith have been in each successive generation. In the aggregate, they are a great city. Then there is the character—holy. The name—Jerusalem; recalling to the heart, even in that which has been and will be the earthly copy of this divine and heavenly original, the earthly Jerusalem, such thoughts of grace and of glory. The source—descending *out of heaven*, FROM GOD. To crown all, there are the words, "Having the glory of God." Yes, it will be the fulfilment to the uttermost and beyond everything that either faith or hope can now conceive, of the words, "heirs of God"—"called to His kingdom and glory"—"called to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus." The One seen sitting on the throne in chap. iv. was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone. Of the city it is here said, "Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal." Conformed thus to the glory of God, and become the vessel for its display, the city has no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. It has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God lightens

it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. The happy nations of the spared inhabitants of the millennial earth, walk in the light of it. The rays of the Divine glory, softened and qualified by the medium through which they pass, the jasper walls of the golden city, give light to the nations of the earth, fulfilling thus the ancient prophecy to Jerusalem below, "Arise, shine: for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The gates of the city are not shut at all by day, and there is no night there. The glory and honour of the nations are brought to it; but anything that defileth or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, can have no entrance within its holy precincts. A pure river of water of life issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, flows through the midst of the street. On either side of the river there is the tree of life, its fruit furnishing immortal food to the immortal inhabitants, while the leaves of the tree minister healing to the nations below. There is no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb are in the city; and His servants serve Him. They see His face, and bear His name on their foreheads, and reign throughout one uninterrupted, cloudless, millennial day. Bright, blessed, glorious vision of what our eternal home will be! May its brightness light up the whole path by which we are hastening onwards to it; and may it endear to our hearts the hope of Him Who announces Himself to us as the bright and morning star, whose presence, while it introduces us to all this blessedness, is itself the highest and chief element of which all this blessedness consists.

(*Concluded.*) W.T.

CHRIST THE FIRST-FRUITS.

Christ is raised from the dead, the pledge that those fallen asleep shall consequently rise. It is the proof that all men shall live, unjust no less than just. He is the "first-fruits of those fallen asleep." W.K.

Some Notes as to the New Doctrine Concerning the Sonship of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

IT is now asserted by some that the relationship of Son only commenced at the Incarnation, and the reasons they assign for this statement appear to be two.

1st. That it is not stated in the Scriptures in so many words that Christ was the Son before Incarnation.

2nd. They quote Ps. ii. 7, as showing that this Sonship commenced at his birth into this world.

Evidently this teaching is in direct conflict with what the church has held for 1,900 years, and with the teaching of the servants of God, such as J. N. Darby, J. G. Bellett and others by whom we have been so greatly blessed. So that we are bound to heed the exhortation of 2 Tim. iii. 14, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, etc.," and 1 John ii. 24, "Let that therefore abide in you which ye have heard from the beginning," etc.

To take up the second of the above stated reasons *first* : it is evident that Ps. ii. 7, refers to the presentation of the Christ to men and as J.N.D. writes, "It is One Who — begotten in time — is owned Son by Jehovah." If we turn to the account of His miraculous birth in Luke, we do not find any reference to, or revelation of the Father, but the birth of that Holy One is attributed to another Person of the Godhead, viz. : the Holy Ghost.

Let us now turn to consider the first of the reasons recited above, and try, as briefly as possible, to indicate what the scriptures tell us of the Son of God, of Whom in the days of His flesh He Himself declared, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father."

But before doing so we should say that in this new teaching not only is Sonship before incarnation denied, but the title of "the Word" is held not to apply to our Lord before incarnation. We should also point out that those who bring this new doctrine do not question

"the eternal Personality of the Lord Jesus Christ." So that in their view He was a divine Person before He came into the world but *not* the Son of the Father.

On the other hand the revelation that has come to us, and upon which our souls have been nourished and fed, is of a Father Whose love in giving His Son is only equalled by the love of the Son Who gave Himself.

Having thus endeavoured to clear the ground, let us turn to a few scriptures for light on the subject.

First of all as we believe the Old Testament "lies open in the New," we may expect to find there some reference to the relationships in the Persons of the Godhead which are revealed later.

Gen. xxii. 12. "Thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." In the wonderful scene described in this chapter, while it is said "they went both of them together," the emphasis is laid not upon the surrender of the son, but upon the gift of the father, and brings before us that infinite love of which our Lord speaks in John iii. 16. *Ps. xl.* 7, 8. "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O My God." Here is the voice of One with divine competency announcing His coming to take a subject place. *Prov. viii.* 30. "Then I was by Him as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him." With the New Testament in our hands do we not recognise the picture presented to us in John i. 14, "as of an only-begotten with a father," and that as a relationship existing before creation?

And now we come to the full revelation which belongs to the period: — "But Christ being come" (*Heb. ix.* 11), and would quote a few passages to show that both titles "the Word" and "the Son" belong to our Lord Jesus Christ from eternity.

Luke xx. 13. "Then said the lord of the vineyard . . . I will send my beloved son." Here our Lord in tracing the history of rebellious Israel pictures the husbandman as sending his beloved son. Evidently then, He was the Son beloved of the Father before He became man.

John i. 14. "And the Word was made flesh . . . (. . . as of an only begotten with a father) (New Trans.). The Word, Who became flesh was God, as is distinctly and emphatically stated in the beginning of the chapter, and that same blessed Person, is seen as a son with a father.

John i. 18. "The only begotten Son which is (*ho on*) in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him." This, read with v. 14, confirms the eternal relationship of the Son with the Father.

John iii. 16. This well-known passage, in the words of the Son Himself, tells us of God's great love in the gift of His Son. Clearly then He had a Son to give.

I need not multiply passages, and will only quote one more from the Gospel of John.

John xvi. 27, 28. One could scarcely have plainer and more emphatic testimony than this. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." Yes, Lord, we believe this and would bow in worship. Lastly, I would cite two passages from the Epistles in which creation is attributed to the Son, proving that this blessed relationship was indeed "in the beginning."

Col. i. 13 *and* 16. "His dear Son . . . for by Him were all things created."

Heb. i. 2. "His Son . . . by whom also He made the worlds."

So let us rejoice to know that "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." (1 John iv. 14.)

J. M. WOODMAN.

Canticles.—2.

AFTER this we have a description of his majesty coming out of the wilderness. It attracts; and the daughters of Jerusalem are exhorted to go forth, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart. All are

occupied with him. With what is he occupied? Is he thinking of his majesty? Do his thoughts centre round his crown? He is occupied, but it is with her who is his love and nothing else. Of her he thinks, with her beauty and sweetness he is taken up. She had failed, but his love could not fail. "Behold, thou art fair, my love, behold, thou are fair, thou hast dove's eyes" (chap. iv. 1.) Before he had endorsed what she said of herself, here, unasked, he expresses what she is. What he said :—chap. i. 15, he reiterates at the beginning of this chapter. How little could she have expected this after the way she had acted. But he does more than this. At first he had only spoken of her eyes; now he gives a full description of his spouse. Nothing escapes his notice; with every feature he is conversant, and all find favour in his sight, so we read, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee" (chap. iv. 7.) Comely and fragrant is she to him, beautiful objects of nature and art alone can describe her appearance; the most valuable spices that were cultivated must be enumerated and massed together to express her sweetness. What delight he finds in her! How true, how deep, must be that love which is thus occupied with such an one as she! To him she is all that is comely, all that is fragrant, and this he tells her himself. She knew his desire for her presence with him, she learns from his lips what she is in his eyes. Another opportunity is offered her of responding to his invitation; but how does she use it? He calls to her from without, not to go out to him, but to open the door that he might enter the chamber where she was. But a short time before she had taken him into her mother's chamber. He stands without and tells her of his condition, his "head filled with dew and his locks with the drops of the night," surely she will at once open the door to him. She hears his voice, knows what he says, but remains where she is. "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?" Chap v. 3. Self comes in and keeps her from

opening the door. At first we saw her thinking of the trouble it will cost her. Before, when he had spoken, she intimated that his invitation is premature, now she would tell him his call was out of season. Need we wonder at her? Have not many practically acted as she did? Again he withdraws himself, he could not act otherwise, for she must be made sensible of her coldness. Yet he would assure her of the unchanging character of his love. She might change or grow cold, he could not. She opens the door, but he was gone. Was that all she found? In his love he leaves a token of affection which she well understood. "I rose to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock." Whence came this? "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door." He had anointed the handle of the door with this perfume in token of his unabated affection, even when she was cold towards him. What proof could she give him of her love? His withdrawal witnessed of her remissness. What a proof had he left of his, as her hands dropped with myrrh, and her fingers with sweet scented myrrh on the handles of the lock.

A second time she seeks him abroad in the streets. Her remissness draws her a second time into a position unsuited for such an one. The watchmen find her without and put her to shame as they took away her veil. Her companions are made acquainted with her condition, as she sends a message by them to her beloved if they found him. She might have spoken to him face to face, but she would not, and now she is reduced to be uncovered by the keepers of the wall and to solicit the help of her companions to recover her beloved. To their request about him, she answers at once, giving a full description of his appearance. He had seen beauty in her, she had seen comeliness in him. Suffering as she did for her conduct towards him, she is once more with him (for he was willing to be found of her) and he is proved to be unchanged, for, as before, he speaks first. He waits not to hear

what she has to say in extenuation of her fault; he speaks not to upbraid or condemn, but to assure her of her beauty in his eyes. "Thou are beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah; comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners." As before he has but one object of special delight—herself. "There are three-score queens, and four-score concubines, and virgins without number. My love, my undefiled, is but one." How perfect it was, his love. It had an object at the beginning of the song from which nothing would divert it. Unworthy of it she was, but he could not change. He sought her, he desired her, his dove, his undefiled was but one, there was not another to be compared with her in his eyes.

At the close of the song (chap viii. 12) she avails herself of an opportunity of showing his value in her eyes. "My vineyard, which is mine, is before me; thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred." But is this what he cared for? Would the thousand pieces of silver satisfy him? Let us hear his response: "Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it." Her voice to him was more refreshing than any present of money she could bring. The sound of her voice he desired to hear, nothing short of that would fully please him. What he had said in chap. ii. 14 is what he concludes with here. His last recorded wish is to hearken to her voice. "Cause me to hear it." In him there was — in Him Who is really figured here there is — no change.

From Bible Treasury, Vol. VII., Page 225.

"What Thou willest, that would *I* will, Lord!
I would will it since Thou will'st it, Lord!
E'en as Thou will'st, may my will be, Lord!
May none but Thou my will e'er change, Lord!
O faithful Lord, keep Thou me willing,
My restless spirit daily stilling!"

From the Dutch.

Notes for Students on the Gospel of John.

BY MR. J. N. DARBY.

FROM A BIBLE READING AT ROCHDALE IN THE YEAR 1877.

THE first three chapters are before the Lord's public ministry, "John was not yet cast into prison." In the fourth chapter, He leaves Judea; the Jews are always rejected from chap. i. John starts with rejection and election all through. The *Jews* are always reprobate. There is no historical account of Christ.

Chapter i. is all that He is, except what He is in relationship with others. Not Messiah. Chapter ii. is the millennium. Chapter iii. the new nature and the cross. Chapter iv., He leaves the Jews, takes up the Samaritans. *Eternal* life, and the Holy Ghost, power of the Spirit, and worship in Spirit. Chapter v. Son of God, gives life; and the responsibility of those who reject Him—"And ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life. Chap. vi. Son of man coming down and sacrificed, and going up again. The food of those who believe whilst He is away. Chapter vii. Can't keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and in the meantime gives the Holy Ghost until they can keep it. Chap. viii. His word rejected, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you." Chapter ix. His works rejected, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Chapter x. He has His sheep spite of all the enemies. Chapter xi. and xii. God bearing witness to Him in resurrection; chap. xi. as Son of man, chap. xii. Son of David, as He rides in on the ass; to take the title of Son of man, He must die. His answer to the Greeks, verse 24, shows this—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "Son of man" brings Him to death, and the disciples must take up the cross. Chapter xiii. *"Supper going on,"* not

"ended." All *water* here, not blood. He could not stay *here,* so He fits them to be with Him *there.* Chap. xiv. He tells them what they would get when He was away.

A good point of chap. xiii. is vv. 31-32, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him," not only sin put away by His death, but God perfectly glorified.

There are two parts in chapter xiv. They are in Him, and He is in them; what He was on earth, and what He is in heaven.

Chap. xv. Him; the disciples, *dispensational* place with Him on earth; no vital relationship, Messiah with the remnant. At verse 26, *We* come in, with the sending the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

Chapter xvi. The Comforter comes, bears witness, and also shows the divine relationship with the Father.

Chap. xvii. He has done with the disciples, and we are allowed to come and hear the communications about us, that pass between the Father and the Son.

Chap. xviii. is all historical, Gethsemane and the cross.

Chap. xix. No suffering either in the garden or on the cross. John gives us the burnt offering aspect.

Chap. xx. is all through the Christian time from the resurrection to the remnant. Read Zech. xii. 10. The subject of John's Gospel is: The Father and the Son, and Eternal Life come down to earth; *not* going to heaven.

Chap. xxi. is the thousand years, first the remnant, fishing, and nets don't break like Luke v. and they bring what they catch (of all nations) to the fish (the remnant), Christ already has; Dan. xii., Ezek. xxxvii. Peter is to follow and die, John to go on to the end.

The destruction of Jerusalem closed the possibility of any going on with the Jews. Though God closed all dealings with the earth, it did not hinder souls being brought to heaven.

Changed into His Likeness.

HE sat by a furnace of seven-fold heat,
As He watched o'er the gleaming ore;
And closer He bent with a searching gaze,
As He heated it more and more.

He knew He had ore that would stand the test,
And He wanted the finest gold
To make a crown for the King to wear,
Set with gems of a price untold

So He laid *our* gold in the searching fire,
Though we fain would have said Him nay!
And He watched the dross, which *we* could not see
As it melted, and burned away.

So the gold burned on, with a brighter glow,
Though our eyes were so full of tears
We saw but the fire, not the Master's hand,
And trembled with anxious fears.

Did we think it would please His loving heart
To cause one moment's pain?
Ah, no! but He saw, in the present loss
The bliss of eternal gain.

So He waited still, with a watchful gaze,
With a love both sweet and sure;
And the gold had no more of the searching fire
Than was needed to make it pure.

And the gold grew brighter, and still more bright,
Till it mirrored the form above,
That bent o'er the fire, though we saw Him not,
With looks of ineffable love.

He has lifted our gold from the furnace now,
Too bright for our eyes to see;
Till the dust that dims them is wiped away
On the shores of eternity. ANON.

The Image of the Master.

AN old Italian sculptor one day called together the students whom he had been instructing in his art and told them he was leaving for a distant country and had a gift for them. He handed each of them a parcel and went away. When the master was gone, the parcels were opened and found to contain nothing but a lump of clay. "Is that all the master thinks I am worth?" exclaimed one of the students, and, seizing the lump of clay, he threw it into a corner, and angrily turned away. The other students marvelled, but carefully wrapped up the pieces of clay and took them home.

Weeks and months passed by, and one day the news went round that the master had returned. He sent a message to his students that they should come and show what they had done with the gift he had given them. They came at the appointed time. The first brought out his shapeless lump of clay as he had received it from the master's hand, except that it was covered with dust and dirt and now quite useless. He could only hang his head in shame and confusion before the master's look of sorrow. The second produced a brick, nothing very ornamental, but shapely and well-proportioned and fit to use in the building of the king's palace. The third had fashioned a vase of great beauty. And the fourth—his lump of clay had been transformed into an image of the master!

The Lord has given to each believer one little life to live for Him. Surely none of us would wish to be like the careless one, who despised and neglected his gift—a picture of those "who mind earthly things" (Philippians iii. 19). All of us have not the same ability. My life may be ordinary and commonplace, and yours may be so full of sweetness and fragrance as to attract others to your Lord and Master. If so, I must at least strive to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Timothy ii. 15).

None of us need despair, however, for the apostle

writes, "We all," not some favoured ones, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Corinthians iii. 18).

In the measure that we are kept beholding the glory of the Lord, as revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, we shall be more and more conformed to His image, until the day when we shall be transformed and "shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii. 2).

An Umpire, an Interpreter, or a Saviour?

EVERY attentive reader of the Bible must be more or less interested in the remarkable fact of the Book of Job being included in it, as well as with the character of its contents.

That so large a book of 42 chapters should be occupied with certain incidents in the life of one man not a descendant of Abraham, or about whose ancestry we know nothing, is in itself remarkable; and the date can only be fixed approximately as before Moses and the giving of the law, so that certain marks of this kind being absent we are left to find in the book itself the proof of Divine inspiration, and the probable purpose of God in His infinite goodness in guiding to its being included in the scriptures of truth.

Our object in this brief paper is not so much to speak of its remarkable contents, as to note some striking points of usefulness in this day, thousands of years after —in short, some lessons for our day in this Book of Job.

Is it not a marvellous fact in itself to find that God is so much interested in one individual, and he not a son of Abraham, that He calls the attention of Satan to Job and his unique character: "A perfect and an upright man, there is none like him in the earth."

God Himself then calls Satan's attention to Job, and his righteous life, which Satan attributes to the fact

that God has blessed him in basket and store, and with prosperity in every way. Thereupon God allows the adversary to test him by the most severe losses, and even bodily affliction; but Job takes it all as from the hand of God; and Satan retires so far baffled.

The story of the visit and efforts of Job's three friends who hasten to his side in sympathy is of the deepest interest; but they hastily jump to the conclusion that the losses and disasters must be chastisement from the hand of God for secret sins and iniquity; so their accusations only increase the agony of poor Job, and draw out from him self-justification, and a demand for justice from God. He sighs for a daysman—*"an umpire"*—who could lay one hand upon God, and the other hand upon him, and adjust the matter of cause and effect between them.

Upon this, an interpreter comes upon the scene in the person of Elihu, but he fails to satisfy the afflicted and distressed patriarch. Elihu is righteously angry that Job should so justify himself. He says, "I will answer that God is greater than man" . . . "if there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand to show unto man his uprightness (his duty) then he will be gracious unto him and say, Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom."

This and much more is said, but Job is still unreached. He clings to his own righteousness until God Himself takes up the controversy, and soon the effect is seen. God does not appeal to the law or His word in any way, but to the marks of His power and wisdom in the earth, the sea, and the heavens; and the effect is soon apparent. Job is silenced. He says, "I lay my hand upon my mouth, I am vile."

But we refrain from further notice of the details, although so deeply interesting. Our object, already hinted at, is to meet some of the objections and arguments still found in the minds of many persons, after nearly two thousand years of the gospel testimony; who turn back to a similar line of argument, as if its weakness had not been proved over and over again.

Has not history proved abundantly, apart from the scriptures of truth, that the only thing that will meet man's need, our need, is a Saviour?

The point that has to be reached in every soul sooner or later is, "If any say, I have sinned, and perverted what was right, and it hath not been requited to me" . . . "He hath delivered my soul from going into the pit, and my life shall see the light."

We write in the hope that this brief article may meet the eye of some unsettled souls, dissatisfied with themselves and things around them, longing for peace within, yet unready to turn to God. We meet with many such, and their arguments often recur—Why does God allow this? Why does not God put down that? Dear friends, just look a moment at the other side of the question. Have you ever read the address delivered by the apostle Paul to the philosophers of Athens on Mars' Hill? He does not charge them with evil or ignorance, but says, "I perceive that in all things ye are *too religious.*" They had reared a great number of altars, yet still felt that the true light was needed, so one altar was reared "to the unknown God"; and the apostle says, "Him Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Mark also this: "He—God—hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained." Nearly 2,000 years have passed away since these memorable words of warning were uttered. Has the world improved in the way of righteousness towards God? Does any sober, thoughtful person really think so? What is the verdict of an upright earnest soul who looks out soberly and righteously upon the state of the so-called most advanced nations of the earth? Great Britain; in America, Europe? Look where you will, are we any nearer, "Peace upon earth and goodwill to man"? Who will say so?

Yet God lingers in longsuffering mercy, "not willing that any should perish." If He were to deal in summary judgment with evil, where would He stay His

hand? Paul's Epistle to the Romans is the most complete answer to these arguments. Man tested by the law is a transgressor, and without law a sinner; and so God will deal with man in perfect righteousness accordingly, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

If any reader is unwilling to take the place of a guilty sinner before God, let him (or her) measure himself by the side of Job in the presence of God. But remember the verdict of scripture at the beginning of this day of grace—"There is none righteous, *no, not one.*" God has but one word to say to this world to-day and that is, *Will you have Christ?* The day of probation was over where Christ was rejected, and the door deliberately shut by man's own hand, so to speak, when Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was sent, by the awful death of stoning, to join his beloved Master.

All the long centuries of grace and truth since are comprehended in that one blessed phrase, "Not willing that any should perish." God has not added one word since to the ample testimony of His rich and abounding grace in the gospel of the grace of God concerning His Son.

Reader, if you wait for further light and truth, you will wait in vain. Be wise in time. T.R.

The Two Adams—1.

(1 Corinthians xv. 45-50.)

THE thought on my heart is to speak a little as to the two Adams, as here brought before us.

There is a wonderful contrast presented in scripture between the two Adams—the Adam of the Garden of Eden, and the last Adam, Who is a life-giving spirit.

The contrast between these two is not merely a matter for the mind of man to be interested in, or to occupy itself with. The fact of the two beings before us is the wonderful way of God in setting forth His own glory. It was just this; He took occasion of the

failure, misconduct, and ruin of Adam and Eve in Eden, to bring forth the exceeding riches and the magnificence of His own character of truthfulness and large-hearted grace, both of which Satan had denied in speaking to Eve, when he told her that God did not mean what He said, that He was niggardly and narrow-minded and that He wished to keep from her something that would be of use to her and Adam—the knowledge of good and evil. God's answer to that came out when sin had been brought in, and the whole human family in our first parents had been utterly lost and ruined. God's truth, and the large-heartedness of His grace and mercy, came out, and He said, in the presence of Adam and Eve, to Satan, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

Now, one of the things that strike me in these last days is, how little the minds generally of religious persons are really cleared entirely from the first Adam, and recognise everything in connection with the first Adam to be dead loss, and if they have got anything whatever, that they have it in the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me briefly pass down the account given in the end of Romans v. 12: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The thing that distinguished Adam was that sin entered into the world by him. Well, the heart might say, I grant you that, but that does not prove the complete ruin of the whole race. Does it not? Why, death passed upon all men, for that ALL HAVE SINNED. When they begat a son, he was begotten with their own likeness and character; and in Genesis that character is strongly marked in the murder of Abel, for Cain withstood God, and would not, even in type, recognise the sacrifice as appointed by God.

Verse 15 speaks also of that one, "through the offence of one many be dead." In verse 16, again, sin and "the judgment was by one to condemnation." In verse 17, "By one man's offence death reigned by one." Verse 18, "By the offence of one judgment

came upon all men to condemnation." Verse 19, "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." When God gave the perfect description of what man ought to be—to love God with all his heart, and all his soul, and with all his mind — the effect was this, it caused the offence to abound. And on which of these verses can anybody build for any comfort? God has said, "Wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men"; not merely governmental wrath, but God in heaven judging righteous judgment. That is the picture God gives of the father and mother from whom the whole race descend, and everyone has a likeness to his father and mother. Where is there a single stone then for his foot to rest upon? Ah! but look at the other side, not only the contrast, striking as it is, but it is a contrast brought in, taking occasion by the very ruin, so that there is not one single thing in the Lord Jesus Christ, not one, of which I could say with intelligence, "I hope that will stand me in stead," without owning the entire ruin of all connected with the first Adam.

Everything is in ruin and under judgment, and God well understood what He had pledged Himself to, when He said, "the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." He well understood the condition to which our first parents were sunk. There was not a thing that met His mind in either of them, not a power they could work forth in any way for blessing to themselves. They were not only then and there in a predicament, but there was no power in them. Whatever was to be done, it was the seed of the woman alone could do it. The serpent had power, and unless God could find some one who could come in to put his foot on the head of that serpent, all were lost, lost, lost, for eternity; every single individual would have been lost. But God could do it, and God would do it, and speaks of Him Who was His champion to put down every mark of evil Satan had brought into the nether heavens and nether earth, and to bring in a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

See what is said of this same Adam in this same series—Romans v. 15: "If through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." We have thus the antagonism of God in His love against the ruined state of the creature, and not a single thing but God and Christ — not one. It is all the gift of God through Christ. All that He finds in the sinner is death, and bondage, and corruption—nothing else whatever. He goes on again (verse 16), "The free gift is of many offences unto justification." What did He do as an answer to those offences? He brings justification. To whom does He bring it? To man, whose mouth is stopped, and who has not one word to say for himself. "They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." Verse 18, "By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Lastly, verse 21, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Then, again, beloved friends, if I have got connected with the last Adam, I have in Him that which just tells me how God has taken occasion of my ruin individually to set forth His Almighty power, and the riches of His grace in Christ, and nothing else whatever. My eyes are brought then to Christ, and all I look at in myself is utter ruin; but there is a Saviour. I am never turning to myself, but I am turning to Him Whom God has thrust in against the will of man—no one can deny it is against the will of man. Christ has set forth the virtues of His salvation, and when Satan found Him in the world to do that work, the hatred of man came out against Him, and man came to be a destroyer. I take these two persons, and one is here, the other there. Now on whom is my back turned, and to which is my face turned? Have I my back turned clean against Adam, and the whole family of which I was a member? There is nothing but ruin there, it is no use turning to

it; it is ruin from first to last, and I will set my face Christward and Godward. I cannot look this way and that way at the same time.

It is good to know the contrast as to what I was when found by Christ. Mine was not a living soul when Christ picked it up; it was a living soul when made by God, not when Christ picked it up. As to the one to whom I look for blessing, which is it? Have you been thoroughly cleaned out of everything that grew on the stock of the Adam and Eve family?

Now let me call attention to the use God makes of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think here again, beloved friends, if I may express it in simplicity of heart before you — I think there is great shortcoming in the present day in presenting God's thoughts to those whose consciences are in any measure awake, and a want in many who, I do not doubt, are the Lord's, of setting to their seal the work of the Lord towards poor sinners.

I would just like to remark as to the difference on the great day of atonement between the atonement and the Azazel, or scape-goat. The blood carried in was for God; it was proclaiming that to be the mercy-seat. Through the rent veil is the way the believer draws nigh, and when inside he finds on the throne the Lamb. The scape-goat had the sins confessed over him, and took the sins away to a land not inhabited. That is the part I want to look at in detail. First, as to clearing the ground on the question of sin, God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; and, if I am to have confidence in the thought of meeting him, I must have known that which will enable me to meet Him Who knows everything connected with my ruin. G.V.W.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

"In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me up upon a rock."—Psalm xxvii. 5.

"When Ye Come Together" or The Christian Company.

(1 Corinthians xi. 18, 20, 33; xiv. 23, 26.)

WHICH company of Christians is right? Or are they all wrong? Is it possible to meet together as Christians did in the days of the apostles? If so, is it worth while?

These questions undoubtedly arise in the minds of many young believers in the Lord Jesus who are bewildered by the number of sects into which Christians are divided. Alas, many become discouraged and fall in with the existing confusion, joining the most convenient or most attractive congregation in their neighbourhood. But there are others who are earnest in their desire to find answers to these questions in the scriptures, and for them this paper is written, with the prayer that God will use it for their encouragement. *Guidance is to be found in the scriptures to meet the present-day difficulties of the Christian company.* So take courage.

We are, of course, dealing in this paper with a company of true believers in the Lord Jesus, not with a company consisting largely of unconverted people needing the gospel. As regards a company of believers, blessing from God is not *only* to be measured by the conversions which result from gospel work. The edification (or "building up") of those who are already converted is hardly, if at all, less important in the sight of God than the conversion of the unsaved. Worship (*e.g.*, praise and thanksgiving) ought not to be regarded as inferior in importance either to the "building up" of believers or to the "conversion" of the unsaved. Now, edification and worship are connected with the phrase, "When ye come together," which is the title of this paper.

We cannot worship God acceptably nor edify one another truly except as our hearts and tongues are subject to the Holy Spirit of God. *Indifference (or disobedience) to the scriptures on our part grieves and*

hinders the Holy Spirit, and is one reason why worship and edification are found in such feeble measure among Christians to-day. If we desire to give to God and to one another what is really according to the Spirit, let us see what Scripture has to say about our "coming together." Many can testify from experience that there is more enjoyment and more blessing when scriptural principles are followed, as far as they are understood, than when there is indifference to them.

Four times the Apostle Paul uses the expression "when ye come together" in 1 Corinthians, besides using other similar expressions. In these words the Holy Ghost (by Whom he wrote) assumes that Christians make it a practice to "come together." The expression used in 1 Corinthians xi. 18, "When ye come together in the church," emphasises the idea of an assembled company. Here it is perhaps well to point out that the Greek word, translated "church" 112 times in the New Testament, literally means "that which is called out" (see Young's "Analytical Concordance," etc.), and is invariably used of a company, never of a material building. The word is peculiarly applicable to the company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who were called out from idolatry on the one hand and Judaism on the other.

There are three important questions answered in 1 Corinthians as regards the Christian company.

1. *Of whom should the Christian company consist?*

Chapters i. to x. of the Epistle are largely occupied with this question. Space would not admit of a detailed consideration of this subject here, but perhaps the answer to be found in these chapters can be summarised as follows: Those who—

(*a*) Give the Lord Jesus Christ the pre-eminent place in their hearts and lives (chap. i.).

(*b*) Subordinate their natural intelligence to the authority of the Holy Spirit (chaps. ii. and iii.).

(*c*) Submit their occupations and recreations to the test whether they are for the glory of God (chaps. v., vi., vii.).

(*d*) Reject as idolatry all conceptions of God not found in the scriptures (chaps. viii. and x.).

The Spirit of God also gives authority for the exclusion from the Christian company of some who are called brothers (chap v. 11). Here it is necessary to observe that a person who substitutes *ideas* of God, evolved from the human intellect, for the *revelation* of God in the scriptures is an idolater.

In 1 Corinthians i. to x. *we are thus taught who are included in, and who should be excluded from, the company of Christians which "comes together in the church" according to the Spirit of God.*

Are you, dear reader, willing to follow the teaching of these chapters, or do you think you will be happier, or have an easier path, if you follow your own ideas or the teaching of men? Depend upon it, the fullness of blessing is not enjoyed apart from complete subjection to the will of God revealed in His word. If we abandon the principles of these first ten chapters no amount of human scheming and organisation will enable us to enjoy, *in their fullness, the privileges of subsequent* chapters.

II. *For what objects should Christians come together?*

The answers to this question are found in chapters xi. and xiv. of 1 Corinthians. It will be noticed that these chapters are separated by chapter xii., dealing with gifts and the relationship of Christians to one another as members of the same body, and chapter xiii., unfolding the atmosphere of divine love (or "charity") in which Christians should live. We may be sure there is a purpose in this separation of chapter xi. from chapter xiv. In chapter xi., verse 20, we learn what should have been, but was not, the object of the Corinthian believers in coming together, *i.e., to eat the Lord's Supper.* This occasion of coming together was not to be treated as an opportunity for self-will (ver. 18) or self-indulgence (ver. 21), but the object was to be the simple one of responding to the Lord's desire (vers. 24, 25). The "Lord's Supper" was not to be confused with an ordinary meal or a person's "own supper"

(vers. 21, 22, and 34). The occasion of coming together to eat *the Lord's Supper is here presented as distinct from all other occasions which brought the Corinthian Christians together.*

We know from this chapter and from the accounts in the Gospels that the Lord Himself "gave thanks" for the bread and for the wine, and "blessed." We gather from chapter x. 16 of our Epistle, and other passages, that the early Christians did the same. Reading 1 Corinthians xi. 17-34 carefully, we can gather the circumstances which the apostle implies would be according to the Holy Spirit. Can anything be more simple? It is not an occasion for the display of "gifts," for they are not described until the next chapter. Natural intelligence may raise many questions and difficulties, but we have seen earlier in this paper that the company should consist of those who subordinate their natural intelligence to the authority of the Holy Spirit.

In chapter xiv. *all other occasions* for which the Christian company should "come together" appear to be covered. *The objects mentioned are "edification, exhortation, and comfort"* (vers. 3, 24, 31), *prayer, praise, and thanksgiving* (vers. 15, 16). For these objects the apostle contemplates the "whole church" being come together, thus assuming a general response to all his exhortations in chapters i. to x. Would that there were such a response in these days! It is not to be understood, of course, that we cannot pray or praise or give thanks at home, nor that one individual cannot edify, exhort, or comfort another. But such individual acts are of quite a different character from the prayer, etc., of the "whole church" when come together. J.C.K.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

Touched with a sympathy within He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations mean for He has felt the same.

A Bright Future for the World.

THE prophets inspired by Jehovah expand largely and in the most blessed terms on the bright future that yet awaits the world. Isaiah depicts the day of Jehovah, when all that now obstructs the light of glory shall be removed; when all that thwarts the honour of the only true God shall fall; when Satan must lose his delusive power; when the nations of the earth, long groaning under oppression, shall be set free; and when the Jews themselves (who ought to have been the leaders of all that is good and true, but alas! abound with teachers of the infidelity that now poisons the world) shall be delivered from unbelief's most withering thraldom, and rise for ever to the place that God's promise assigns them as the head of the nations then blessed, the priests of the world. They, converted and restored to Canaan, are destined to fill the foremost place when the earth itself is raised out of its actual and long degradation. Jehovah has spoken it, and His hand will accomplish all in due time. It is these prospects of the world on which the Old Testament prophets descant at great length, and with graphic minuteness. **W.K.**

The Blood, the Fat, and the Body of the Sin-Offering.

(Leviticus iv. 1-12; Hebrews xiii. 10-14.)

THE Book of Leviticus contains the special instructions which Jehovah gave for the guidance of His people in their approach to Him, and particularly in their approach when bringing their sacrifices. Nothing was left to chance. Nothing was left to the ideas or imaginations of those who came. Full instructions were most scrupulously laid down, and it was necessary that they should be followed in every detail. Aaron and his sons as priests were particularly appointed to see that these instructions were carried out.

We have read in chapter iv. some verses relating to

the sin-offering. This is the fourth class of offerings spoken of in this Book. The first chapter deals with what was called the burnt offering, the second chapter laid down particulars relating to the meat, or rather meal, offering, and the third chapter those with regard to the peace offering. These three offerings are what are called in this Book the sweet savour offerings, because God said He would receive them as a sweet savour to Himself. They commanded His special appreciation and delight. Something was attached to them which "appealed," if we may use the word, to God Himself.

These three offerings were connected with a person's giving—prompted by what was in his heart, to bring an offering to Jehovah. "If a man shall bring" so and so—if he gave his sacrifice in that particular way, the result would be gratification to God in heaven. It spoke, of course, typically of the manner of our approach to God in worship whereby it is possible to afford gratification and delight to God Himself, when we come in the right way and bring the right offering. All the Levitical offerings speak of Christ, but these three speak of Him especially in the way in which His Person and His work were in accordance with God's holy mind and will.

We know that so far as the mass of the world's population is concerned, men are too busily engaged with themselves to seek to please God. They "have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But when worshippers come to Him with a sense in their souls of the worthiness and beauty and excellency of the Lord Jesus Christ, God Who searches the heart finds satisfaction therein. There are those here and there in the earth who find it a joy to come and meditate on God's Son and upon His work. The world goes on its way occupied with trivial, temporal, things, but the worshippers, leaving such matters, give themselves up to think with delight upon the Lord Jesus Christ. These persons are put in the forefront of this Book of Leviticus. They represent those who approach to

God in that way, because the Father seeketh worshippers to "worship Him in spirit and in truth."

It is a marvellous thing that we can give something which is acceptable to God. You say, "Let us go first to receive." Of course, that is our own point of view, but in this order of Old Testament worship this was not the first thing. Jehovah said, "I want something from you. Bring an offering according to what is in your heart. If you have a large heart full of thanksgiving and gratitude you will go and bring Me the choicest, the most expensive of your beasts. You will choose the finest animal in your herd and bring him. Look to see that there is nothing about the animal to spoil its value. Bring such an offering and I will accept it because it speaks to Me of Him in Whom there was no flaw and in Whom was every glory and excellency—the Lord Jesus Christ."

Chapter iv. gives another side of the sacrificial offerings. In our approach to God we also have what touches us to the quick, because coming into the presence of God discovers to us the unholiness of our nature, the sinfulness to which we are liable and the mistakes which we make. How then can we come into the presence of a holy God? Sin cannot be overlooked, and God here shows its seriousness by the fact that, though the sin-offering is not in the first place, yet still its details occupy a greater portion of the Book than the other three. Thus, the whole of this chapter and part of the next is about the sin-offering, and the trespass offering follows.

No, do not make the mistake that God is indifferent about the question of sin. And you must not be indifferent either, for you have to do with God. You have to face your wicked self, and find out how it is met and dealt with righteously. The great temptation is to trifle with the sin within us, to think that it does not matter, to wake up late on Lord's Day morning and rush off to the breaking of bread, without any thought of what is proper to the presence of the Lord. Beloved friends, we have to do with a holy God! God

is love, aye, but God is light; "and in Him is no darkness at all." How then can there be real fellowship between light and darkness? God has made provision for what you and I are, and for what you and I have done that we may have fellowship with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The astonishing thing that comes to the forefront in this chapter is God's provision to meet unwitting sin. "If a man sin through ignorance, inadvertently, and do anything contrary to the holy commandments of God." In Numbers xv. the distinction is drawn very clearly between the sins of ignorance and the sins of presumption and wilfulness. The person who sinned presumptuously or wilfully and despised the word of God and broke His commandments was to be cut off. The law had no mercy for the wilful sinner. Who then can be saved? we might ask.

We find in the New Testament that God graciously regards sins, which seem to us vile and hateful to the worst degree, as sins of ignorance. What does Paul say of himself? He speaks of himself as a persecutor and blasphemer, an injurious person, a man who lifted himself up against God, but he said, "The Lord had mercy upon me because I did it in ignorance and unbelief" (see 1 Tim. i. 12, 13). God does not excuse the sin, but He puts it on the ground of ignorance.

We are thinking also perhaps at this moment of that marvellous prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ, when men were in the very act of nailing Him to the cross. Man said, "Away with Him, crucify Him, let Him not live but die." He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Lu. xxiii. 34). Peter, preaching after Pentecost to those who had lifted up their hands against the Lord of glory and crucified Him, said, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it" (Ac. iii. 17). They were ignorant of what they did, in its full significance. Beloved friends, God deals with us also according to His grace. He treats us as those who have erred, not knowing the full guilt of what we have done.

Presumptuous sin is possible even now, for Hebrews x. 26-31, speaks of those who may sin wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, and may depart from the sacrifice God has provided. There is nothing for such but a fearful looking for of judgment, because if we neglect or forsake the sacrifice of Christ, where shall we find another? Deliberately turning the back upon the One Who died at Calvary is a sin for which even the grace of God has no remedy. There is but one remedy for sin, and that is Christ Jesus Who offered Himself as a sacrifice.

Beloved friends, we have need to be thankful to our God that in the sacrifice of Christ He has provided for the sins of our ignorance. "Cleanse Thou me from secret faults" (Ps. xix. 12). Not merely things done in secret by those who love darkness rather than light; they need cleansing, of course, for all evil habits that are practised apart from the eyes of others are open to the eye of God. These are not the secret faults of which I think the Psalmist speaks particularly; it is those faults we commit in our ignorance, not knowing how terrible they are.

Let me try to illustrate the necessity for this provision. We are in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ on the most solemn occasion possible, thinking of His crucifixion and death, and some trivial thought comes into the heart and blots out the blessed person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Satan has succeeded in turning us away from the Lord at that holy moment. What a sin that is! A passing thought as we are crossing the street is one thing, but in the presence of the Lord Himself it is another thing.

But the Lord Himself is there. He looks upon the lapse of spiritual attention as a sin of ignorance. We forgot! We were faulty and human! We are here upon the earth, and He in heaven, and known only to faith. Something intervened, but the Lord Jesus Christ, that blessed sin-offering, has made the vicarious sacrifice for this very thing. The One Whom we are remembering in that very act of suffering and death

has provided for that sin of ignorance, which rose up unexpectedly at such a moment. Oh, we have indeed cause to praise and bless God for the fulness of the sacrifice of His Son!

But we must not lose any of the teaching in Lev. iv. Although we may be ignorant, or may not notice these evil things within or about us, they do not escape God's notice. They are before Him, Who is holy, and every sin must be cleansed. Man cannot provide a remedy adequate to cleanse the conscience, but this has been provided in the sacrifice of Christ, the true sin-offering. "If a soul shall sin through ignorance": Now there are several cases taken up in this chapter, each of which required the sin-offering.

The first one is the priest, and the priest as the representative of the people. The priest can act for God, and he can also act for the people. Here it is the anointed one, the high priest. "If a priest shall sin according to the sin of the people": it should read "sin, so as to bring guilt upon the people"; this is what the scripture means. It is a terrible responsibility to be a representative person, because you affect others as well as yourself. When David the king sinned, it was the people who suffered as a consequence of the pestilence, and he was made to feel what a terrible thing it was for a king of Israel to sin. Those poor sheep all suffered because of David's folly.

Here, in Leviticus, the priest had sinned. Aaron had need to offer a sacrifice, first for his own sin and then for the people. We have a High Priest in Whom is no sin—no failure there. But we are now looking at things under the law, and the law made nothing perfect. We must always remember this when we are thinking of the types. They are imperfect figures and shadows of the true Substance that came in our Lord Jesus Christ. W.J.H.

(To be continued, D.V.)

"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."

Set Apart.

"Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself"—(Psalm iv. 3).

SET apart for Jesus! Is not this enough,
Though the desert prospect open wild and rough?
Set apart for His delight,
Chosen for His holy pleasure,
Sealed to be His special treasure!
Could we choose a nobler joy?—and would we if we might?

Set apart to serve Him, ministers of light,
Standing in His presence, ready day or night!
Chosen for the service blest,
He would have us always willing,
Like the angel host fulfilling
Swiftly and rejoicingly each recognised behest.

Set apart to praise Him, set apart for this!
Have the holy angels any truer bliss?
Soft the preludes, though so clear;
Isolated tones are trembling;
But the chosen choir assembling,
Soon shall sing together, while the universe shall hear.

Set apart to love Him, and His love to know!
Not to waste affection on a passing show.
Called to give Him life and heart,
Called to pour the hidden treasure,
That none other claims to measure,
Into His beloved hand! thrice blessed 'set apart'!

Set apart for ever for Himself alone!
Now we see our calling, gloriously shown.
Owning, with no secret dread,
This our holy separation,
Now the crown of consecration
Of the Lord our God shall rest upon our willing head!*

F.R.H.

*Num. vi. 7.

The Blood, the Fat, and the Body of the Sin-Offering—2.

(The substance of an address on Leviticus iv. 1-12; Hebrews xiii. 10-14.)

IT may help in considering this portion if we notice that in the first instance we have what the offerer was to do, and in the second place what the priest was to do with the sacrifice that the offerer brought.

In verse 4 there is the instruction for the offerer. He was the high priest in this instance, but that does not alter the fact that he was the offerer. He stood at the door of the tabernacle, not to receive the offerings from the congregation, but to present his own offering for himself. There he was, the offerer. He was one who had sinned, and the sinner needs an offering for God.

There are three things about it. He was first to bring the offering to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; secondly, he was to lay his hand upon the head of the offering; and thirdly, he himself was to kill the bullock. First, he brings it to the door; next, he puts his hand upon it; then he slays it.

The priest who had sinned was to go to the door, the place of entrance, the entrance into the courts that surrounded the real tent, the dwelling place of Jehovah. He was to come there, but not to go any further. Why? Because sin had barred his entrance; the courts of God's house are holy. There is no place there for anything that defiles. The offerer comes with a substitute for himself, a bullock without a spot or blemish. There he is at the door, and he needs a title of entrance, though he is a priest.

We speak of drawing near into the holiest of all through the new and living way dedicated for us by the blood of Christ. That is perfectly true (Heb. x. 19, 20). We say it over and over again and rejoice in it; but let us remember that when a soul sins his first station is at the door. Jehovah in His holiness is beyond. Here is a person with sin on his conscience.

You know very well you are not happy in the

presence of God if you have sin on your conscience, and this is the case when you know you have sinned. But supposing you do not know. You say, "I had never thought of that. It might be when I am going to worship. I may have already contracted sin and do not know it. What am I to do? If I have sinned and done this, that, or the other contrary to God, how can I go and worship with others?" A person dare not go if he does not know the truth of the sin-offering. He must go to the door and go away again, if there is no offering to cleanse him.

But in Leviticus, Aaron comes bringing his offering, and there at the door of the tabernacle he pauses, so that the great work of atonement may be enacted in figure before his eyes. He is the sinner, the one who has done the deed and committed the sin. He lays his hand upon the bullock's head. He identifies himself with the sacrifice. The bullock to be offered and the sinner who has sinned are thus one in God's sight, and by the confession of the one who sinned.

I suppose this is the figure the poet had in mind when he wrote, "I lay my sins on Jesus." In the fullest sense, the sentiment is not exactly true, for Jehovah laid our sins upon the sacrifice, and we cannot really lay them upon Him. But it was no doubt this figure that the poet was thinking of. We can in that sense put our hand, so to speak, upon His blessed head and say, "He died for me. He suffered for me, and gave Himself for my sins." When I make that confession I, so to speak, lay my hands upon His head, and by faith claim Him as mine.

The sacrifice had to be slain. The offerer himself must take the knife and shed the blood of that sacrifice. He is the cause of the death of his victim. Beloved friends, is it not so when I feel and know in my soul for the thousandth time it was my sin that caused the blessed Saviour to die? It never would have been needful for Him to come from the glory, to be upon the cross, and to give up His life for me had I not sinned. Never mind about the rest of the world :

"God be merciful to me a sinner." This question of personal sin thus arises to challenge our faith, if I may put it in that way, with the remembrance that the Lord Jesus died, and that my sins, though thoughtless, contributed to His sufferings and death.

The work beyond the door of the threshold was the work of the officiating priest. The priest knew exactly what God wanted, and knew how to do it in the right way, so that it should be acceptable to God. We must observe what he does.

The priest deals with the sacrifice of the sin-offering in three ways. There are three separate figures in the three priestly actions performed. He first deals with the blood of the sacrifice; he next deals with the fat of the sacrifice; and then he deals with the whole carcase of the animal. There is the blood to be sprinkled, the fat to be burned, and the carcase to be burned.

You say, "That is a lot to remember." But it sets forth only a very little of what is in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you tired of thinking of that? Do you not want to see more of His sacrifice in its details; for its value and excellency shine out in every detail given in the Old Testament types. God puts the matter separately so that our hearts may lay hold both of the whole and its parts, and thank God for everything found in that sacrifice.

The priest first takes of the blood of the bullock, and brings it to the tabernacle of the congregation. The animal was slain at the door of the court. He crosses the court into the covered tent where Jehovah's presence was. He was to bring the blood there. Then he was again to do three things in connection with the blood.

He was first to dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle of it seven times before the vail of the sanctuary. You know the tent was divided into two parts, one larger than the other, separated by the beautiful vail. That vail shut off the holy of holies where Jehovah's presence was. The priest was to dip his finger in the blood and sprinkle it seven times before the vail.

Why? Because sin is committed against God, and its expiation requires a sevenfold perfection.

When a person sins he sins against God. It may be sin committed against his brother. Cain took the blood of Abel, but the voice of Abel's blood rose to Jehovah. Cain had sinned against Jehovah. He had killed his brother, but he had wronged God. He had affronted the righteousness of God; his sin was against God. No matter how trivial the sin may be, it is reckoned as a sin against God. If I do my brother, or sister, or neighbour an injustice, I do it against God, the Ruler over all. It is not merely to the one whom I injure but it is to God that I am ultimately responsible. We do well to remember that however small the error or fault may be it is serious, for the reason that it is done against God, to Whom account must be rendered.

The blood was sprinkled in full, perfect measure, seven times, before the vail. Inside that vail there was the Shekinah glory upon the throne of judgment, and apart from the blood judgment must come from that throne upon the guilty offender. But the blood was placed there seven times, and there was therefore no sword of judgment for him. It was the effective protection of the guilty one in the presence of Jehovah in His righteousness and His glory.

The second thing: he was to put or smear some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord; because in the holy place, as distinct from the most holy, there was the altar where sweet odours were burned, speaking of worship; and the blood was placed there to be a righteous ground for the worship of God's people.

Now you will see how it applies to us. This scripture is not written for the poor sinner who does not know anything about worship, but for those who know a little about it and who wonder sometimes why their worship falls so flat. Why? Because they are looking at themselves, at their own mistakes and imperfections, or at those of other people. There is no

worship that has ever been offered on this earth that has not required the blood of cleansing. All is tainted with our paltriness and imperfections, but the blood of the sin-offering is efficacious, so that whenever incense is burnt on the altar it is purified, so to speak, and made acceptable to God in the excellences of Christ.

The blood was carried still further. The priest was to take the blood of the bullock, having sprinkled seven drops before the vail, and some on the altar of incense to the brazen altar. All the blood of the sin-offering was preserved. It must not be lost; it was holy and belonged to the Lord. It was therefore taken and poured out at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, near the door where the offerer was.

The altar of burnt offering was where Christ as the acceptable Sacrifice to God was offered, and where we bring our offering to Christ. We see that altar was based on the blood of the sin-offering. The blood was poured out there to form the righteous foundation of the offerer's acceptance for worship. We do not need any human authority to give something acceptable to God. What we need is a permanent foundation, so that what is brought to God shall be based on something that He Himself can accept. This is provided in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I ask again, what is there we do not owe to the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ? There is the foundation of everything. All that is acceptable to God is based on the fact that Jesus Christ shed His precious blood, and that "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. W.J.H.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The Two Adams—2.

(1 Corinthians xv. 45-50)

IN connection with sin, I think there are three things very important to separate the one from the other. What is sin in principle? What are sins as distin-

guished from sin? and what is guilt? These are the three things I want to call attention to before passing on. When sin is brought in in Eden, it is very simple indeed. God had given everything freely to Adam, to remain his as long as he marked his dependence upon God by not touching a certain tree. What came out with Eve was, she thought she could better herself, and she took the place of independence. Adam did it in a more solemn and deliberate way after. Self-willed independence was the secret of sin. God had pledged Himself to give Adam everything. But they preferred catering for themselves to being dependent on God. If I take self-willed independence as a definition of sin, do I not find in every one self-willed independence of God? Is it not born with us? Is not self-will what we see even in a babe? and as a child grows up, we hear, "I like" and "I don't like"; and as men get into the world, there is a seeking after their own. How many a one, terrified at God's word as to judgment to come, will lay to heart how he is to meet God, and toil and labour, entirely setting aside the work of Christ, and never taking any notice of it until he finds he cannot succeed *that* way! Three years I toiled and laboured after God awoke me, and I saw something of the beauty of Christ too, and never thought of asking God what *His* way was of dealing with sin. What came out? What did it all come to? That eighteen hundred and upwards of thirty years ago, God, without consulting me, without waiting for me to say whether I liked His way or disliked it, had given His Son from His bosom, and made a way for the sinner to draw near to God. Is there no conflict, no thoughts of our own that we superadded? Ah, to be sure there is. What are all these thoughts to accomplish a way of our own but just the self-willed independence of our own human minds? Sins are will working out into action. When Cain was born, Eve said, I have gotten the man from the Lord, I have the child; but he was a murderer, not a Saviour. When he found that God had respect unto Abel's offering, and not to his, he set his heart to kill his brother.

What is the difference between that and guilt? Guilt is the state of one having set aside the laws of One Who has power over him.

When would a creature have come to an end of the experience of the impossibility of God and the sinner meeting together? When their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched. How could I grasp the largeness of God's mind against sin—the creature—worm, if you please—turning His back on God, and saying, No, I will cater for myself, I will be independent? How could I measure what God's penalty would be—His hatred of that before the whole universe? Where are these three things met? God shows in Romans vi. that He had His thoughts about the humiliation side—the experience of the Son of His love down here on earth. Mark these two verses (3 and 17), "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death?" "God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." That is, God proposed the doctrine, set it forth, that the only hiding-place to be found, for any one belonging to the family of the first Adam, was in the last Adam, in the depth of His humiliation. To what extent does He go? These three words, "Crucified together with Him," "dead together with Him," "buried together with Him," tell the extent of it. There is a refuge, and a safe one, for one who knows that he is ruined in himself, belonging to a ruined race, and having a ruined head to the family in Adam and Eve.

The three things which come in—I know Who the Nazarene was and is, and I know that He was set forth evidently crucified, put to open shame by man, and in the hour when everything told to the grief and sorrow of His heart, God added an element the creature never could have added, and He cried, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Psalm xxii. is wonderful in connection with that cry of the Lord, because, immediately after expressing a sense of forsakenness,

He goes on to vindicate God for having done it. No creature has ever been forsaken for sin. He was forsaken when He took the cup from the hand of His Father, and was put to open shame before heaven and earth, hanging on the cross.

Was there any self-willed independence in Him? Never, never; He was the only One who could carry out the mind of His Father perfectly. Ah, I know the secret, my conscience understands it. If there were not a second man on earth that would say, He was put to open shame for me, I say I have it all to myself, and I bear the whole burden as the one whose self-willed independence brought it on. He bore the penalty, the judgment came on Him. Seeing this, a power is brought in on the soul which gives a death-blow to independency.

If you do so and so, I will do so and so. God is thought to be very hard. We cannot satisfy even our own minds—it is impossible. When the soul knows God made Him to be sin for us, and that He bore the penalty, what a simple thing to say, Is that the God I have been so self-willed against? Am I to go on longer in my own independency against the God who gave His Son from His bosom for me? Shall I go on so? Shall this principle not be hated and judged by me? I see the love of God in having put His Son to shame—the One in whom the penalty was borne; then I loathe this self-will. I learn to watch against it, in anywise, and watch against attributing any blessing whatever save to Him that hung upon the cross.

What had I to do with His hanging there? Nothing but my sins: as to its virtues, nothing. Men may find the nails, the Romans may have found the spear, that may be man's part; but what is God's part in the cross? "He made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

When God looks at the Son of His love in connection with the sinner—the Son crucified to be a hiding-place for poor sinners—what are God's thoughts? Ah! I have revealed that; you are blessed in knowing how I

could reveal it, to get honour to Myself and to My Son, the only One who could look sin in the face, and take the judgment—you a creature of yesterday! then it is the death-blow comes to self-will. I *want* to begin with God, I *wish* to begin with God. When we get to the blessed Lord in Psalm xl., it is not only that He in that way charged Himself with the sin that rested on the human race, and could do it, but He speaks of sins more in number than the hairs of His head.

How it will shine forth when the Lord, according to Zechariah, comes in, all their sins and iniquities gone, and Israel shall say, "This is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us." The Lord claimed them all, and makes the hearts of Israel willing to abase themselves before God.

If I have no good thing to give Him, I will give Him my bad things; my sins, my self-will, my guilt, I will give to God and to Christ. I have got a heavy burden of ruin, and I will let the Lord be heartily welcome to it. You never get that till you get grace and mercy as the ground of your standing. I give all my self-will to Christ. I have done nothing but sin; I will give all my sins to Him. Yes, He is the only One Who has borne the judgment, He is the One Who *has* borne it, and He is the One Who is the joy of God's heart as the Saviour of lost ones.

Do you know Him as your Saviour? not only your Saviour from the wrath to come, and from Satan and the world, but from your *own self*? Many a one wants to have that driven home. What characterised the Lord when here? All that Satan could do, he could get nothing out of the Lord. When Christ was here, He was always master of Himself. The Lord undertakes to save us from ourselves. When He presents us to the Father, we shall be in glorious bodies, delivered from humiliation, made like unto His own body in glory. Then we shall be perfectly delivered from everything not of Him. Can you say to God, I am a poor, simple, foolish thing, but I see that Thou hast said, and written it down, that I am crucified

together with Christ? Thou lookest on me, having faith in the love that gave Thy Son; Thou lookest on me as crucified together with Him Who was put to open shame.

A second thing comes out—dead together with Him. He gave His life a ransom for us, and the eternal life with which He quickens us is the eternal life which He had before the world was. There can be no mistake as to what that quickening is. Dead, buried; ah, do all believers know what it is to reckon themselves buried together with Christ? When I think of the grace of Christ, I say there was the end of myself. God put me away on the cross.

Now as to the power of this practically: if you have got any gospel at all, what is your gospel? Is it the gospel of eternal life? If so, I expect you to be doers, not hearers only. You cannot have life, and not be a doer. God has met everything against me in Christ. What is the grand mark of that given to us here? "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God." Do you reckon yourselves to be dead? Do you know what it is to be in communion with God? That He is a living Person, Whose glory we can have no idea about? The Lord Jesus Christ is the image of the *invisible* God; and do you and I know what it is to say of everything connected with the first Adam, Thou sayest of me that I am crucified together with Christ, dead together, buried together with Him? If Thou sayest that I can reckon myself to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, I believe. Yes, you say; but do not you see that I do not feel it? He never said that you would *feel* it? Abraham was given certain promises, and God took special care to let everything in nature get the sentence of God against it. You see how faith *versus* feeling was tried in Abraham. "A father of many nations have I made thee." I can quite suppose the people around him saying, Where are these nations? You have no child even, only Ishmael, who was born in the house. (See Gen. xvii. 12, 13.) Where are all these nations? What did Abraham say? Just

leave all alone. God has committed Himself by promise, and He is able to perform—leave it all alone.

He took the truth of God just as the thing in which He could rest, and would rest, and did rest. I do wish to press that side of the gospel. The heart having found in the humiliation of Christ that which enables it to look ruin in the face, and say, I am not afraid to see the place Adam got into, not afraid of the flesh or of the world. Why? Because there is a Saviour. "Know ye not that as many as were baptised into Jesus Christ, were baptised into His death?" We are crucified together with Him; dead together with Him; buried together with Him. There is where the saint gets rest. God said it, God has written it. We have learnt just a little of the blessedness of the humiliation of Christ, if we have faith; but God only knows the fulness of it, and He will give us perfect blessing in His own time.

G.V.W.

Doctrinal Definitions.

1. PURCHASE means that Christ's blood or death has bought the world, and all that are in it, to Himself and to God. See Matt. xiii. 44; 1 Cor. vi., vii.; Heb. ii. 9; 2 Pet. ii. 1; Rev. v. 9; xiv. 3. But there is this difference, that the believer owns the purchase, the unbeliever disowns it, and denies Him, Who purchased all by His blood.

2. REDEMPTION is by power founded on the shed blood of the Lamb, as we see in Exod. xii.-xiv. By the resurrection of Christ the Christian now knows this for his sin, that is, for his soul, and will know it for his body when Christ comes again, Who will make it good for Israel in the day of manifestation. (Rom. viii. 23; Isaiah lxii. 12.)

3. RECONCILIATION is the bringing back to God what had been severed by sin, and this is applied to both persons and things, as we see typically in Lev. xvi., doctrinally in Col. i. 20.

4. ATONEMENT consists of the two parts, united for

us in the bullock, analysed for Israel in the two goats of Lev. xvi., which set forth Jehovah's part in propitiation, the people's in substitution.

5. JUSTIFICATION means that the believer in Jesus, though in himself ungodly, and confessedly so, is accounted righteous with God by virtue of the work of Christ, the full measure of which is Christ risen from the dead. (1 Cor. i. and 2 Cor. v.)

6. FORGIVENESS is the remission of the sins of those who believe in Jesus through faith in His blood; not their pretermission merely, as of old, but their remission. (Rom. iii. 25.)

7. SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit is the setting apart to God of all that are born of God, to obey as Christ obeyed, and to the sprinkling of His blood (1 Pet. i.); and this personal or absolute sanctification is followed up by practical sanctification in the measure of their faith, and it is therefore relative; it should also be progressive. There is also a position of sanctification by blood in Heb. x. 29, which might not be vital, and hence such might be lost.

8. ADOPTION, in the Christian sense, is the sonship which the believer receives as his new relation to God through faith in Christ Jesus. (Eph. i. 5.)

9. PERFECTION means that full growth which is the characteristic of the Christian who goes on from the elements of truth in Christ after the flesh to Him dead and risen, and ascended to heaven, and our place in Him. (Heb. vi. 1; x. 14.)

10. GLORIFICATION means the application to our bodies of that power of Christ risen, which will conform us completely to His image in glory. (Rom. viii.; Phil. iii.)

11. REGENERATION goes beyond "new birth" in John iii., which is a change purely subjective, and was always true of saints since the fall, whereas this is objective and imperfect: that change of place only which enables one to say, "I am in Christ a new creation, old things have passed away; behold all things are become new." W.K.

"When Ye Come Together" or The Christian Company—2.

(1 Corinthians xi. 18, 20, 33; xiv. 23, 26.)

III. *What Order and Control should exist when Christians come together?*

The teaching in 1 Corinthians in regard to the subject, "When ye come together," ends with the exhortation, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40). This verse is not, however, the starting-point from which *we* should devise an orderly system of coming together, but a reminder of the order which will result from the carrying out of the principles taught *by the Spirit of God* earlier in the Epistle.

As far as *the Lord's Supper* is concerned, we have seen how very simple the procedure was in 1 Corinthians xi. *Where all present had only one object—to eat the Lord's Supper—there was no need for an organised "service."* It is astonishing, when one considers the point, how much discussion has recently taken place as to the form of the "Communion Service." Men have contended for phrases and forms most strenuously, appealing to all sorts of "authorities" except the scriptures. Will you turn up all the passages that deal with the "breaking of bread," or "the Lord's Supper," and see what form of "service" they justify? As we have stated before, we shall find "giving thanks," and "blessing." Beyond this we are not aware of anything which, in the present day, would be called a "service" connected with the Lord's Supper, except in Acts xx., where the apostle, after the breaking of bread, gave a lengthy address.* (The Greek word translated "preached" in Acts xx. 7 and 9 is not used of preaching the gospel, but is generally translated "disputed" or "reasoned".) Is scripture sufficient, or must we add to it? Is it scriptural to

* *Note.* First there was the breaking of bread, the primary object of coming together; then the discourse until midnight; then a meal to satisfy their hunger, followed by mutual conversation till break of day. Ed. W.O.H.

stereotype the phrases in which thanks should be given? These questions hardly require an answer.

For *all other occasions;* when Christians "come together" scripturally, we have the instructions of chapters xii.-xiv. Bearing in mind what we have seen under the heading, "Of whom should the Christian company consist?" we find the following verses assume that *all the men present in such a company were free to speak* subject to restrictions which we shall come to later:

"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to *every man* to profit withal" (chap. xii. 7).

"The Spirit dividing to *every man* severally as He will" (chap. xiv. 1).

"I would that *ye all* spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied" (chap xiv. 5).

"If *all* prophesy" (chap. xiv. 24).

"*Ye* may *all* prophesy one by one" (chap. xiv. 31).

"Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy" (chap. xiv. 39).

These six passages are worded so plainly that it is quite evident they had the widest possible application, and were not restricted to elders or members of the "clergy." The only individuals in such a company who were necessarily to keep silence were the women as referred to in chapter xiv. 34 and 35. Further, we must always bear in mind that the Epistle is addressed, not only to the Corinthians, but to "all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours" (chap. i. 2). So that *these general principles apply to all companies of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ which "come together" in a scriptural way.* There are, however, several important points to notice before this liberty of speech can be used scripturally.

Every believer in the Lord Jesus is regarded as indwelt by the Spirit of God (chap. iii. 16); and as endowed with some "gift," just as every member of our natural bodies has some function to perform for the benefit of the whole body. The gifts are described in verses 8-10 of chapter xii. Some of them are

exercised in an individual way, and consequently are not referred to in chapter xiv., where "the church" (ver. 4) is dealt with. For instance, "the gift of healing" and "the working of miracles" are not in evidence when "the whole church" is "come together into one place" in chapter xiv. The Spirit of God singles out the "gift of tongues" as "a sign to them that believe not" (chap. xiv. 22). But *the gift of prophecy is given special prominence in connection with these occasions when the whole church is gathered together.* It is generally known that prophecy means "telling *forth,*" or "publicly expounding." This often involved foretelling the future, which consequently became the secondary meaning of the word, but in Luke xxii. 64, for instance, the word is plainly used in its primary meaning. The interpretation to be placed on the word in 1 Cor. is made clear by chapter xiv. 3: "Speaking to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."

The gift of prophecy, in common with all the gifts of chapter xii., was *given by the Holy Spirit.* It was not the product of intellectual study, mental ability, eloquence, or any other "natural" gift. Many earnest men, relying upon their natural gifts, attempt to speak for the edification, exhortation, or comfort of a company of Christians. How feeble are such addresses, however beautifully expressed, in comparison with the humblest sentences of one led by the Holy Spirit!

We are also taught in chapter xii. 5 that *the one to whom a gift is given is responsible to the Lord for the proper exercise of it.* The gifts could be used in a disorderly way (chap. xiv. 26) or in an orderly way (verses 29-31). If the speaker realised that he was responsible to the Lord for the administration of his gift, and that others present had similar responsibility, he would carry out verse 30 in the power of verse 32. Without this control there was opportunity for two or more speaking at once, so the apostle tells them to speak by course (or "in turn") one by one. There was also the possibility of too many successive speakers, so he says "two or three." If there were

confusion it could not be of God, but must arise from man (verse 33).

Any profit resulting from the exercise of these gifts was the work of God (chap. xii. 6). The speaker could not take any credit to himself for it.

Further, every exercise of gift, as well as every relationship of life, should be characterised by *love* ("charity"), chap. xiii.

Summarising the foregoing pages, we have considered passages in 1 Corinthians which show us:

Who would be included in, and who excluded from, a company of Christians gathered in a scriptural way.

For what purposes such a company would come together.

That each individual in the company would have a function to perform in it.

That each individual brother should particularly desire to speak for edification, exhortation, and comfort.

That there should be liberty for each individual in the company (with certain specified exceptions) to exercise his gift subject to certain order and control.

Let us now consider for a few moments what has actually happened in the history of the church. The disorder which had commenced in Corinth through ignorance was perhaps corrected by the Epistle. But similar disorder soon arose elsewhere. Two evils occurred at an early stage. *Unbelievers were freely admitted* to the company of Christians, or "the church." These unconverted people took advantage of the liberty of speech. Again, *Christians became careless* of their relationship to the Lord Jesus. They allowed their natural intelligence to take control. They became absorbed in the amusements and occupations of the world. They cherished their own ideas of God instead of accepting the revelation He has made. All these things grieved and hindered the Holy Spirit, and disorder increased more and more, with disputings, heresies and divisions.

Attempts have been made to cope with the disorder by *human systems of organisation.* Public "ministry"

has been restricted to a limited class of "priests," "parsons," "ministers," "elders" and such like. "Creeds" have been drawn up. Set forms and phrases have been introduced. But none of these things can restore the edification, exhortation and comfort, nor the fullness of prayer, praise and thanksgiving that characterised the early church.

Reaction to the simple teaching of scripture has occurred from time to time. Christians have separated from the human systems which restrict the liberty of the Holy Spirit, and have "come together" on the principles of 1 Corinthians. *There is a danger of being affected by the spirit abroad in the world to-day* —the spirit of democracy, of what is inaccurately called "equality of the sexes," of revolt against authority. If professed return to the liberty of 1 Corinthians xiv. is really based on this worldly spirit, confusion will be made worse confounded. May God preserve us from it! But whole-hearted response to the principles so clearly set before us in 1 Corinthians will receive the reward which God never withholds from obedience. The apostle, writing by the Holy Spirit, appeals to us in weighty words: *"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord"* (chap. xiv. 37).

To many readers the difficulty may occur that the differences of opinion in the present day are a formidable obstacle to the whole company of Christians in a town or city coming together "into one place" as described in 1 Corinthians xiv. 23. This is, indeed, a fact, due to the setting aside of the Scriptures for the inventions of man, and to the substitution of intellectual interpretation of the scriptures for the work of the Holy Spirit. We are left with two alternatives. One is to give up the scriptural principles of "coming together," which have been briefly touched on in this paper. The other is *to meet according to these scriptural principles with any other believers we can find prepared to carry them out.* I am persuaded that the latter is the right course, and that there will be such

companies "come together" for the Lord's Supper, and for other scriptural purposes, "till He come." However small such companies may be, they have the promise of the Lord Jesus that "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). It may be that these companies will have to face a recurrence of the moral and spiritual evils leading to divisions such as troubled the Corinthians, but if so, revival will follow, based on return to the principles of 1 Corinthians, and the resources of those who desire to "come together" in a scriptural way will still be the word of God and the Holy Spirit.

In conclusion, the writer is conscious that the subject taken up has been very inadequately dealt with, and would therefore entreat his readers to study for themselves, very carefully and prayerfully, the Epistle to the Corinthians. J.C.K.

Not Ashamed.

I WAS very much struck in reading 2 Timothy how the apostle wrote to the young man, Timothy, his "dearly beloved son" in the faith. — "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (2 Tim. i. 8). How such words make us wish to be always "not ashamed" in this difficult day? But how the heart leaps when realising it is "the testimony of our Lord"!

Doubtless the apostle, who could say elsewhere "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . ." and ". . . whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed," must have felt "the afflictions of the gospel" being "His prisoner." Some do not realise that, in a degree, there are still "afflictions of the gospel." "But be thou partaker," Timothy, "according to the power of God." What an encouragement to young men desirous of being used of God in the

gospel! Who can be ashamed of sufferings when supported by the power of God?

Further, the apostle says, in verse 12, "I am not ashamed; for I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." *He* knew the Saviour he believed; was persuaded of His ability to keep; committed all unto Him against that day. "I know . . . am persuaded . . . I have committed."

But he thinks of others and says in verses 16-19, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain . . ." Here is another who "was not ashamed," so much so that he very diligently sought the apostle and found him, and in many things ministered unto him. Hence for him the apostle prayed that he might find mercy of the Lord in *that* day.

We may remember too, how the beloved apostle, John, said—"I, John . . . was in the isle . . . Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 9). One has said, "If more testimony were borne by us that all power in heaven and earth is His, we should be counted mad; the world's anger would be stirred up." We are standing, in the place where He is rejected, as servants and witnesses holding forth the word of life—our feet are on earth where John's were. From the Father's hand we receive blessings, but from man's heart-breakings and Patmos.

In our epistle, ch. ii. 15, Timothy is exhorted — "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The workman need not be ashamed, if he rightly divides the word of truth.

Think of the words of the Lord Himself, that Perfect Servant, in Mark viii. 38. "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."

When Nicodemus was not ashamed to say of "this

man"—"Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" (John vii. 50-52), the swift answer was—"Art thou also of Galilee?" How quick the world is to notice the weakest allegiance to Christ. Let us then keep these words in mind—"I am not ashamed"; "he was not ashamed"; "be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord."

C.A.M.

Heavenly Contemplation.

OH, scenes of heavenly joy,
The Father's house above!
Where cloudless peace, without alloy,
Fills all that home of love.

There glory bright and fair
Shines with celestial beam;
For He Who suffered once is there,
Its centre and its theme.

The Father's full delight
Is centred in the Son;
And countless tongues in heaven unite
To tell what He hath done.

The Lamb enthroned shall there
Engage each raptured heart!
While myriad saints Christ-likeness bear
And have with Him their part.

For He has made us meet
With saints in light to dwell;
E'en now we chant His praises sweet,
Whose love we know so well.

E'en now we taste the love,
And know the mighty power
By which we'll rise to realms above,
When waiting-time is o'er.

Praise Him again, again,
For us the cross He bore,
Now all is yea, and all Amen
In Him for evermore.

ANON.

The Blood, the Fat, and the Body of the Sin-Offering—3.

The substance of an address on Leviticus iv. 1-12: Hebrews xiii. 10-14.

SUCH was the regulation concerning the blood of the bullock. Now we come to the fat of the offering. You know that according to Eastern customs the fat was the most precious part of an animal, and was esteemed as a choice delicacy. In the sacrifices, God signified that the fat should be His. Just as no one was to eat of the blood, so of the fat. The proper fat, that is what might be called the suet of the animal, was to be burned, not eaten. There is always in an animal a certain amount of the fat that is streaked amongst the lean. This might be eaten. We read sometimes of eating the fat and drinking the sweet. In that case it is the fat mixed with the flesh of the animal, but the fat pure and simple, the fat by itself, the best and choicest part of the animal, was reserved exclusively for Jehovah. It belonged to Him as His own portion.

Full details were given as to how the inwards were to be searched, and every scrap of fat collected for burning on the altar of Jehovah. The fat belonged to Him. He was the only One Who could properly appreciate it. How does that fit in with the sin-offering? Christ is the sin-offering. What was the best part of Him? Blessed be His Name, it was that which was hidden from human eyes. It was that which was never revealed in its fulness and blessedness until His sacrifice and death. Who was there that could appreciate it fully, and understand it but God?

I understand nothing, relatively speaking, about the meaning and value of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Man despises the Sacrifice; we all under-value it, and think less of it than we should. There was but One Who knew what was in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father knew the desire that was in His heart to lay down His life. He said, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life." His

answer to God's will that was in His heart was, "The cup that My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" Therein was the fat of His sacrifice that went up acceptable to God.

There is another side of it in Gethsemane, when we see Him there in His agony, beseeching that this cup might pass from Him. There was "fat" in His holy repugnance to be "made sin." Such was the inward excellence that rose up to God. The fat was to be burned, to be consumed upon the altar; and God had His portion in the sin-offering of our Lord Jesus Christ, even there upon the cross.

The next thing was the disposal of the carcase. The priest was to carry outside the camp the "skin of the bullock and all his flesh . . . and burn him on the wood with fire." This strikes us at once with the deepest interest, and we ask the meaning of this special arrangement. Were not the sacrifices usually burned upon the altar? Surely. The bullock offered as a burnt offering was consumed on the altar of burnt offering.

Here the animal offered for sin, the whole thing, the whole animal was taken outside the camp, and was burned there, outside the camp. Why? Because in the great mystery of atonement our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross was charged with our sins. "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree."

Mark the words of holy scripture and never depart from them when you speak of the sacrifice of Christ, or of the Person of Christ. Never consciously depart one iota from the words of holy scripture, or you will make a mistake. Scripture does not say that God made the blessed Lord Jesus a sinner. He made Him to be sin. He was never a sinner. He was separate from sinners. But He made Him to be sin. There the sword was drawn, and the Shepherd was smitten. He was outside the camp, and He was wholly consumed, by the fire of God's judgment, as the whole animal was burned on the wood outside the camp—

not upon the altar inside the tabernacle—for a sin-offering.

Now the Holy Spirit is most careful to guard the person of our Lord Jesus Christ from any unholy human thoughts. You say "He was made to be sin." Yes, but we find that the Holy Spirit speaks further in chapter vi. 25 about the sin-offering; it was "most holy." Although it was taken outside the camp, it was most holy. It was of the same nature as that sacred inner enclosure where Jehovah dwelt; that was "most holy." The Lord Jesus Christ was "most holy" —"Holy, holy, holy, Lord." Even when He was upon the cross, His was perfect, unspotted holiness. Yet, "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree."

Mark here, too, what Jehovah said to Moses, "He shall carry it forth without the camp unto a clean place" (ver. 12)—a clean place! The sin-offering was burned in a clean place. It was all guarding the holiness of our Lord Jesus Christ; and do we not see it fulfilled in historical fact? What did man do? They crucified Him between two malefactors. They might have put those two thieves somewhere else, not there side by side with the Lord of glory. But such was the evil of man's heart. They put Him there.

They appointed His grave with the wicked. They crucified Him on the hill of a skull—that was unclean so far as their national law was concerned. But He was with the rich in His death, for Joseph of Arimathaea laid Him in his own new grave, where never man had laid. It was a clean place, and the body of the Lord Jesus rested there. Man said, "Oh, let Him be with the thieves, let His body rot there in the ditch," but God said, "I will see He is in a clean place." God is above all the evil of man.

When we come in spirit to Calvary and look at Him bearing our sins, we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ was never holier than when He was there on the cross. God was never holier than when He smote His Son. When the Lord Jesus said, "My God, My God, why

hast Thou forsaken Me?" He was "Holy, holy, holy, Lord."

That is the great truth that stands out in connection with the sin-offering. There must be judgment; there must be the unsparing consuming of the sacrifice with fire; but still it was all in perfect consonance with God's immutable and eternal love and holiness; and there we rejoice.

Now I would like to turn to the chapter in Hebrews for a moment, because there is always a practical side to God's truth. The truths of holy scripture are not problems in metaphysics, not subjects for our minds, but for our hearts.

In Hebrews xiii., there is a reference to the sin-offering: "The bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp." Christ went outside the gate, and suffered there "that He might sanctify the people with His own blood." Going out into that place He was apart from everything associated with earthly religious privilege, and His own people have that place, too.

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered without the gate—not in the holy city of Jerusalem. The sacrifices of the temple were even then going on; but God had abandoned all those, and He was with His Son at Calvary, when He offered Himself without spot to God, a sacrifice for our sins.

You remember in the Gospel history that there was a man who went after our Lord, bearing His cross from the city to Calvary. It was Simon the Cyrenian who carried the cross. Would not we have carried it joyfully? I say, joyfully. Only joyfully because we might thus do something for Him. We would take it to relieve Him. It was a happy burden for Simon. He was with the Lord, following Him.

How much of the truth Simon knew we cannot tell, but his eyes were in the right place, and his heart was right. Everybody that went along could see that he was a disciple of the Lord. He was bearing the

reproach of Christ. That is what the cross meant. They put a man upon a cross when they wanted to use him despitefully, to make him an object of scorn. Christ is "despised and rejected of men."

"Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp." Christ is still outside. Christ is in the place of reproach. Those that seem to make a profession of His Name but do not really know Him are turning away from Him and despising Him. He is not first and last with them. Do not let us be with those; do not let us be in the courts of the temple when Christ is suffering outside the gate. Do not let us be in the busy marts of Jerusalem when the Lord Jesus Christ is suffering reproach at Calvary. "Let us go forth unto Him." Nothing matters so long as we are with Him, bearing His reproach.

When the Lord Jesus was here, He said, "The reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me." Those who hated God hated Christ. The Lord bore the reproach of God. Now He calls us to bear His reproach. Let us be like Moses, who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures, the riches, and the fame of Egypt; so Moses went down with the slaves. He said, "The promise of the Messiah is here amongst these brick-makers. I am going with them. The Messiah will surely come to this down-trodden race to bring blessing to the whole world." He saw Christ in the brick-yards, and he went down from Egypt's palace. Moses set all aside for Christ's sake. What are you doing? If your soul is resting upon the sin-offering, if you are exulting in the display of God's grace at Calvary, do remember that you are also to stand by Him and bear His reproach in daily life.

When the Lord looked from the cross, He saw His mother, and He saw John there and told His beloved apostle what to do. They were there, and He loved to have them there. It was a ray of sunshine in that darkening hour to see those two—Mary and the beloved disciple that had leaned upon His bosom not long

before. It was a joy to see them, beholding His sorrow. They were bearing His reproach.

Where are you? Are you standing for Christ? Not only in the world of unbelievers but in the world of those who profess to know Him, who have the form of godliness but not the power? Are you for Christ? I do not ask anything else, but there is this call, "Let us go forth therefore unto Him, without the camp, bearing His reproach." He will not use force to drag us there, only by the cords of His love. He calls for volunteers. Who will go? "Let us go forth therefore unto Him, bearing His reproach."

W. J. H.

The Advocate or the Accuser:

WHOSE SIDE DO YOU TAKE?

THIS is a practical question for Christians in these days. It is not a question of whether we are Christians or not, though it may often test the fact. Happily simple faith in the Person of the Son of God and His work settles that question. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved (Acts xvi. 31). He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life (John iii. 36). We are justified by His blood (Rom. v. 9); as well as numberless other passages. But the question is, as professedly saved ones, do we take sides with the Advocate, or with the Accuser of the brethren?

The advocacy of Christ is founded on His righteous Person, and His perfect work. (See 1 John ii. 1, 2). His blessed work clears us from all the guilt of our sins, and in His blessed Person we have entire deliverance from our Adam state, He Himself—the dead, risen and ascended One—being our righteousness before God. It is on this ground that He intercedes, does the work of an Advocate. If we sin after our relationship with the Father, as children to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, has been settled, then the Advocacy of Christ applies.

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we [children] have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He is the propitiation for our sins (1 John ii. 1, 2).

The office of the Advocate then is not to get righteousness for us, nor to put away our sins, nor to make us children. That is all settled by Christ's death and resurrection; by faith in Him. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool: for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Heb. x. 12-14). It is to maintain us as children before the Father without sin, in face of the Accuser of the brethren. (See Rev. xii. 10.) When a child of God sins, communion is interrupted; the relationship remains, but the Father has no fellowship with the sin of His child. The Advocate pleads against Satan who accuses. The Father hears the pleadings of the Advocate, who thereon applies the word to our walk (John xiii. 4, 5), brings us to the confession of the sin, upon which the Father is faithful to the righteous Advocate, and just to the Advocate who made propitiation, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John i. 9). Thus communion* is restored, and the child of God walks in the joy and light of his Father's countenance. Thus the Advocate is literally the Manager of our affairs in our Father's court, and has reference to His government of His children in this world. It reconciles the fact of a naughty child and a Holy Father.

The Advocate does two things. He pleads with the Father for us. He applies the word to us. The one maintains our cause if we sin before the Father, against the Accuser. The other brings up our practical state to our standing which is always maintained without sin by the righteous Advocate Who has made propitiation. The failure in our practical state

* Fellowship or communion means the association of two or more together, having common thoughts and feelings together.

is from the fact of our having the flesh still in us. Our actual state is that of having two natures in one person. With the mind I myself serve the law of God, with the flesh the law of sin (Rom. vii. 25). And though by faith, and in Spirit, we are no longer in the flesh, yet actually it is in us (though by faith we reckon it dead); hence the failure. There is no excuse, but the fact is we fail. Our standing as children ever remains the same, even though we sin, owing to the righteous Advocate Who has made propitiation. If any man sin we have an Advocate. But we have failed in our practical state. We are defiled. Our bodies are washed with pure water, that is true (Heb. x. 22); we have had once the washing of regeneration (Titus iii. 5); we are born again (John iii. 3); we need not then to be put into the bath over again.* But we have sinned, we have got our feet defiled as it were in passing through this sin-defiling world. This will not do for the Father's presence. What does the Advocate do? He applies the word to us, washes our feet; the word judges us, leads us to confession and self-judgment. The remembrance of our Advocate Who made propitiation leads us back on our knees to our Father Who forgives us and cleanses us from all our unrighteousness. Thus the blessed work of the Advocate is on the one hand to plead for the children before the Father, if they sin, on the other hand to wash their feet with the word, to bring their practical walk and state up to their standing before Him.

Satan on the other hand is the Accuser of the brethren. He accuses them before God day and night (Rev. xii. 10). He is the author of divisions between the children of God, by accusing them one to the other (Rom. xvi. 17-20). He would hire Balaam to curse the people of God, and failing in that he would use the same prophet to teach Balak to mix them up

* (John xiii. 10.) Literally, "He that is put into the bath, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."

with the nations around, and partake of their sinful practices. He would excite Jehovah to try Job, speaking bad things of him before Jehovah's face (Job. i., ii.). He would tempt David to sin in numbering the people of Israel (1 Chron. xxi. 1), and move Jehovah against them to destroy them (2 Sam. xxiv. 1). He would resist Joshua the high priest, and seek to prevent his filthy rags being taken from him, and his being clothed in new raiment (Zech. iii. 1-5). This is the Accuser's wretched work. Those that follow him are called false accusers, slanderers (literally devils), because doing the devil's work. He whispers in the ear of a minister's wife (1 Tim. iii. 11) some false story about some brother or sister in Christ. She spreads it about, and so the evil spreads, which perhaps may end in an assembly being broken up. Some aged sister sits leisurely at home (Titus ii. 3), and not having much to do is ready to hear stories perhaps from some worldly person about some child of God. It is a slander, a lie, and so the devil does his work, and perhaps some child of God gets a wound, or gets hindered in the work of the Lord for years.

I would solemnly ask every child of God who reads this paper, On whose side are you working? When some slander is uttered about a child of God, do you plead for him, go home and pray for him, if you know he has failed, do you go in love and humility, and take the word to him, and wash his feet? (John xiii. 14).—This is the blessed work of the Advocate.—Or do you listen to the story, go and spread it lightly to someone else, without knowing whether it is a fact or not? And if you are hurt by some brother, do you go in a pet to God or pray in anger at him at prayer meetings (1 Tim. ii. 8), and accuse him? This is to do the devil's work.

But how happy it is for us to be associated with the blessed Advocate; on the one hand pleading for our brethren if they sin, on the other hand carrying the word to them and washing their feet. May the Lord grant His people increasedly this grace, so that the saints may see their blessed privilege of love to cover

sins (Prov. x. 12), plead for their brethren if they sin, and act in faithfulness to them, in carrying the word to them, washing their feet, so that they might be cleansed from the defilement; these last, overcoming the Accuser by the blood of the Lamb, on the one hand if they sin, and on the other hand openly resisting him by the word of their testimony like the blessed Lord Jesus Himself. He answered the devil when tempting Him to sin, by "It is written." So should we. If we sin thank God we can always answer Him by the blood of the Lamb, which is balm for every wound. Thus the blood of the Lamb and the word, the sword of the Spirit, are our instruments against the devil down here, whilst the Advocate maintains our cause before the Father up in heaven. Thus in every case we are maintained, and are overcomers, more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.

LORD A. P. CECIL.

Four Prayers Not Granted.

Deut. iii. 24-29 ; 1 Kings xix. 4 ; Mark xiv. 35 ; 2 Cor. xii. 7-9.

LET us dwell for a little on the important question of prayer—"Ask, and it shall be given you." We have to do with a God Who reveals Himself as a Giver, and only expects that His own should with faith make known their needs to His merciful heart that He might bless them according to the riches of His grace.

Now, that there are prayers not granted no one doubts, and I would just examine four cases of prayer to which God has not responded. But we shall see that although He has not quickly conceded that which has been asked of Him, He was nevertheless holding in reserve blessings and rewards greater than those desired, and that His not replying immediately to supplications directed to Him, has demonstrated the excellency of His wisdom in every case.

The first example of prayer not granted is in Deut.

iii. 24-27, where Moses, the meek servant of God, prays Jehovah with persistency, that it may be permitted to him to enter the promised land. Now Moses, being leader of the people of Israel under the law, yet, having failed in his task (Num. xx. 7-13), came to be excluded from the land for ever. We shall see in this how rigid was that dispensation of the law, under which the best man must lose his place in blessing for a single fault. Moses is not heard, he cannot enter into that country, so beautiful, and for which he had cherished so much hope, sustained so much suffering. But God did not forget His poor servant, and when the opportune moment came, He made him enjoy blessings which He held in reserve for him. If He denied him access to the land of promise in company with a stiff-necked people, He conducted him nevertheless to Mount Tabor with Elias, amid the glories of the transfiguration, a witness of the bright designs of that God, the promises of Whom are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

The second case, and not less remarkable, we now find in the life of the one who later on would be the companion of Moses on the mountain. Reading 1 Kings xix., we find Elijah, who, after being a fugitive from the presence of Jezebel, weary and faint from a long labour which apparently seemed to be fruitless, prayed the Lord to take away his life from the earth. That great man, in a moment of supreme agony, and of moral displeasure easy to understand, wished to die under a juniper tree! But God had entirely other thoughts; to die under a juniper tree would not have been an end worthy of so great a prophet, and therefore He transported him into heaven in a chariot of fire. As the heaven is higher than the earth, so are the thoughts of God higher than ours! Instead of being heard, Elijah deserves to be taken away from the earth later on, and transported in a triumphal chariot; to be found again afterwards with Moses on the holy mount, encompassed by a cloud luminous and full of glory.

The third case of prayer not granted demands from us greater attention and deep reverence. We have here, not a failing man prevented from entering into Canaan, or a prophet overcome by the world, but the Son of man, the perfect Man, Who in His agitated prayer feels all the horror of the death which weighs upon His soul, and asks, "If it be possible," that this weight should be taken away. Let us go to the garden of Gethsemane with a reverent heart, and let us contemplate (Luke xxii. 39-46) the perfect Lord Jesus kneeling before the Father, while He continues praying to Him, if it be possible to cause the cup to pass away from Him! Certainly, dear brethren, to occupy ourselves with this profound subject, we would wish for hearts full of adoration, for if Moses ought to take off his shoes to approach the burning bush, how much the more ought we to be reverent in approaching in spirit the dark trees of the garden! There we shall perceive a Man Who prays earnestly, saying, "Abba, Father! . . . . . take away this cup from Me! nevertheless not what I will but what Thou wilt." Well, as to that perfect Man, Who never had recourse to God in vain, that wish was not granted. Oh, the depth of the grace for us that the case should have remained thus! God has not spared His Son; indeed, speaking with all reverence, He could not take away the cup from the One Who should be the Victim for sin. And where should we be, O reader, if our blessed Lord Jesus had not drunk the cup? We all should have been lost, and for ever! But, on the other side, we see that God held in reserve an endless joy for the obedient Man (Ps. xvi. 10, 11); and that although the perfect Servant had not been heard in Gethsemane, He would enjoy fully of the travail of His soul, and would be satisfied with joy (Is. liii. 11). Who can conceive the joy that One will experience, Who has drunk all the cup of the wrath of God, when He shall see His redeemed ones in the glory with Him? Considering our Lord as perfect Man, can we not perhaps say again that God, not having heard

Him in Gethsemane,* has reserved for Him something of supreme excellency? Let us look unto "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," being the only One Who is worthy to occupy so elevated a position.

The fourth example that I shall bring forward of prayer not answered, though not without result, is found in the twelfth chapter of 2 Cor., where Paul prays the Lord in vain three times that the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan that had made him suffer so much, might be taken from him. But here also God has in view something greater in His counsels for His poor servant. Like his Lord in Gethsemane, Paul asked three times that the thorn should be taken away from him, and then heard the comforting reply of the Lord, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." What a resemblance you have afterwards between Christ and Paul! The thorn was quite otherwise than agreeable to Saul of Tarsus; yet Paul who scarcely understood that in his weakness and suffering there would be a vessel more suitable for the manifestation of the strength of Christ, is reverently silent, and submits himself joyfully to the will of Him Who is able to subdue everything to Himself.

What a beautiful prospect of glory displays itself to the eyes of the faithful apostle, when he receives the word of his Lord, by which he should become a vessel more full of the power of Christ! This is a most beautiful example of submission for all of us.

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* Although the Lord prayed, in utter submission to His Father's will, that the cup might pass from Him, and was not heard as to that particular, yet are we told in Heb. v. 7 that He prayed, with strong crying and tears, unto Him Who was able to save Him out of death and was heard, in that He feared, or for His piety. The prayer that was not answered differed from that which was granted—even life for evermore.—Ed. W.O.H.

Those able to sound the depths of this subject will, I believe, find a God Who, if He does not grant every prayer, always holds in reserve greater blessings according to His counsels. May we be able to know it much better, and have confidence in the grace and wisdom of the One Who has revealed Himself to us as the Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him!

R. KENT.

The Christian Calling

"For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not to bring to nought, things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence." 1 Corinthians 26-29. (See also Eph. i. 18; and 2 Timothy i. 9).

IT will be agreed at once by all earnest Christians that nothing can be of greater importance to us than the understanding of what the true character of the Christian calling is. As in the training of a youth we seek to prepare him for the calling or profession he is to follow, so with our life as Christians will the whole be guided and controlled by our understanding at the start what we are called *by* and *to*. What disappointed hopes and fears of purposeless struggling will be avoided if we learn early in our Christian course the true nature of our profession!

However briefly we look at this subject, if we do not even refer to all the scriptures that speak of it, the opening verses of Hebrews iii. give us a starting point of the most definite kind. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession Christ Jesus." Then follows a precious tribute to the Person and work of our Lord in this special regard, and an exhortation as always in this epistle to "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

Just what the Christian profession has not done, as a whole; they, or rather it, has "let them slip" (Heb. ii. 1), to the irreparable loss of Christians generally, and the lowering of the whole tone of the profession. But we must look a little more definitely at some points of this epistle to the Hebrews, and we shall doubtless find that although the calling of the Old Testament saints was earthly by contrast, they are set before us in the most emphatic way as examples to follow; because of the imperative need of faith for the whole of our path and service, as for theirs.

Beginning with Abel, Enoch and Noah, and passing on to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we read, "These all died in faith, *not* having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them; and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." *Mark the comment!* "Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. xi. 13-16).

Now when we turn to Paul's epistles addressed to Gentile believers to learn what characterises the Christian calling, we find a marked contrast in every way. The scripture at the head of this article, for example, puts something before the Corinthian believers that must have awakened their consciences, not only to the contrast between it and the earthly calling of the Old Testament saints, but to the true nature of the heavenly calling, about which he instructs also the Thessalonian church; and prays that God count them *worthy* of it, "and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power" (2 Thess. i. 11).

Yet however great the contrast may be in character, they are set before us as examples because of their devotedness in the pursuit of what was set before them. Does not this prove that always in every age the one great need is faith? In this respect the people of God are alike, whatever the difference in the dispensation, and the character of the calling; faith in God is the

one indispensable power. "We walk by faith and not by sight."

The first chapter of Corinthians gives us in a direct and definite sentence or two what this calling is—"God is faithful by Whom ye were called into the fellowship (or communion) of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord"; and this forms the basis of all the exhortations that follow. There was much to correct and to warn them about; the spirit of the world had got a place amongst them in no small degree, and so patiently and at length he warns them of the various ways in which they had so soon been diverted from the path of "Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

A brief glance at the first chapter of Ephesians, eighteenth verse, enlarges our thoughts as to this calling, for it implies that the saints were already in the possession of it; which indeed they were, and so are exhorted to pray for the knowledge of the hope of it, and the glory of it.

What a contrast this opens out to us of all that is generally held and taught as to the proper hope and character of Christianity. It calls upon the Christian for a holy and heavenly walk consistent with the Head in heaven. Animated by this heavenly hope, and sustained by the Holy Spirit, the goal is Christ in glory, and the heavenly Jerusalem, in contrast to Jerusalem on earth and all that it was to the earthly saints in sustaining power for faith.

The Jew was naturally contented with an earthly Messiah, but the apostle in Hebrews takes pains to present a heavenly Christ, and all things in heaven and earth to be put under Him. Now we have such an One in Whom all the purposes of God, heavenly and earthly, are centred. T.R.

(To be continued, D.V.)

The True Vine

"I AM the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman," were the words spoken by our Lord Jesus, and although so beautiful in their simplicity, yet what volumes of truth lie in them? They present to us the very motive of the heart of our Lord in undertaking His pathway of service here in this world, which was that He might bring pleasure to the heart of His God and Father.

In Genesis we have the account of the work of God in creation, but in Rev. iv. we are brought to see the purpose of that creation . . . "for *Thy pleasure* they are and were created." And how God delighted in His own handiwork is indicated by the constant repetition of that joyous refrain . . . "and God saw that it was good," concluding on the sixth day with the final pronouncement, "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." His pleasure, too, in the man He had created is beautifully suggested in that He sought his company "in the garden in the cool of the day," at a time when Adam would be free from the pleasant duties of keeping and dressing the garden (for the divine order is that man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening), and that together they might hold uninterrupted communion, the character of which is perhaps suggested to us by the later account of Abraham being informed of the things which God purposed to do.

Then what a grief to the heart of God to come down and find that this man on whom such love had been bestowed with so lavish a hand had sinned by disobedience, and instead of being able to lift up his face before his God, now seeks to hide himself from His presence. Here we have the sad result of sin, not only the beginning of man's wretchedness, but that which brings grief to the heart of a God Who is our Creator and One Whose great desire is to bestow every blessing upon the creature of His hand. God's pleasure in this first man is for ever gone, never to be restored.

A beautiful piece of pottery which was the delight of all eyes that looked upon it, after being broken may be pieced together again, but the original pleasure will never be recovered, and in looking upon it a feeling of disappointment will ever ensue as we remember its pristine beauty. So with man. A covering may be provided, and a promise of redemption introduced, but God's pleasure in the first man Adam and his race is for ever gone, and He retires, as it were, into His own counsels, waiting to find His delight in Another.

Then His own beloved Son, by His side in heaven, perceiving the cause of this grief, and knowing what alone would bring pleasure to God, in wondrous devotion to the Father, assumes a body in this creation, and cries: "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." The system of sacrifices had been introduced (through the forbearance of God), but God found no pleasure in these. Until there is a man in the world who will obey Him only (which God had looked for in the first man) His delight could not be restored. Even Samuel had been taught that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." But we now see One Who can say, "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come . . . to do Thy will, O God." Well might the angels (whom we know are intelligent in the ways of God) praise at His incarnation and say, "Glory to God in the highest . . . *Good pleasure* in men."

So we find Him, in John xv., testifying that His object here was to bring fruit to His Father. The husbandman is the owner of the vineyard, so how right that the fruit should be borne for him! After man's early and hopeless failure, God called out Israel as a nation to bear fruit for Himself, and lavished all care and blessing upon them to this end. But alas! they proved no better than others, and sadly failed. We see God's grief and complaint over them in Isaiah v. 1-7. How disappointing to come expecting to receive fruit, and to find none!

But how gloriously did the Son of God restore that

pleasure to God, and that by His submission and obedience. If man failed, and if Israel later failed, every step of our Lord's blessed pathway brought glory and fruit to God. Well might heaven be opened upon Him and God's approving voice be heard: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I have found My delight." So what a theme now opens out to us; to go through every detail of that pathway, tracing how His obedience brought pleasure to God. Commencing at His birth —wondrous submission to be made even lower than the angels; going on to His baptism — and even John wondered at this stoop; His beautiful submission to His parents—for here He recognised God's will, for was it not written, "Honour thy father and thy mother"—all was fruit to God. His rejection and insults at the hands of men He accepted as God's will, for He could reply, "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me except it were given thee from above." We can think, too, of that time when shameful man refused Him leave to pass through their village (like Israel of old in the desert), but in adorable meekness and without a word of complaint, He "went into another village." And so this wondrous and inexhaustible subject could be pursued, His life (as flawless as His seamless garment) culminating in that supreme act of obedience—"He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." A perfect close to a perfect life, His one motive having been to keep His Father's commandments, and thus abide in His love (John xv. 10). "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I might take it again . . . . This commandment have I received of My Father." Thus we see how truly did He fulfil this character of the true vine, and how pleasurable were the fruits to God. And how it causes us, too, to glorify God and to give praise that He has been glorified here, where previously He had been "robbed"!

It is a privileged, and yet solemn, position we, who are Christians, now occupy, for the Lord said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The

position He once filled on earth He now leaves for us to continue. We are to be moved by the same motives that guided Him, for John could say, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." It is an exalted position to be in a world opposed to God, and yet to be glorifying Him by bringing forth much fruit, for "herein is My Father glorified that ye bear much fruit." As the fruit is borne for God's pleasure, it is not always approved by man. How can man, away from God, value, say, the preciousness of a meek and quiet spirit, but it is, *in the sight of God,* of great price. In Gal. v. 22, 23, we have other fruits enumerated. Every believer longs to bear fruit to God's pleasure, which can only be produced by abiding in Christ, for without Him we can do nothing. God's whole delight is centred in Him, and by the Spirit He is graciously teaching us that the flesh profiteth nothing, but that "Christ is all."

J.R.G.

Enough

I AM so weak, O Lord, I cannot stand
One moment without Thee!
But, oh! the tenderness of Thine enfolding,
And, oh! the faithfulness of Thine upholding,
And, oh! the strength of Thy right hand!
That strength is enough for me!

Once were strange soul-depths, restless, vast, and broad,
Unfathomed as the sea;
An infinite craving for some infinite stilling;
But now Thy perfect love is perfect filling!
Lord Jesus Christ, my Lord, my God,
Thou, Thou art enough for me!

F.R.H.

A Marriage Address on John ii. 1-11.

IT is very apparent in scripture what an important place marriage holds in God's estimation. We find it mentioned in the first Book of the Bible, where God Himself provided a wife for Adam; and we find it in the last Book of the Bible, where a bride makes herself ready and the marriage of the Lamb takes place in heaven. Throughout the Bible there are many instructive references to marriage.

We notice in this passage from John that our Lord was present at this marriage in Cana of Galilee, and that the event took place at the commencement of His testimony as recorded in this Gospel. Here He first "manifested forth His glory" (ver. 11). The mother of Jesus was there, and Jesus and His disciples were invited to be present.

But the first thing that strikes us is that, though invited, the Lord at first had no prominent place. Every preparation for the occasion had no doubt been made, but the Lord Jesus was not consulted. He was there practically unknown to the governor of the feast. And, as a result, they lacked wine, the symbol of joy, the characteristic feature of a marriage feast.

We see, then, that the Lord was not there in the character that should have been given Him, the Son of God, especially on such an occasion as a marriage, which is the commencement of a new career in life. It seems also that the matter of ceremonial purification had been overlooked. There was no water available. Water is not a sign of joy like wine, but of cleansing the conscience and ways by the word of God. If cleansing is neglected, joy is absent in consequence.

It is true there were six waterpots in the house; but they were all empty. Instead of being filled with water for the use of the guests as required, the large vessels were empty. The Lord desired that this defect should be remedied, and He commanded that the large vessels should be filled with water.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, gave golden counsel at

this point. She said to the servants, "Whatsoever He saith to you, do it." She had confidence in the word of the Lord Jesus, and so she told them to pay attention to what He said, and to obey Him. Her advice was sound and good, and makes a useful motto—for every married couple especially.

There had been some oversight in providing the means necessary for periodical purification. The waterpots of water were required for the cleansing of the feet of those in the house, as we find the Lord doing for His disciples in John xiii. Water is very needful, not only for those walking along the dusty highways of life, where the feet become weary and travel-stained, but for those in the home, as a means of cleansing and refreshment. The water of God's holy word cleanses away all that is defiling, and must be constantly used for this purpose. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word" (Ps. cxix. 9).

It should be observed that the Lord did not Himself provide the water on this occasion. There was water at hand. It was the duty of the servants to draw the water and fill the vessels. And it is our responsibility to read the scriptures for ourselves, to store its teaching in the vessels of our memories, and to see that there is a good supply in the waterpots at home—filled to the brim.

It is important, then, that the new duties and relationships of married life should be regulated by God's word in order to secure the joy that Christ gives to those who carry out His directions. The Lord converted the water into good wine—the joy of His own providing.

Scripture shows what principles of life and conduct go to make that very beautiful institution, the Christian home. We may consider some of them conveniently for remembrance under the headings of the six waterpots.

The FIRST WATERPOT is for the wife. In Eph. v. 22, we read, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your

own husbands as unto the Lord." She is called to be submissive to her husband, regardless of the present ways of the world, according to which the woman struggles for a position of command, and the wife is often seen ruling the husband.

The Christian wife obeys this precept cheerfully, because it is done "as unto the Lord." She sees the Lord behind her husband, directing her through him. She will, of course, have the word of God in her heart for herself, and she will then see how the counsel and direction of the Lord come to her through her husband. He is to her as head, for "the head of the woman is the man" (1 Cor. xi. 3). This attitude of submission and obedience to the husband "as unto the Lord" is to be maintained all through the period of her wedded life.

The SECOND WATERPOT is for the husband. In Eph. v. 25-27, it is written, "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

The great point here is that Christ's love for the church is the pattern of the husband's love for his wife. There could not be a higher ideal. This is the manner of the love, not of courtship, but of marriage: "Husbands, love your wives." He is to go on loving his wife to the end.

The husband's love must be self-denying, like Christ's, Who gave Himself for His church in order to display His incomparable love for her. The husband studies his wife's welfare, nourishing and cherishing her, even as the Lord Jesus is continually active in caring for His church.

The THIRD WATERPOT is for the wife. She is to adorn herself for her husband's pleasure. In 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, it is said of wives, "Whose adorning let it

not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Here the cultivation of spiritual beauty is enjoined for the joy of the husband. It may be comparatively easy to adorn the exterior by means of millinery, drapery, and jewellery, which practice is condemned; but the wife is directed to the hidden man of the heart, the meek and quiet spirit, and this form of adornment is not accomplished in a moment.

When Rebekah saw her prospective husband, she took a veil and covered herself; no doubt, during her journey across the desert, she was engaged in preparing her bridal veil which she hoped would please the eyes of Isaac. We also, as belonging to the heavenly bride of Christ, are preparing the robe in which to meet the Bridegroom; for when the marriage of the Lamb is come, His wife will adorn herself in fine linen, which is the righteousnesses of saints (Rev. xix.).

Let the husband find a delight in beholding that meek and quiet spirit, which comes from having "the mind which was in Christ Jesus," and is of such great price.

The FOURTH WATERPOT is another one for the husband. In 1 Pet. iii. 7, we have, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."

The chief point of this exhortation is that the husband is counselled to give honour (or preciousness) to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel. The stress is not upon the weakness of the vessel but on the honour or esteem in which he is to hold his wife. He is to put a spiritual value upon his wife as a precious gift to him, and as a fellow-heir of the grace of life, confided to him for guardianship.

The use of these waterpots by the husband and wife will promote a unity in their new life and new purpose,

and their joint prayers will not be hindered but helped, rising to God as one united supplication.

The FIFTH WATERPOT deals with the newness of the step taken in marriage. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph. v. 31). Something is left behind, and something is begun.

An important aspect of marriage is set forth in this passage. It implies that, by God's appointment, a new institution has been formed on earth to-day. The foundations of a new home have been laid. Earthly materials compose the *house,* but love, peace, joy, holy obedience to God's word make the Christian *home.* There God's authority rules, and there God's blessing rests.

God, looking down, beholds our brother and sister now as "one flesh." As united together, they are to become a power for increased blessing to one another in their new home; and also that home should be a new centre from which blessing will flow out to others.

The SIXTH WATERPOT relates to the connection between the new home and the assembly. We read in 1 Cor. xvi. 19, "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

It is the will of God that there should be a close link between the new home and the assembly. Other accommodation being lacking, this godly couple, Aquila and Priscilla, opened their house for the use of the assembly. We have been speaking of the duties and responsibilities of husband and wife to each other, but we are reminded that the married are not to isolate themselves in their home. It is to be opened, not to the world, but to the church. The new home is to be in practical association with the assembly of the living God. There should be an influence for good going out from their home life to those who belong to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Other passages of scripture applicable to marriage relationships might be mentioned, but those mentioned are of the first importance. And the divine counsel in

them is for the guidance of all who are united by the marriage tie. All those who are in the family of God must accept the word of God for their guidance. By the habitual use of the "waterpots" to correct every failure to rise to His standard, and by more careful observance of His word the Christian home will be kept sweet and clean.

In Cana, when the vessels were filled to the brim and the water made wine, there was enough for all in the house. The wine signified spiritual joy, and the Lord gives this in abundance. The joy of the Lord is the strength of His people, and it is His will that we should have that joy. First honour God's word, and then there will be the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow thereto. Keep the home waterpots full, and the wine of divine joy will not fail you. W. J. H.

Union, Division, Unity.

(Romans xvi.; Ephesians i. 11.)

WE are here introduced into the family circle, and shown God's delight in His people. The earthly kings of Israel and Judah had Chronicles written for them. God writes chronicles of His heavenly saints. Every one of their characters and deeds are written down in heaven. Not a word is said against them. God is the same God as He was of old. When His earthly people had well-nigh finished their journeyings in the wilderness, and had wandered about for forty years, the Lord could say of them, even at the moment of awful failure: "The Lord hath not seen iniquity in Jacob nor perverseness in Israel." Forty years' murmurings and failures had not changed His heart towards them. If they commit iniquity He will indeed chasten them with the rod of men, but His mercy will He never take away. So is it here. Faithfulness is chronicled down, but all failure left out. Will the father of a family tell the failures of his child to the world? No; and why? Because he is his child. He

will tell of the good, but not of the evil. So does the Father as to His children born from above. He delights to hold forth to the world and the enemies their virtues.

There is a mother (ver. 13), there are brethren (ver. 14), and sisters (ver. 1), and cousins (ver. 7, 11) brought forward here. All of one stock with the last Adam, who is not ashamed to call them brethren. They are bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh, partaking of the same life of the One raised out of the dead. It is not the church as the body of Christ here. It is the family of God (compare John xvii.; Heb. ii. 10-14). Not unity but union. There are different members in a family. Each preserves his individuality, still it is one family. In the body there is no individuality; there are members, but members working in the one great unity. The assembly, the body, is a unity, not a union. The sisters are especially mentioned here. They may be servants of the church, like Phoebe, succourers of many; helpers in Christ Jesus, like Priscilla, willing to lay down their necks for a Paul, for whom the whole assembly give thanks; they may bestow much labour on the servants, like Mary; may labour in the Lord, like Tryphena and Tryphosa; yea, labour much in the Lord, like the beloved Persis. Nothing is too little to be put down. Epenetus is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Amplias is beloved in the Lord. Apelles is approved in Christ. What a bond! The little words "in the Lord," "in Christ," are mentioned ten times in the first sixteen verses. They mark the full position of the saints as set forth in this blessed Epistle.

That no one who reads this may come short of the fullest blessing, I would just say that there are two parts of our salvation brought out in the Epistle. First, in chapters i.-iv., man is looked at as a guilty sinner, and God as a Justifier. Christ's death and resurrection for the sinner are pressed as the righteous ground on which God forgives and justifies. In the beginning of chapter v. he is seen justified and reconciled to God

through Christ's death and resurrection for him. But from chapter v. 12 to chapter viii. man is looked at as born in sin, under its power, consequently lost, and God as a Deliverer, through the gift of Christ. By His death the believer is delivered out of his Adam state, has died for faith out of that condition, and by Christ's resurrection, and ascension, and descent of the Holy Ghost, has been identified with Him in a new life, so that he is in Christ, and Christ in him by the Holy Ghost. My reader, I pray you mark these words, *in Christ*! It gives the position of every child of God in this dispensation. Every child in the family of God has this common position, and Christ as his life.

In Christ! It means the entire setting aside of the first man, the setting up of the Second, and the Holy Ghost come down identifying us with that second Man, Who died and rose for us. It is the secret of all union and blessing amongst the saints. Christ is in them all; they are in Christ. They are united in a common life to Him, and to one another. The Spirit of life of the second Adam has been breathed into them (John xx. 22). They are one family. The world has no part in this holy circle. They are outside it all. They are in Christ.

But if they are in Christ, and thus separated, men causing divisions and contentions may still come in. They may belong to the saints themselves, and even arise from the elders (see Acts xx. 28-30). They are to be avoided. Every saint, even the weakest, is responsible. No gift or office is to hinder the saints in this. The greatest test for the saints is *the doctrine they have learned,* especially as set forth in this Epistle. They were to test these dividers by it. Another great sign to find them out is, they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly. They may have great weight in the professing church, be taken into the service of a king, and paid for it; but it is, like Balaam, to curse the Lord's people, and, if that is of no avail, to teach the Lord's people to bow down to some system of religion, which becomes an idol, or to commit

spiritual fornication, mixing up the world and the Lord's children together (Num. xxv.). Of such God's people are to beware (see Rev. ii. 14). Alas for the church when it is full of such people! In the midst of divisions the saints are thrown on the God of peace. He will bruise Satan, the author of divisions, under their feet shortly. Different salutations ensue, which close the Epistle.

A little appendix is added, in which the mystery of Christ is alluded to. Eph. iii. 3-11; v. 32. Col. i. 26, 27; ii. 2.

The general subject of the Epistle has been to individuals. Their corporate relationships have hardly been touched. These, however, are founded on the truths brought out in this Epistle. The doctrine of the assembly is fully brought out in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The mystery had been hid up to this time, but was now made manifest in the prophetic scriptures. Up to Christ, God had been dealing with a nation, good and evil all mixed up together, and shut out from the Gentiles by their legal system. Now the gospel went out to Jew and Gentile alike, and those who received it were saved out of the world, composed of Jews and Gentiles, and united to Christ in heaven by the Holy Ghost, in which unity they formed one body, to be manifested in the world as such (see 1 Cor. xii. 27; Eph. ii. 14-16). Besides having a common life and nature with Christ (see John xx. 22), they were baptised by the Holy Ghost into one body (Acts ii.; 1 Cor. xii. 13), so that they were more than simply individuals and members of one family. They were one with Christ by the Holy Ghost, and responsible to express it by breaking the one loaf at the Lord's Supper, since they were all members of the body of Christ, the true loaf (1 Cor. x. 17). This was their privilege, and the common privilege of the members of the body of Christ. As united to Christ in heaven, and as owning the presence and power of the Holy Ghost in their midst, Who guides the house of God according to the Scriptures, they were privileged to meet.

These two divine Persons, however, give the true character to this unity. Christ as head is the *holy* and *true* One (Rev. iii. 7). The Spirit who fills the body is the *Holy* Spirit (John xiv. 26), and Spirit of *truth* (John xiv. 17). The Father, too, is the *Holy* Father, sanctifying His children through His *truth* (John xvii. 11, 17). Beloved brother and sister in Christ, are you walking worthy of the Lord as one of the Father's family, seeking union, and avoiding division? Are you on the watch against those who divide the flock, avoiding them as you would Satan? And, thirdly, are you endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Some are seeking to make a unity. The unity is already made. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of it (Eph. i. 3). Christ is the head and centre of it (ver. 22). The Holy Ghost is the One Who gathers the saints on earth, and the power of it (ii. 22). The saved are members of it. It was made on the day of Pentecost. Flowing from this seeking to make a unity, forms of worship are made; dear saints not recognising that the Holy Ghost Who formed the unity is there also as the power of worship (John iv. 23, 24). A ministry is likewise ordained—men not recognising that the Holy Ghost, already there, is the power of ministry (1 Cor. xii. 4-11). Discipline is likewise formed—saints not recognising that the Holy Ghost is already there as the power of discipline (Acts v. 3-11). Rules are made—saints not recognising that the Holy Ghost, through the word, has already all the rules written down that are necessary (see especially 1 Cor. xi.-xiv., etc.). Ever since Pentecost Christ has been up in heaven as head of the body, and the Holy Ghost down here as the Spirit of unity in the body. Beloved, though the saints are scattered and divided, yet your responsibility remains to own these first principles, and to take the Scriptures alone of the New Testament as the Spirit's rules for the house of God. He is the orderer of the house, not man. A.P.C.

The Christian Calling—2.

THE Christian is called to the privilege of serving God in the sanctuary, into which man under the first covenant had no entrance. It is for the place where God Himself is known and, so to speak, fills it; so that the flesh has no place. It has been often said, although perhaps little understood and practised, that the Christian is both a priest and a Levite. How many of us know our privileges in this way and enjoy them? Do we appropriate it to ourselves? Because it is said *we have* an altar, and *we have* sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving. Surely this is priestly work; who amongst us practises it?

Why do the vast majority of our fellow Christians think that these blessed privileges are to be relegated to certain persons trained for the purpose, and so deprive themselves of the most blessed part of the Christian vocation?

Let us briefly glance at another aspect of our calling, and perhaps an incident of actual experience may help us here. Two Christian men known to each other and by many in the town in which they live as Christians meet and get into conversation. One has recently been elected as Mayor of the town in which they both carry on business, and the worthy Mayor says to his friend, Why don't you come and lend us a hand in doing the right thing? It is nomination day and I shall have very much pleasure in nominating you for a seat on the Council. The friend shakes his head and assures him that he has no thought or desire for such a position. But the Mayor is not easily put off, and argues his point—"If you Christian men stand aloof you cannot blame the others whom we don't want to see in these positions for getting them." He urges his request and at length says, "We want to get Christian men on the bench, and govern the world by the Sermon on the Mount"—and so on. His friend at length replies something like this, "Well, now, Mr. Mayor, suppose you make me a magistrate and I have a man brought before me for stealing a coat, and I

look down and say to the plaintiff, 'Well, friend, I advise that you give him your cloak also,' that's the principle of what the Lord says in the 'Sermon on the Mount.' "

The good Mayor is dumb and leaves his friend with a shake of the head that says, "I don't understand your argument"; but not before his friend and fellow Christian assures him of one thing, that the prayer meeting he attends weekly rarely separates without someone praying for kings, magistrates, and all that are in authority over us.

But what is the explanation of the difference in judgment and action of these two Christian men? Is it not that they look at the Christian calling from a different standpoint? And the question is, "Which is according to the word and will of God?" Are we to blame the Christian who thinks he is called upon to help keep the world right, or improve its condition as far as he can? We would say to him, Did not the Lord Himself say, "*If* My kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight." And again, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant" (Matt. xx. 25, 27).

All such questions and many more are answered by an understanding of what our true calling in this day is. Let Philippians iii. 12-14 speak to us that we may truly be found pressing toward that mark for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

If our Christian brother who thinks his path should be to try and leave the world better than he found it sees you and us holding aloof from the work he thinks we should lend a hand in, and striving to better the position of ourselves and family in this world, what value is he likely to set on our avowed purpose of seeking the heavenly things; so that things which are not yet (seen or manifested) bring to nought the things that are (seen)? T.R.

The Sacrifice.

OH all ye, who passe by, whose eyes and minde
To worldly things are sharp, but to Me blinde;
To Me, Who took eyes that I might you finde:
Was ever grief like Mine?

The Princes of My People make a head
Against their Maker: they do wish Me dead,
Who cannot wish, except I give them bread:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Without Me each one, who doth now Me brave,
Had to this day been an Egyptian slave.
They use that power against Me, which I gave:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Mine own apostle, who the bag did beare,
Though he had all I had, did not forbeare
To sell Me also, and to put me there:
Was ever grief like Mine?

For thirtie pence he did My death devise,
Who at three hundred did the ointment prize,
Not half so sweet as My sweet sacrifice:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Therefore My soul melts, and My hearts deare treasure
Drops bloud (the only beads) My words to measure:
O let this cup passe, if it be Thy pleasure:
Was ever grief like Mine?

These drops being temper'd with a sinner's tears,
A Balsome are for both the Hemispheres,
Curing all wounds, but Mine: all, but My fears.
Was ever grief like Mine?

Yet My Disciples sleep: I cannot gain
One houre of watching; but their drowsie brain
Comforts not Me, and doth My doctrine stain:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Arise, arise, they come. Look how they runne.
Alas! what haste they make to be undone!
How with their lanterns do they seek the sunne!
Was ever grief like Mine?

With clubs and staves they seek Me, as a thief,
Who am the way of truth, the true relief,
Most true to those who are My greatest grief:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Judas, dost thou betray Me with a kisse?
Canst thou finde hell about My lips? and misse
Of life, just at the gates of life and blisse?
Was ever grief like Mine?

See, they lay hold on Me, not with the hands
Of faith, but furie; yet at their commands
I suffer binding, Who have loos'd their bands:
Was ever grief like Mine?

All My Disciples flie; fear put a barre
Betwixt My friends and Me. They leave the starre,
That brought the wise men of the East from farre:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then from one ruler to another bound
They leade me: urging, that it was not sound
What I taught: Comments would the text confound.
Was ever grief like Mine?

The Priests and rulers all false witnesse seek
'Gainst Him, Who seeks not life, but is the meek
And readie Paschal Lambe of this great week:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then they accuse Me of great blasphemie,
That I did thrust into the Deitie,
Who never thought that any robberie:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Some said, that I the Temple to the floore
In three days raz'd, and raised as before.
Why, He that built the world can do much more:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then they condemne Me all with that same breath,
Which I do give them daily, unto death.
Thus Adam my first breathing rendereth:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They binde and leade Me unto Herod: he
Sends Me to Pilate. This makes them agree;
But yet their friendship is my enmitie.
Was ever grief like Mine?

Herod and all his bands do set Me light,
Who teach all hands to warre, fingers to fight,
And onely am the Lord of hosts and might.
Was ever grief like Mine?

Herod in judgment sits, while I do stand;
Examines Me with a censorious hand:
I him obey, Who all things else command:
Was ever grief like Mine?

The Jews accuse me with despitefulnesse;
And vying malice with my gentlenesse,
Pick quarrels with their onely happiness:
Was ever grief like Mine?

I answer nothing, but with patience prove
If stonie hearts will melt with gentle love.
But who does hawk at eagles with a dove?
Was ever grief like Mine?

My silence rather doth augment their crie;
My dove doth back into My bosome flie,
Because the raging waters still are high:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Hark how they crie aloud still, Crucifie:
It is not fit He live a day, they crie,
Who cannot live lesse than eternally:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Pilate a stranger holdeth off; but they,
Mine own deare people, crie, Away, away
With noises confused frighting the day:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Yet still they shout, and crie, and stop their eares,
Putting My life among their sinnes and fears,
And therefore wish My bloud on them and theirs:
Was ever grief like Mine?

See how spite cankers things. These words aright
Used, and wished, are the whole worlds light:
But honey is their gall, brightnesse their night:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They choose a murderer, and all agree
In him to do themselves a courtesie;
For it was their own cause who killed Me:
Was ever grief like Mine?

And a seditious murderer he was:
But I the Prince of peace; peace that doth passe
All understanding, more than heav'n doth glasse:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Why, Cesar is their onely King, not I:
He clave the stonie rock, when they were drie;
But surely not their hearts, as I well trie:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Ah! how they scourge Me! yet My tendernesse
Doubles each lash: and yet their bitternesse
Windes up My grief to a mysteriousnesse:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They buffet Me, and box Me as they list,
Who grasp the earth and heaven with My fist,
And never yet, whom I would punish, miss'd:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Behold, they spit on Me in scornfull wise;
Who by My spittle gave the blinde man eies,
Leaving his blindnesse to Mine enemies:
Was ever grief like Mine?

My face they cover, though it be divine.
As Moses face was vailed, so is Mine,
Lest on their double-dark souls either shine:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Servants and abjects flout Me; they are wittie:
Now prophesie who strikes Thee, is their dittie.
So they in Me denie themselves all pitie:
Was ever grief like Mine?

And now I am deliver'd unto death,
Which each one cals for so with utmost breath,
That he before Me well-nigh suffereth:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Weep not, deare friends, since I for both have wept
When all My tears were bloud, the while you slept:
Your tears for your own fortunes should be kept:
Was ever grief like Mine?

The souldiers lead Me to the common hall;
There they deride Me, they abuse Me all;
Yet for twelve heav'nly legions I could call:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then with scarlet robe they Me array;
Which shews My bloud to be the onely way,
And cordiall left to repair man's decay:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then on My head a crown of thorns I wear;
For these are all the grapes Sion doth bear,
Though I My vine planted and watred there:
Was ever grief like Mine?

So sits the earth's great curse in Adam's fall
Upon My head; so I remove it all
From th' earth unto My brows, and bear the thrall:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Then with the reed they gave to Me before,
They strike My head, the rock from whence all store
Of heav'nly blessings issue evermore:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They bow their knees to Me, and crie, Hail King:
What ever scoffes or scornfulnesse can bring,
I am the floore, the sink, where they it fling:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Yet since man's scepters are as frail as reeds,
And thorny all their crowns, bloudie their weeds;
I, Who am Truth, turn into truth their deeds:
Was ever grief like Mine?

The souldiers also spit upon that face
Which Angels did desire to have the grace,
And Prophets once to see, but found no place:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Thus trimmed forth they bring Me to the rout,
Who Crucifie Him, crie with one strong shout.
God holds His peace at man, and man cries out:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They leade Me in once more, and putting then
Mine own clothes on, they leade Me out agen.
Whom devils flie, thus is He toss'd of men:
Was ever grief like Mine?

And now wearie of sport, glad to ingrosse
All spite in one, counting My life their losse,
They carrie Me to My most bitter crosse:
Was ever grief like Mine?

My crosse I bear My self, until I faint:
Then Simon bears it for Me by constraint,
The decreed burden of each mortall Saint:
Was ever grief like Mine?

O all ye, who passe by, behold and see;
Man stole the fruit, but I must climbe the tree;
The tree of life to all, but onely Me:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Lo, here I hang, charg'd with a world of sinne,
The greater world o' th' two; for that came in
By words, but this by sorrow I must win:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Such sorrow, as if sinful man could feel,
Or feel his part, he would not cease to kneel,
Till all were melted, though he were all steel.
Was ever grief like Mine?

But, O my God, my God! why leav'st Thou Me,
The Sonne, in Whom Thou dost delight to be?
My God, my God . . . . . .
Never was grief like Mine.

Shame tears My soul, My bodie many a wound;
Sharp nails pierce this, but sharper that confound;
Reproches, which are free, while I am bound:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Now heal Thyself, Physician; now come down.
Alas! I did so, when I left My crown
And Father's smile for you, to feel God's frown:
Was ever grief like Mine?

In healing not Myself, there doth consist
All that salvation, which ye now resist;
Your safetie in My sicknesse does subsist:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Betwixt two theeves I spend My utmost breath,
As he that for some robberie suffereth.
Alas! what have I stolen from you? death:
Was ever grief like Mine?

A King My title is, prefixt on high;
Yet by My subjects am condemn'd to die
A servile death in servile companie:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They gave Me vinegar mingled with gall,
But more with malice; yet, when they did call,
With Manna, Angels food, I fed them all:
Was ever grief like Mine?

They part My garments, and by lot dispose
My coat, the type of love, which once cur'd those
Who sought for help, never malicious foes:
Was ever grief like Mine?

Nay, after death their spite shall further go:
For they will pierce My side, I full well know;
That as sinne came, water and blood might flow:
Was ever grief like Mine?

But now I die; now all is finished.
My wo, man's weal: and now I bow My head:
Onely let others say, when I am dead,
Never was grief like Mine.

GEORGE HERBERT, 1593—1633.

Seek To Be before you Attempt To Do.

IT is quite possible for the word of God to reach the heart, and even to interest one very much, as the seed which fell on the rock (Luke vii.), and yet for no real power to be there. The Spirit of God is careful on this subject to show the difference between receiving the word humanly and divinely. "Our gospel came not unto you in word (or sense only), but in power (the power of action), and in the Holy Ghost." I believe one's practice is the measure of the truth one has received in the Holy Ghost. You are an exponent of that by which you are controlled, and you like to be so.

"Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." The expression in action is the grand result—the life of Jesus manifested in the body, which is "full of light, with no part dark"; it is thus that the Father is glorified. It is not only what is in my heart, but what is the effect in my body.

We are to exhibit in our bodies the colour and beauty of the truth committed to us. To hold forth the word of life. The act indicates the power. The external in everything indicates the internal. Let a man ape as much as he likes, or study to represent himself in a light not genuine, only give him time, and he is sure to betray himself. The effort to express any quality in action is of itself indicative that the quality does not exist. The quality ought to be expressed, but it cannot be expressed unless possessed, and the attempt at expression without possession is affectation: it is an effort to exhibit a right thing without the power.

Hence we should seek not so much to do as to be. You may remark in your prayers whether you are praying to be or to do. I admit it is right to do, but the question is, How do I get strength to do? I reply: By first being. As I depend, as I draw on the power of Christ, as I am living Christ, I am enabled to act Him. It is a great thing to do, but I cannot do until I am first qualified . . . I don't at all want to weaken the desire to do. The friends of Christ do (John xv.

14), but I say, if I am seeking to do, I am occupied with my doings; I am like a tree overweighted with leaves and wood, and no fruit. If Christ is living in me I cannot but express Him; but I am making no effort to do so. The deeper anything is in our hearts the less we care to let others see it, but because of its depth of power it tells of itself. *Gleaned.*

Giving Thanks at the Remembrance of God's Holiness.

WHILE we are not of "Israel," nor can we join the goodly fellowship of "the house of Aaron" (Psalm cxviii. 2): the fourth verse says, "Let them now that fear the Lord say that His mercy endureth for ever." This is the company we *can* join—those who "fear the Lord"—and therefore can sing the song of verse 14. David had seen how the enemy had lifted his sword against him, as it says in v. 13, "Thou hast thrust sore at me that I might fall," but he had also himself often lapsed into sorrowful failure which had brought him under God's judgment and correction, as, for instance, his numbering Israel in 1 Chron. xxi.

There his pride comes out, his ambition to raise himself to the level of the nations around, and the lust for power. This made him forget the will of the Lord, and he ordered the census of the males, but without collecting the redemption money according to God's instruction in Ex. xxx. 11-16. Joab was displeased with David's orders, and proves that sometimes the servant is wiser than his master. To restrain the king the Lord sent the pestilence on Israel as chastisement, and 70,000 of the people were destroyed (v. 14). The angel of the Lord also appeared over Jerusalem, destroying it, and standing over the threshing-floor of Ornan, on Mount Moriah, with a drawn sword in his hand, which was much worse than any enemy had thrust at him.

When David and the elders saw this they clothed themselves in sackcloth and ashes, and fell on their faces. God instructed the king to go up to the

threshing-floor and set up an altar unto the Lord that the plague might be stayed. He had no hope of saving *himself;* but he prayed God to be merciful to *the people*: "Let me fall now into the hands of Jehovah. It is I that have sinned and done evil indeed . . . Let Thine hand, I pray Thee, O Lord, my God, be on me." In the face of the naked sword he could only expect to die, but there God hears him, answers by fire from heaven upon the altar, and accepts his burnt offering. What a discovery for the trembling king! God had met him in grace and used the altar for the salvation both of the people and himself. He found he had to do with One Who could not only save on the ground of the sacrifice he had presented (v. 26), but could also righteously command that the sword be replaced in its sheath—a holy God Who could act in fullest love! That threshing-floor on Moriah became the spot where afterwards Solomon's temple was erected as Jehovah's dwelling place (2 Chron. iii. 1).

Perhaps some believer reading this has fallen even more seriously than David. We know that God must deal with us when we sin: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." He does not think lightly of our evil ways as believers. The sins of a child of God are far more serious in His sight than those of an unbeliever.

Look now at Psalm xxx. The heading of this Psalm should read, "A psalm and song at the dedication of the site of the house of David." For David had died before the temple on Moriah was built, but here he consecrates to God the spot on which he had met the Lord, and where the sword was sheathed. What a wonderful array of blessings this Psalm contains! Beyond extolling the Lord, the rejoicing, the healing, he charges, "O ye saints of His, give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness" (v. 4). There was no song on that threshing-floor in 1 Chronicles xxi. But he can sing now. Why? Is it not that his sins were gone and the place where God saved him has become

the site where He would have built the house on which He had set His heart, the place where God's holiness would dwell (2 Chron. iii. 1)? The remembrance of that holiness now filled him with praise.

We behold that the man who had failed so seriously through his pride, who brought the judgment of God on himself and on the people, now stands before Him and dares to say, "We give thanks at the remembrance of Thy holiness."

Fellow-believers, we, too, must be able to calmly and confidently contemplate God's holiness, as vindicated in the cross of Christ. Has the question of sin been for ever settled for our consciences? Are all doubts as to our standing before God put to silence? Is everything evil in us judged in the light of God? The death of Christ met all this, fully and for ever. Then we may freely look up to Him, and say with David, "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness."

I well remember the first time I ever attended a meeting for "the breaking of bread" in remembrance of Christ's death. It was as a young man of twenty that I strayed into the meeting because too late for my usual chapel. On returning to my lodgings I said to my landlady, "I have been to a very strange place this morning. There was an aged man in the meeting who led them in prayer; he confessed to God a black list of sins, and then suddenly sat down with the words on his lips: 'We give thanks at the remembrance of Thy holiness'." This astonished me greatly. It seemed so presumptuous. So I asked her, "Is that anywhere in the Bible?" She replied, "Yes, in the Church Prayer Book, and, I think, in the Bible." After searching some time I found the passage in this Psalm; but I did not understand it then. How was it possible for David to say such a thing after his black list of sins? And how dared a man in advanced years now, in a public meeting in London, to say it?

David realised that God does not think lightly of sin. He had watched the drawn sword, and seen

70,000 of his subjects dead around him. But, what grace! God saves His people and accepts the sacrifice—and David is spared. No, God does not shut His eyes to our sins, but He finds a righteous way to save and to forgive. We may well rejoice over God's grace, but we must not forget that His holiness must first be satisfied. Let us remember that He Whom we praise is not only a God of love, but a holy God, and let us walk and act consistently with that holiness.

Men say sometimes, "God will not punish, because He is love." Yes, truly He is love. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son"; but we have to remember that He is also light. He is a God Who must act in righteousness and Who must judge sin. The most secret things in your heart and mine must be manifested before Him.

Have we ever meditated seriously on the dreadful spectacle on Golgotha? A lady said, "To think of hell fills me with terror; that anyone should go there and be for ever without hope is most awful." "I know of something much more terrible," I said, and pointed her to the cross. "The only begotten Son of the Father—His Fellow—hanging on the accursed tree, the bearer of our sins. That is the most terrible sight that man or angels ever saw. God hiding His face from His Son, making Him our sin-bearer. God's righteousness and holiness there made their utmost demands against us. God's beloved Son there met and exhausted their every claim." One can hardly trust himself to speak of it, so deeply does the sight affect my soul. The sword which guilty David saw on Moriah was sheathed. But, at Calvary, there was no sheath, rather, "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Zech. xiii. 7). Christ, the voluntary substitute, gives up His life. But then in virtue of this—like David in Psalm xxx., and the aged saint at the Lord's table—we ought to be able to say and can say: "We give thanks at the remembrance of Thy holiness." It was this that lay behind David's song in

Psalm cxviii. "The Lord is my *strength* and my *song* and He is become my *Salvation* !"

Finally, we come to Isaiah xii. The time spoken of here is yet future, for the remnant are yet to return to the very place where God at the beginning had the dwelling place of His holiness. A long and sad history intervenes; but we see the Lord there in choicest grace. His holiness is perfectly satisfied. He acts in the fullest mercy and gathers them round Himself. So the valley of Achor becomes the door of hope (Hos. ii.; Joshua vii).

Now they sing. Jehovah is the subject of their song. Words fail to fully express what fills their heart, but one song remains; this becomes the outlet of their pent-up feelings; they raise once again the old chorus which had been sung on the shore of the Red Sea in the days of Moses.

Through grace they now come at long last into the possession of all the blessing of the New Covenant reserved for them in the heart of God, but of which their conduct hitherto had deprived them. Now in true repentance they accept by faith the pardon of God for all their sins and with hearts filled with gratitude they sing a new song: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

Such is God also towards *us*. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ puts us on even a higher platform. May each one of *us personally* learn to say: "The Lord is *my* strength and *my* song; He also is become *my* salvation"! W.M.R.

Do not be afraid of full grace. Be well sure *that* does not mar holiness; as whatever deadens the conscience does. And as to power which we need, in grace alone it is found. Fellowship in the heart with Christ keeps the sense of our standing in Christ steady, and is the saving power of the heart practically in our walk. May He—oh, may He keep us near Himself! J.N.D.

Deliverance.

(Read Romans vii. 24-25.)

COMPLETE forgiveness of sins and eternal life are the portion of the soul which rests in the simplicity of faith on the accomplished work of Him Who glorified God by His death and has now "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." The Christian is no longer "in the flesh," but "in the Spirit," because the Spirit of God dwells in him (Rom. viii. 9). His position before God is a new one—no longer in Adam but in Christ—and "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Nevertheless, though we are no longer "in the flesh," the old nature, the flesh, is still in us and *it is beyond improvement.* This is a lesson which every Christian must learn. Many learn it as they are converted, but probably the majority only learn it later. As a rule the thought is that God expects from us an improving or even a sanctifying of the flesh, while the fact is that the flesh is and shall ever remain incapable of improvement; it cannot become better. God, therefore, gives us a *new* nature, a *new* life and, at the same time, a *new* object in this life.

Deliverance can only be accomplished by death, not, of course, by actually dying a literal death, but by becoming dead *with Christ.* Scripture does not speak only of the fact that Christ has died *for* us, but says also that we are dead *with* Him and, in consequence, shall also live with Him (Rom. vi. 8). In this connection, scripture speaks of us as being "dead to sin" (Rom. vi. 2, 6). The power and control once exercised by sin is destroyed, annulled; we are under a new Master, no longer to be the servants of sin, to obey the lusts of the flesh, but, on the contrary, "he that is dead is freed from sin." Once and for all, such a one is, in the eyes of God and of faith, done with sin. His blessed Substitute, with Whom he is united in death, was "made sin" on the cross and "died unto

sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God" (v. 10).

This truth, of course, like every other, has its practical results for the believer; and the believer's responsibility is immediately set forth in the words: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." The power of sin over us is broken and we should never again allow it to reign in our mortal bodies nor yield our members to it as instruments of unrighteousness. But where do we find strength to do this, since we are still powerless in ourselves? We are told further: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law but under grace" (v. 12-14).

In Rom. vii. the apostle takes up the subject of our being dead, not only to sin, but also to law (verses 1-6). The law was given for man "in the flesh," and the believer is no longer in that position, but can say: "When we were in the flesh . . . " And, "but now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that wherein we were held." After being made dead to the law by the body of Christ, he becomes Another's, His Who was raised from among the dead that He might henceforth bring forth fruit to God. It is said, moreover, of us that we are crucified unto the world and are dead from the elements of the world. For this reason the apostle Paul would boast only in the cross of Christ by Whom the world was crucified unto him and he unto the world (Gal. vi. 14), and to the Colossians he writes: "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments (or elements) of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" And again: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. ii. 20; iii. 3). The Christian, then, is freed, not only from the power of sin and subjection to the law, but also from the world and all the ordinances which religious men would lay upon him. These are no more to him than "rudiments of the world." What a deliverance! Who else could

have wrought such a deliverance but that One, the great Victor over sin, death, the world and Satan! Truly, Christ has set us free that we might have liberty, not a liberty of the flesh for lawlessness and want of restraint; no! but for the sanctified liberty of the new man to serve, and bring forth fruit unto Him Who created him in righteousness and true holiness. Let us stand fast in *this* freedom and let us not allow ourselves to be laid under the yoke of any other service. How seriously we should go to work in this respect is taught us by the word: "Mortify therefore your members which are on the earth," i.e., pass sentence of death remorselessly on all that is of the flesh. "Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication, out of your mouth . . . seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds" (Col. iii. 5-10).

A verse in the Epistle to the Galatians sums up this truth in a remarkably complete way. A freedman of Christ says there: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). As for the old "I," it is done away with in the cross of Christ and it is "no more I that live" but the new man, Christ in me, lives and operates. This new life requires a new object in life, and this object is the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. What is there in heaven or on earth that can draw out and fill the heart more than this one Object—*Jesus?*

Besides a new life and a new object which pertains to it, the Christian has also a new power or energy. It is not enough to know that I am dead with Christ and thus have died to all in which I once was held. Nor is it enough to know that I have now that which can never grow old instead of that which I once had and which was unclean and would last only for a time. I require, in addition to the new Object for my heart, a spiritual power, too, which makes me to take full advantage of this new Object and which sustains and upholds me. If it is Christ Who is the Object Whom

I have found, Who has taken possession of my heart, to Whom my affections belong, Who strengthens my faith and shapes and forms my life and my character down here to suit Himself, so is it the *Holy Spirit* Who dwells in me, the new Power or Energy Who ever keeps turning my eyes to Jesus and awakens the motions of the new life, and strengthens and directs them, while ever meeting the spiritual needs of the new man.

In Rom. viii. we hear of this new Power. Why is there now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus? The apostle says: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (v. 2). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life and of freedom—under the law there ruled a spirit of bondage—and He dwells in the believer. He works in the new nature and, "led" by Him, we are able to mortify (put under sentence of death) the deeds of the body and "in newness of spirit" to serve God in piety and fear. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, moderation (temperance)" (Gal. v. 22).

The Spirit, Whom we have received, is also the "Spirit of sonship," Who puts into the mouth and heart of the believers (the "sons" of God) the cry: "Abba, Father"! God's love would have us not only to stand in this relationship but also to have the blessed consciousness of it in our souls at all times.

This then is "deliverance"—a word well known but not always equally well understood among us—a great and blessed fact. As we have seen, it is not merely a release from all in which we once were held in bondage and fear, but it is connected with the truth of a new life, a new nature and a new energy. All these things and many more are ours in virtue of the position into which God has brought us in His endless grace.

Shall we not more earnestly than ever set before our eyes our high calling and seek to realise it in daily walk and life?

FROM THE GERMAN.

Notes of an Address on Luke x. 21-42.

IT is often difficult to see the connection between different parts of the same chapter. I should just like to show you here the connection with the first verse read: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight," and the twenty-fifth verse.

In the twenty-fifth verse we find in the lawyer a wise and prudent man, according to the ideas of this world; but a wise and prudent man is often unwise in the things of God. A lawyer had to be thoroughly acquainted with the Bible before he could be fully qualified for office; and this lawyer was a wise man: for he gave a remarkably wise answer to the Lord's question; he gave the very best answer possible, viz.: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself."

He was a prudent man, because he wanted to take care of the future: for he did not want to lose the world to come. But he lacked faith: and so he wanted to put the Lord Jesus to the test, to see if He would give a wise and prudent answer. The present-day critics are testing the Bible: for they do not like the truth; they are doing what they can to upset it; and so the truth is withheld from them. The lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

If I inherit something, this is not something I have worked for, or can do. Everyone knew that to inherit eternal life, it would have to be a free gift of God; but, somehow, they thought they could make themselves worthy. Now the lawyer brings forward the question of doing; but God had told them 1,500 years before to keep the law, and no one had done it. The Lord answers his question, because the lawyer wanted to know what he could *do*. The lawyer showed his

acquaintance with scripture, when he answered the Lord's question from one Book, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind"; and completes his answer from another Book in the Bible, viz.: "And thy neighbour as thyself."

But he willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" What was it which characterised this man most of all?—"He, willing to justify himself." This is what he wanted to do; and many a man to-day says, "If I do my best, it will be added to the work which Christ has done, so that I shall get to heaven even if it is only just within the door."

The Lord did not reprove the lawyer openly; but He drew a picture of a man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves. The lawyer, I think, understood the Lord's picture; it was a representation of his own condition in the eye of God, wounded, robbed and without strength; he needed mercy: for all his righteousnesses were as filthy rags. What he needed was a helper, and a Saviour, not to do something.

There is a connection between the story about the lawyer and that of Mary by way of contrast: for the lawyer wished to justify himself, whereas Mary did not justify herself. Martha charged her sister rather sharply, as some sisters are apt to do at times; but, while Mary did not justify herself, the Lord justified her. Some found fault when the woman broke the alabaster box at the Lord's feet: for it did seem to some that the precious contents had been wasted; but Mary did not answer and the Lord justified her.

Verse 30. "And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." Jerusalem was fourteen miles from Jericho, some say eighteen miles, and it is 2,500 feet above the level of the sea; whereas Jericho is 800 feet below the level of

the Mediterranean: so the journey was down, down, down; and it was a very rocky country, and the road is even dangerous to travel along to-day.

The treatment meted out to this traveller was confirmed by a German known to me who was taken prisoner by the Arabs. He was set upon by the banditti which infest the rocky gorges, and he came in for the same kind of treatment, being stripped of all his clothes. Jerusalem was the city of God, and it was a holy city: for it was the city where God was worshipped. Jericho, the city of palm trees, was, on the contrary, a city of pleasure.

The story reminds one of many a young man who has been brought up in the fear of the Lord, and who at the age of eighteen or twenty, wishes to be independent, and off he goes from Jerusalem, the place of godly restraint, into the world, enticed by the devil. Perhaps one here, who has been robbed by sin and Satan, needs the Saviour; and the Lord Jesus is ready now to help such. In acting as the good Samaritan, it shows His heart is full of love: and He possesses all that is needed for a poor lost soul.

Verse 31. "And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side." The Lord did not wish to reproach the priest as being hardhearted. For in the Old Testament, an Israelite was defiled if he touched the dead body of a man; and if he did, he was to remain unclean for seven days, and purify himself, lest he defiled the tabernacle of the Lord.

How dangerous human religion is where the word of God is added to! Many are so particular now as to outward observances, thinking they will be a great help to them on their way to heaven. This parable is given to impress upon us the necessity of loving God, and our neighbours as ourselves. Many have given up faithfulness to God, and gone back into the world; and thus many children, brought up in the fear of the Lord, have afterwards sought the pleasures of this poor, lost world.

Verse 33. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him." The Samaritan did not belong there; and so this Samaritan is a type of the Lord Jesus Who was a stranger, but is moved with compassion towards perishing sinners. When Jesus told them the truth, that the devil was their father, when they claimed Abraham to be their father, and did not the works of their father, the Jews said unto Him, "Say we not well, that Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" (John viii. 48.)

The reason I dare to take the place of being saved by grace, is because the Lord Jesus had compassion on me: for He saw me going down the broad road to destruction. It is because of His great compassion, that we are here this evening. What a marvellous Saviour! He has had compassion! This man could not have been much worse, or else he would have died, and this is really our condition by nature. May the Lord give you courage to come to Him, if you are without the Saviour; and come to-night!

Verse 34. "And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." The priest and the Levite did not have compassion like the Samaritan. The Blessed Saviour has plenty of experience in binding up wounds, and administering the oil and the wine; and very natural things they are to do.

Some twenty-five years ago, a chemist was asked why did not the Lord use up-to-date antiseptic means, as have now been discovered in modern surgery? This question set the chemist thinking; and he decided to make experiments with the wine the Samaritan used. He procured some French red wine, and put some living bacteria into it; and he was astonished to find that they all died. He then thought that perhaps it was the alcohol in the wine which had this effect. So he boiled some of the wine until the spirit was elimin-

ated; he then added some living germs to the residue, and the result was the same: for all the germs were destroyed.

The chemist had proved that the wine of the country was thoroughly antiseptic: for microbes cannot live in it, but are immediately killed. The oil and the wine were just the right things for the man at the time. The gospel is very simple, and it is very effective where it is believed. The Lord Jesus has brought to us just what we need for time and eternity.

The Samaritan took care of him: but he did not leave him unprovided for. The Lord Jesus takes care of us all the time of His absence, although we have tried His patience many a time; but neither has He forsaken us, nor forgotten us.

Lying on his bed the next day, what was the wounded man thinking about? Why, how soon the Samaritan would return, so that he could thank him worthily. Even as we remember His words: "Surely I come quickly," and fervently respond: "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Verse 35. "And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." Two silver pennies were a good day's wages for to-day and to-morrow; the Lord agreed with the labourers to work in the vineyard at a penny a day each. The longsuffering of God is salvation, but one day the Lord will come; He is not neglecting His promise, but is waiting for the last one to come in, that His Father's house may be full. Then, the Master of the house will rise up, and shut to the door.

The five foolish virgins in the parable are the religious people of this world, who did not get converted, but only had profession. To live and die without the grace and gladness of the Lord is to die without hope.

T. W. B.

Moses in the Inn.

(Exodus iv. 24-26.)

GOD'S dealing with Moses in the inn may, at first sight, seem to be difficult to understand and more so because Moses was, at the time, carrying out God's commandment with regard to the liberation of the people of Israel from the slavery of Pharaoh. Scripture gives us a detailed picture showing how difficult it had been for Moses to consent to carry out the will of God. He had repeatedly refused to go to Pharaoh with the message in God's Name, saying, "Let My people go." Time after time he sought to show God that he was not the man who should be the saviour of Israel. "Who am I," was his first excuse, "that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" "But, behold, they will not believe me," was his second excuse. The words with which they had turned him away (see chap. ii. 14), although forty years since then had flown, still rang so clearly in his ears that he had not the courage to offer himself to the people a second time as their saviour. When God had given him in his hand a sign to prove that *He* had sent him, he had cried with regard to his lack of eloquence, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue" (chap. iv. 10). At last, when God had dealt also with this objection, he had even dared to offer to Jehovah a refusal, "Oh, my Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send" (v. 13). Only after the anger of the Lord was kindled against him, did he own himself ready to carry out God's command.

Moses now entered upon his journey to Egypt, obeying completely the distinct command of God and, behold, "it came to pass by the way" that "the Lord met him, and sought to kill him." What is the meaning of this? The verses which follow show that Moses had been guilty of a serious neglect in his home life.

Perhaps it was weakness towards Zipporah, but he had spared "the knife" on his son and had neglected to circumcise him. Before God could use Moses, however, to judge Egypt for her sins, He must first take sin out of the family of the saviour. God is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." (Hab. i. 13.) He judges sin wherever He finds it and, indeed, first of all with those who stand nearest to Him. Later, after God's judgment on the two sons of Aaron, Moses himself had to pronounce to his brother the words of the Lord, "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me" (Lev. x. 3).

The words of the apostle Peter (1 Pet. iv. 17), "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God," show us that this solemn principle runs through all scripture, both Old Testament and New. Moses is no exception to this rule, for God is no respecter of persons.

"The Lord met him, and sought to kill him." Is it possible to save him?

Death, with all its terrors, had evidently laid hold on Moses in such a way that he himself was not able at the moment to make good his neglect. Zipporah stepped into the breach, the wife who, as hinted above, had probably been more of a hindrance than a help to him in divine things. God sets a solemn choice before her. It was in her hands whether she would ward off the judgment which hung over her family and this by making up for their neglect, or whether she would allow it to fall by paying no attention to the commandment which God had given to Abraham and to his seed (Gen. xvii. 10). Zipporah chose the former. It was a painful path for her and for her son, but she obeyed (v. 25). God then withdrew the sword of judgment from her house. "So he let him go."

Circumcision sets forth the judgment of death to the flesh. There is no possibility of the flesh being of use in the service of God. In the conflict with Satan, the great adversary, God never uses or acknowledges the flesh. That which the circumcision sets forth in type

is to-day actually possessed by the believer in Christ. The apostle writes to the Colossians (chap. ii. 11): "In Whom (Christ) also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." All who truly have faith in Christ have part in this circumcision. The moment is coming when God will bring in judgment on the flesh, but to the believer it has already been executed in his Substitute, Christ Jesus, on the cross. On the ground of this fact, the apostle can write: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: . . . if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 16, 17).

If the service of a believer is to be a blessing, if he is to speak in God's stead to his fellow men about death and judgment, about life and salvation, he must first know something about these things for himself; they must also be seen in his life. This applies equally to every believer, whether man or woman, youth or maiden. To all do the words apply: "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. vi. 11).

If to-day, as it was once with Moses in the inn, God should call one or another of His own to stop, in order that He might draw attention to something, be it personal or belonging to the household, which must be judged and set aside, let us even in this acknowledge His lovingkindness. He seeks only our profit "that we might be partakers of His holiness" (Heb. xii. 10).

In conclusion, let us consider for a little the matter which first occupied our attention. After Zipporah had circumcised her son, she said to her husband: "Surely a bloody husband art thou to me." A momentous declaration! Does it not indicate that with this act a fresh beginning was made in the association between Moses and Zipporah? After Moses had been under the hand of God, which would have taken him away by death, Zipporah receives him again

from God, but on the ground of a new relationship, on the ground of *death* and of *blood*. "A bloody husband," said she, "because of the circumcision." This new association between Zipporah and Moses points solemnly but sweetly forward to the association of the believer with the heavenly Bridegroom as it is to-day and shall be throughout eternity; it has for its basis the *death* and *blood* of the Son of God Himself. Standing on this ground, Peter could say to the poor persecuted saints of his day: "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" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

The redeemed to-day, standing on the same ground, can rejoice thus: "Unto Him, Who loves us and has washed us from our sins in His Own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

FROM THE GERMAN.

The Little Wheel.

"I went down to the potter's house, and behold he wrought a work on the wheels."—Jer. xviii. 3.

"The appearance of the wheels . . . was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel." – Ezek. i. 16.

"We know that all things *work together* for good to them that love God."—Rom. viii. 28.

THE "laws of the universe," great and small,
Seem just like "wheels" to be!
Revolving ever in their course,
And governing earth and sea!

Summer and winter, night and day—
The ebb and flow of the tide—
Riches and poverty, sickness and health—
Rolling on side by side.

The world can see *these* wheels, on which
  The human life doth run,
But Christians see, within each wheel,
  A little hidden one !

A little wheel, which really guides
  Th' events we all can see—
Events in individual lives,
  Or the world's history !

This little wheel, God's hand doth guide,
  'Tis His own perfect will—
Which so controls the outer wheels,
  That they His plans fulfil !

We *cannot* always understand
  The outward "wheels" of life—
The loss, or disappointment—
  The discipline or strife !

Yet we may *always* trust our God,
  And thus in peace abide—
Knowing the little wheel *is* there,
  Working away inside !

Then murmur not at those events,
  Thou canst not understand !
Look for the hidden will of God,
  And trust His guiding Hand !

E. M. EVERARD.

"You will find truth in scripture connected at one end with God, and at the other end with man; but if you cut off these ends, you will find you have got a dry stick instead of a living plant. And (as it is connected with man) in order to get at the mind of the scripture, you must put yourself in the place of the people addressed, and in that way look at it."

No Man Becomes a Child of God by an Act of His Own Will.

(A LETTER TO A FRIEND.)*

MY Dear Brother,

I have often thought of our last conversation, as we walked on the sands at S——, and as often felt the regret which I then expressed to you, that the subject of the eternal security of God's children should be so generally approached through the medium of texts and considerations, which are supposed to be attended with difficulty as to it, instead of the substantive testimony to it, with which the word of God abounds, being fairly considered, and difficulties and objections viewed in the light which is thus afforded us. But in turning to the subject, with the thought of fulfilling your request, that I would present you in a condensed form, with what I regard as the positive testimony of Holy Writ respecting it, I have been divided in my mind between these two modes of presenting it, namely, that of taking the passages in the order in which one comes at them in reading the New Testament, or that of classifying the passages, arranging them under several heads. I had pretty nearly determined to confine myself to neither, but commencing in the former mode, to take any opportunity which might arise of acting on the latter also, an inquiry into one passage often naturally suggesting a reference to others of like import. even though they should not follow in exact order of the occurrence; when it seemed to me, that, ere commencing either, it was almost indispensable to devote a little attention to the previous inquiry, of how a man becomes a child of God. If it be, as so many suppose, by an act of our own will, choosing to

* This was *bonâ fide* a private letter, and was first published with the consent of the writer and the receiver. It is now republished in the hope of extending still further the sphere of its usefulness.

turn to God and believe in Christ, that we become Christians, then it is a doctrine feasible enough, that by another act, or by other acts, of our own will, we should finally cease to be such. But if the sentiment placed at the head of this letter be the truth of God, and can be proved to be such, then it will be manifest, that in order to the utter and final defection of a Christian, it requireth not only a change in his will (which is indeed fickle and unsteady as the wind), but a change in the will of Him by Whose will and power it is that he has become a Christian—a child of God. The Lord grant us true simplicity and subjection to His word, in looking into these matters.

Two passages would of themselves be sufficient to settle our souls as to the subject before us, if we really read them with unquestioning simplicity of faith — "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13); and, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures" (James i. 18). In the former of these, the new birth is expressly declared to be, "not of blood," or natural descent; "not of the will of the flesh," or the natural will or choice of the person who is born again; "nor of the will of man," any agency which other men may choose, or will, to pretend to exercise upon him. In both passages, it is expressly declared to be "of the will of God." Here I might leave this subject; but, knowing how the thought haunts the minds of those who have had the kind of training both you and I had —"Well, but are not life and death set before us in Scripture? And are we not called on to choose life that we may live?"—I would not thus summarily dismiss the inquiry. There are passages such as these in the Old Testament; and there are some of a somewhat similar character in the New; and every word of God is sacred, and true acquaintance with its meaning important. But it does now appear to me, that they who use such passages as those just referred to, to show that the new birth is dependent upon an act of

the human will, in the reception of Christ, or of the gospel that sets Him forth, have entirely mistaken the scope and meaning of those passages, and betray their ignorance of the scope and design of a great part of the word of God.

To you I need hardly say, that all doubtless who have been converted in all ages, have been converted by grace through faith; but there is a wide difference between the testimony and dealings of God before the crucifixion of Christ, and since that event. Until that event took place, God's dealings with mankind were one continued trial, so to speak, of whether there be in man anything whereby he can, under any circumstances, retrieve or save himself. Not that such trial was needed for God; He knew from the beginning, yea, from before the foundation of the world, what man's course would be, and how it would demonstrate the utter hopelessness of his condition, if left to his own will, with every possible inducement to act aright. But this was to be demonstrated to man himself; and hence the trial. I would not at present dwell upon man's trial in Eden. He was then tried as to whether he could maintain his innocence, by withstanding temptation from without. There was then no tendency to evil within. But when man had fallen — when the great deceiver had succeeded in poisoning all the springs of moral action in man's nature—God neither summarily cut off the offender, nor at once sent the Saviour. Wrapping up a promise of the Saviour in the curse pronounced upon the enemy, he left man, now driven out of Eden, to multiply and fill the earth, and make manifest, without the restraint of an express law such as Adam had been under, what the bent of his will was, the promise all the while affording a resting place for faith, wherever there was a heart such as Abel's, Enoch's or Noah's, opened to receive it.

What was the result of this trial? "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5). "The earth

also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (vers. 11, 12). The evil rose to such a height, that God could no longer tolerate its existence; so the flood was sent to destroy man from off the face of the earth.

Noah had found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and was, with his family, preserved to re-people the earth. Man was thus put on trial once more. After the flood, a new element was introduced, to restrain the violence which had before filled the earth. The ordinance, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," made man a check and a restraint upon the violence of his fellow-man. But how does man acquit himself under this new principle of human government, thus in its essence introduced? Alas! Noah, the one in whom the authority was naturally invested, debases himself with wine; and, when thus degraded, his own offspring take advantage of his state to degrade him further still! Babel, too, and the cities of the plain, Egypt, with its idolatries and oppressions; and the cities of the Amorites (see Deut. xviii. 9-12), all form specimens of what man proved himself to be in the interim between the flood and the giving of the law. Rom. i. 21-32 presents us with a gloomy picture of what man at this period proved the desires of his heart and the bent of his will to be; as well as the consequences to which God gave up the Gentile world. But when He did thus give up the Gentiles, He made choice of Israel, that in His dealings with that nation, brought outwardly nigh to Himself, and favoured with every possible advantage, further trial might be made, within a narrower sphere, of what the heart and will of man would produce. It was to this people that the law was given. And Moses, in recapitulating the dealings of God with this people in the wilderness, states that the object was "to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments or no" (Deut. viii. 2).

It was to Israel that the words so often quoted to prove that life or death is at our own choice, were spoken: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; in that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply," etc. (Deut. xxx. 15, 16). Again, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (v. 19).

Was it, then, that any were converted by thus choosing life that they might live? This would be to affirm that life could come by keeping the law; and Paul says plainly, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. iii. 21). But then he also says, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. ii. 21). This would be a terrible conclusion to come to, indeed. And if you should enquire, as some did in the apostle's days, "Wherefore then the law?" let the apostle answer: "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. iii. 19). And if you should still say, why added because of transgresssions? take for answer the same apostle's words in another place, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20). And again, "Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound" (Rom. v. 20). And again, "I had not known sin, but by the law" (Rom. vii. 7). And again, "But sin, that it might appear sin, by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (ver. 13). Yet once more, "The law worketh wrath" (Rom. iv. 15). Now, it seems to me a serious thing, in the face of all these declarations of what ends the law was designed to answer, to affirm that any were converted by "choosing life" according to the tenor of the words of Moses, which have been quoted. W.T.

(*To be continued, D.V.*)

Notes of an Address on Hebrews ii. 16-18 and iv. 12-16.

IT is deeply interesting to see the way in which the Lord Jesus is presented in this epistle, both as regards His Godhead glory and His glory as a man. He is the Son by Whom God made the worlds, and is declared to be far above angels. But He became man, and in the second chapter four reasons are given for His incarnation: 1st, For the suffering of death, "that He, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." 2nd, Because God Himself was worthy of it; "It became Him in bringing many sons to glory to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." 3rd, "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." 4th, "To make reconciliation (rather, propitiation) for the sins of the people."

We read in verse 17 of ch. ii., "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." "Propitiation" (instead of reconciliation) is the right translation here, as all admit, and it is God-ward. If no one availed himself of it, that would not detract from its value in the sight of God. It was on account of sin that the propitiation was made, and it glorified God. In this work the Lord Jesus acted as priest, as offerer and as victim. He was a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. It is quite true, as we read later on in this epistle, that if He were on earth He would not be a priest, because He did not come from the tribe of Levi. He came from the tribe of Judah, but this did not prevent Him from taking a priestly character when He offered up Himself and so made propitiation for the

sins of the people. This priestly character is distinct from His high priesthood, which He now carries on in heaven after doing the work of propitiation and passing into the heavens. This is found in chapter iv., where we come under the searching process of the word of God, and are brought consciously into the presence of God Who knows all about us. Nothing can escape His eye. "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do." The word of God searches us and brings us into the presence of God, where every creature and all things are made manifest. Then we read, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Some object to the word "profession," but there must be profession if we are to be saved. It is the same word as "confession," and this we know goes with faith. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus (or, Jesus as Lord) and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9, 10). According to this scripture confession (or profession) has an important place in the way of salvation, and here, in the fourth of Hebrews, the exhortation is: "Let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but (one who) was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." That is, "apart from sin," because there was no suggestion of sin in Him. He was spotless and pure and altogether separate from sin. Neither can He sympathise with us in our sins. He sympathises with us in our infirmities, which is a very different thing. If it is a question of sin, the sin must be judged and repented of and confessed. Then we have the gracious words in 1 John i. 9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What a wonderful salvation! How everything

needed has been provided for! The Lord Jesus has not only made propitiation for our sins, but He ever liveth to make intercession for us. And He is presented in this epistle, not as One Who simply talks to us about these things, but as One Who has passed through death and has in His own Person endured all the trials that a believer in Him can meet with. "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." Moreover, He "was in all points tempted like as we are, apart from sin; let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

G. F. COX.

"And Saw Him."

(A WORD FOR THOSE WHO MOURN. Read John xi.)

THERE was a great difference between the sorrowful sisters Martha and Mary, when they came to Jesus.

Martha came to Jesus, yet as it were failed to see Him. Her look was the look of faith but it lacked penetration, but when Mary came to Him she *saw* Him, truly saw Him in all His dignity as a divine Person, God Himself.

Confidence of faith there was with both sisters; they proved this by their words: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died!" Yet when Martha spoke these words she adds: "But I know, that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee."

Just as she once presumed to tell Jesus what He should do as to Mary in connection with her service, so again she gives the Lord a hint as to how He may help her in her sorrow. She clearly saw that none but God could help her and she firmly believed that Jesus had power with God, even to the raising of her dead brother, but she failed to apprehend that Jesus was

Himself God and as such the Resurrection and the Life.

She was absorbed in her sorrow, as she once was absorbed in her service. And as then her service diverted her from enjoying Jesus in her heart, so now her sorrow prevented her from being comforted by His presence, and so experiencing what He ever will be for His loved ones at such times.

Mary stayed at home when Martha went to meet Jesus. But when Mary received the message that the Master called her, she obediently arose and went to Him quickly.

The Jews thought that she was going to the grave to weep there—the world has no other thought—all that the world can do is to weep at the grave of their departed loved ones. But Mary knew another place. When sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to His word, that word had been a revelation to her as to the Person of the Lord. She had indeed learned to know Him and now she goes to Him, deeply moved, and weeping. But yet her sorrow and her tears did not hinder her, when she came to the place where Jesus was, from seeing Him. "Then when she was come where Jesus was, and *saw* Him, she fell down at His feet," and there told out her full confidence in His love, nothing more. "If Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

Great was her sorrow, but in the presence of Jesus, she saw *Him*. And so was she able to leave all in His hands. She saw that His eye was upon her; that He saw her weeping; that He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. He did not speak much to her now for she had formerly given Him every opportunity. Now He only asked of her and her weeping companions, "Where have ye laid him?" And by this human question, accompanied with godly pity, He gave opening to the oppressed hearts so that "they said unto Him, Lord, come and see."

And then we read those moving words: "Jesus wept."

Once the *words* of the Lord were a revelation to

Mary, but how glorious were now His *tears* to her. God puts the tears of His beloved into His bottle (Ps. lvi. 8). Surely Mary now puts the Lord's tears into her heart. And how wonderfully those tears at the grave of Lazarus would lessen her grief.

Ere long she will be helping to remove the grave clothes from Lazarus and looking once more into the faithful eyes of her beloved brother; soon they would together be looking upon Jesus and admiring Him in the glory of His Person. And then Jesus would be coming to Bethany once more and she would kneel at His feet and worship Him, her Lord, as the Son of God.

But the moments now spent at His feet, when she sees Him weeping, she would not have missed for ever so much. Already those tears had proved a comfort to her sorrow and mourning. They enabled her to look right into His heart.

She will see Jesus in the glory of eternity yet will she never forget how she saw Him when she fell at His feet weeping. For where the weeping eye looks upon Jesus, and *sees* Him it finds comfort and deliverance in the greatest of sorrows.

It is well for mourners to be assured of this and to beware lest they shut up themselves in their grief. To dwell upon their painful experiences and constantly to recall the difficulties they have had to live through, will surely hinder them from seeing Jesus.

Truly the place to weep is at the feet of Jesus, for there will our hearts be alive to the comfort He so graciously gives.

From the Dutch.

I am so needy, Lord, and yet I know
All fulness dwells in Thee;
And hour by hour that never-failing treasure
Supplies and fills, in overflowing measure,
My least, my greatest need; and so
Thy grace is enough for me!

Christ Dealing with Conscience and Heart.

(Mark vii.)

IT is said that the Lord is the truth, "I am the way, the truth and the life"; and He does bring out everything in a remarkable way. He shows out what God is in Himself, and what man is; and God's grace has come with Him: "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

In this chapter we find truth first, truth as to man's condition; but there is also the grace of God's heart. It is a great thing to have the two together. If truth had come without grace, we could not have borne it a moment. Man is a sinner utterly unfit for heaven; but it is immense comfort that grace and truth have come together. God's two essential names are Love and Light. If we had not love with light, it would have condemned us; but we have perfect light in presence of perfect love. Our comfort is that light does come and reveal everything. Being in God's very nature, we cannot separate the two things, light and love. Just the same things appear in the details of the Christian's life.

In many instances in scripture we see how light penetrates; but there is an attractive power along with it. There is never real working in man's soul without attractive power. The Christian stands "accepted in the Beloved"; but the light of God comes in on all his ways. Take the prodigal: the light shines in and shows that he is a lost sinner; but there is attractive power, too. "I will arise and go to my father." Take the woman that was a sinner. There was a sense of sinfulness because light comes in; but the measure in which light shone into her soul cannot be separated from the love that came with it. Take Peter, falling at Jesus' feet, and saying at the same time, "Depart from me." Wherever the blessed God reveals Himself to our souls, nothing is left in the dark. If anything is not completely revealed it may come out in

the day of judgment; but all is revealed. We have a perfect revelation of God as light and as love; and both are working in the soul.

If you have an idea of God's love without the conscience being reached, it may pass away as the morning dew. It is a blessed thing that we are brought to God, and that everything is fully out. The blessed Lord bore our sin; there was full light and full love at the cross. There are two parts in the gospel; one is the revelation of God; the other is the work done by the Lord standing as Man for us on the cross. First we find the revelation of God Himself, then the work of the Lord.

In the chapter I have read it is rather the character of the Lord as thus revealing God than the work which He has done. Here you see first, religious, very religious, man; the authority of the elders, the cleansing of the outside. It is much easier to wash one's hands than to wash one's heart. Man hides the state of his heart by all these outward things. The Lord comes in, searching and judging all the religion of man. Where the heart has not been purified, where the soul is not right with God, religion only hardens. Cain was just the expression of this; he was just as religious as Abel, and his religion cost him more than Abel's.

"Ought" is not the question now; there is another: what we have done and what we are. The question is not whether the law is right, but whether I am right. Abel recognised that he was wrong, a sinner out of paradise, and without hope, unless God would save the lost. Cain's offering was nothing but perfect hardness of heart. If the light of God shines into my soul and finds nothing but sin and impurity, my conviction is that I cannot go to God in myself, unless He has found and given a blessed way. The real question for people's souls is, not what they ought to do, but what they have done and what they are. Think of the audacity of people coming to God as they are! Man is doing all he can; his thought is trying a way to

satisfy God and purify himself outwardly—he feels he cannot inwardly. Here it is not professed religiousness, but the heart of man detected. The Lord goes right through this veil that is over the heart of man to the heart itself, and He tells what proceeds from it. What about the good? He says nothing of it whatever. In us dwells "no good thing." Man is a judged creature. He will set up man in a thousand ways; but God has judged him. There are the natural faculties of man—all true; but what has that to do with the soul? "When his breath goeth forth, all his thoughts perish."

When God was not dealing in a special way with man, he became so bad that God had to bring in the flood. Then, when He did in a special way, the golden calf was made as soon as the law was given. Last of all He sent His Son. We are now living in a world where man has rejected God in grace.

The first thing we read of man was that he departed from God, as Adam. We see the same in Noah before, in Solomon after, as in the Israelites when they made the golden calf. When the priesthood was instituted, Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire. There was the patience of God going on saving souls all the time: I do not deny this. Man was lawless when he had no law: he was God-hating when the Lord Jesus came into the world. It is better that the light should come in and show me what I am.

God has since set out a meeting-place with man—the one way, the altar of the tabernacle. This is God's *one* meeting-point with man. If you do not come as a sinner, you do not come in truth, you do not come for grace. Having ripped up the veil with which man tries to cover himself, the Lord showed what the heart of man is—a terrible picture, and terrible because true. He Whose love spoke it comes as light into the world. When light comes, I do not say, man is a sinner, but I am a sinner; "and we indeed justly." There is truth. So far we have it told, but grace had come to tell it. Then all dispensations are set aside, and God

comes out as sovereign. There are two things in the gospel: God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and Christ made sin by God. Here it is God coming into a world of sinners.

People know there is a judgment coming, and they hope to get into some kind of preparation for that judgment. In contrast with this thought we have, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Those who are Christians ought to judge everything by the judgment-seat of Christ. It is very fruitful to the Christian, but is not in itself Christianity. The grace of the gospel is the very opposite to judgment. God comes into a world of sinners not imputing their sins. The gospel is this blessed truth, that God is dealing with men above all their sins. He comes into this world to show holiness itself—a holiness that never could be contaminated, and to bear love into a world of sinners. The Syrophenician had no title to promises. Being of a doomed race, as to dispensation, she had only curses, the very opposite to promises. The Lord first deals with her on this ground: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." He brings her to her true place, as He always does. You may try and spare the soul, but it must be in truth before it learns grace. Would you all say, "Yes, Lord, but the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table?" She had not a word to say for herself; but she had a word to say for God. The publicans and harlots justified Him, and He justified them. So it always is where He works in grace and truth. I believe there is overflowing goodness for the children; but there is something for the dogs, too. Could Jesus say there was not? It was real knowledge of God and herself.

The heart must be brought to this, "I have no righteousness, I have no promises, but I have God come into the world to us as sinners, and because we are sinners." He never said, "Come to Me" till He had first come Himself. There was perfect light to

convict, but the convicted sinner finds himself in the presence of perfect love. Have you ever said, "Yes, Lord," owning that you had no righteousness and no promises; only that you trust the perfect love that brought Christ into the world? Then the thought of what God is towards you takes the place of what you are towards God. Here I am, just as I am, in the presence of perfect love—love that cannot deny itself. The sinner finds he has a title in God's heart when he can find none in his own. The woman that was a sinner loved much because much was forgiven her. It was a broken heart that met the heart of God, and the heart of God met a broken heart. It is wonderful when the heart of man really meets the heart of God. The moment I am brought through grace into full, distinct consciousness that there is no good in me, I find this; I find the perfect blessed love of God which has met me where I am in His presence.

At the cross you see sin meeting God, Christ being made sin for us, and the nature of God glorified—far more than merely sin being put away. While the Lord puts away sin, He prepares the way to the accomplishment of all the counsels of God. At the cross I find man made sin in the presence of God—a divine Person, too, of course; and this is not to screen but to sustain Him. There is love that has met me in my sins, and now there is righteousness in the presence of God, our forerunner being there. The truth is there; but there is also the perfect love of God to put away sin. The heart is then free to trust the love unhinderedly.

Remember this, beloved friends: I am not my own at all now; I am in a new place altogether—a place into which I have been brought in perfect love, in divine righteousness, in the presence of God Himself. We have power now—the power of the Holy Ghost. The Christian is in this world to show what Christ is. If you call yourselves Christians, you are the epistle of Christ: it is not merely said you ought to be, but you are. He sends you back to the world to witness what God is. You have responsibility as a Christian now,

not as a man. All responsibility flows from the place we are in. If Christian responsibility is measured, as a child of God, nothing that does not suit the blood of Christ suits you. Is Christ the motive of everything you do, and this in things of every-day life? For you are not to be heroes and heroines. Is Christ all and in all? "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." Walk as children of the Father.

J. N. DARBY.

The Cross of Christ.

BY the cross of Christ is meant much more than the means of pardon for the sinner. To treat it only as the great remedy for man's need, however true as far as it goes, is to rob it of an immense deal of its importance as well as to obscure the truth and shut out God's glory. For in that most stupendous of all facts, what has not come to issue? God's holy hatred and judgment of sin; His amazing love of the sinner; the infinite grace, humiliation, and suffering of the Saviour; the audacity and craft of Satan; the abominable wickedness of man, under the best possible circumstances and, spite of the greatest benefits, without cause to justify or excuse to palliate: all met, as nowhere else, in the cross. There are the pretensions of man crushed; sin condemned and put away; Satan defeated and vanquished; judgment borne; and God glorified in Christ Who knew no sin made sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in Him. There are only indeed divine attributes and ways, which our sin had otherwise seemed to set aside or at variance, are now conciliated for ever on behalf of those that believe, and a firm basis laid for the ruined creation, as well as the people of God, to be made new and shine unto eternal ages to the glory of God. Yet all this would be rendered vain by that wisdom of speech which some in the Corinthian church were ignorantly

affecting and blaming Paul because it was far from him.

But the Corinthians were in danger who shrank from the facts of the gospel and desired to hear the philosophy of the Christian scheme. "For the word of the cross is to those that perish foolishness, but to us that are to be saved it is God's power" (1 Cor. i. 18). The cross bespeaks the lowest extreme of human shame and suffering. It was the severest penalty for a slave. That the Son of God should stoop not merely to the nature of man but to the death of the cross, and this in atonement for man to God as well as in rejection of God by man, seems the depth of folly to those who, ignorant of their own sinfulness and of the holiness of God, must needs perish, living and dying as they are. That He must suffer in order to save supposes the hopeless ruin of the race.

But it is also irreconcilable with every feeling of the natural heart that He would stoop so low to suffer for His enemies, and that God would give Him up to do so. For philosophy knows nothing truly of love in God, any more than of total ruin in man : the cross proclaims both, and that He Who hung there in grace, suffering for our sin, that God might deliver us righteously, was Himself God over all as surely as He was man without sin. For the gospel was no effort or device of man's wit. Yea, the word of the cross is the deepest offence and the sheerest foolishness to him; but it is God's power, not wisdom only, to believers, "to us that are to be saved," for here, to bring it the more home, the apostle treats it as a personal fact instead of continuing his abstract statement. Salvation here, as elsewhere in this epistle, is regarded as not complete till the Lord comes; it takes in the whole work of bringing us through till we are conformed to Christ in resurrection glory.

W. KELLY.

The Four Great "Hallelujahs."

(Revelation xix. 1-6.)

HAS my reader ever noticed that the only occurrence of the word, Hallelujah, in the New Testament is in the Book of the Revelation? There we find it near the end of the book, repeated four times with great emphasis at the beginning of chapter nineteen. A brief consideration will well repay us, we feel assured, if it awakens a response in our hearts to join in the ascription of praise to our God in a day when the cry of Hallelujah is somewhat seldom heard.

If we turn to the Old Testament, we find its most frequent use is in the Book of Psalms; and in the last five (Psalms cxlvi. to cl.), it occurs both at the beginning and end of each, although sometimes translated by the words: "Praise ye the Lord," or in some Bibles, "Praise the Lord."

So much then for its meaning. Now turning to the nineteenth chapter, we read in the first verse, "After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven saying Hallelujah." What a relief after all the solemn scenes of judgment described in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters on which we do not now dwell; but who are they who raise this great cry of relief and joy—"Salvation and glory, honour and power, unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are His judgments"? It is not the voice of the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, of whom we read in the fifth chapter of this book, but more probably it is the united voice of the martyrs who died under the great tribulation, and those of whom we read in the sixth chapter as being "slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held." They no longer cry "How long?" from under the altar, but their praise is on account of the righteousness of God now exhibited in the judgment of that great system of corruption, "which did corrupt the earth with her fornication." Language which could only apply to a

false system that laid claim to the closest tie of relationship as the bride of Christ. And a *second* time they cry Hallelujah, as the smoke of the fires of righteous judgment "rise up for ever and ever."

This is followed by a *third* Hallelujah. This time it is from the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures of whom we read in the inspiring scenes of praise and worship in the fifth chapter. Doubtless, the Old Testament saints, and the church of the New Testament saints, typified by the twenty-four elders, together with the voices of all created intelligences, now join in this third great cry of Praise the Lord. Their cry is a worshipful one, a blessed confirmation of the first and second choruses, they say *Amen*, Hallelujah.

Then in answer to a voice coming out of the throne in heaven, invoking praise of God "from all His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great, comes the *fourth* and last great united cry: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." This is followed by the invitation for which "the bride has tarried long." "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready."

Ought not the anticipation of this blessed future joy to awaken in the hearts of all the Lord's people a desire for its realisation? And a present response by the power of the Holy Spirit while we say: "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Hallelujah!" (Psalm cl.). T.R.

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2 Cor. xiii. 11	The God of love and peace.
2 Cor. i. 3	The God of all comfort.
Phil. iv. 9 Heb. xiii. 20	The God of peace.
Rom. xv. 5	The God of patience. The God of consolation.
Rom. xv. 13	The God of hope.
1 Cor. i. 9 1 Cor. x. 13	God is faithful.

Faith.

FAITH is a very simple thing,
Though little understood; — 1 Cor. iii. 14.
It frees the soul from death's dread sting — 1 Cor. xv.
By resting in the blood. — Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14.

It looks not on the things around
Nor on the things within; — 2 Cor. iv. 18.
It takes its flight to scenes above
Beyond the sphere of sin. — Heb. i. 3.

It sees upon the throne of God
A Victim that was slain; — Heb. x. 12-14.
It rests its all on His shed blood,
And says, "I'm born again." — Gal. iii. 26.

Faith is not what I feel and see,
It is a simple trust — John v. 24.
In what the God of love has said
Of Jesus as the "Just." — 1 Pet. iii. 18.

The perfect One that died for me,
Who's on His Father's throne, — Rev. iii. 21.
Presents my name before my God,
And pleads Himself alone. — Heb. iv. 15.

What Jesus is, and that alone,
Is faith's delightful plea; — Eph. i. 6, 7.
It never deals with sinful self,
Nor righteous self in me. — Rom. vii. 18.

It tells me I am counted "dead"
By God in His own word; — Rom. vi. 6, 7.
It tells me I am made alive
In Christ, my risen Lord. — 2 Cor. v. 17.

In that He died, He died to sin;
But now He lives to God; — Rom. vi. 10.
And I am dead to nature's hopes,
And justified through blood. — Rom. iii. 24, 25.

ANON.

No Man Becomes a Child of God by an Act of His Own Will.—2.

LIFE was then offered them on condition of obedience to the law; and the Holy Ghost solemnly assures us that "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. ii. 16, 21; iii. 11); that is, in other words, they could not have life on the terms proposed by Moses.

Of this, Moses himself was quite aware. In the very next chapter to that from which his words are quoted, we find that the Lord appeared and said unto him, "Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake Me, and break My covenant which I have made with them" (Deut. xxxi. 16). They had already broken one covenant of works, in token of which Moses brake the two tables of the law, which were in his hands, when he came down from the mount (see Ex. xxxii. 19). With an unchanged nature, and placed under a similar covenant of works, what could be expected now? What but the results which the Lord assures Moses, and Moses assures the the people, would actually ensue? "Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel. For when I shall have brought them into the land which I sware unto their fathers, that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall have eaten and filled themselves, and waxen fat; then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke Me, and break My covenant. And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed; for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land

which I sware" (Deut. xxxi. 19-21). Can anything be more solemn or decisive than these last words? God declared to Moses that, instead of choosing life that they might live, the people would turn to other gods, provoke Him, and break His covenant; and He speaks of these future acts of evil, as only the display of what He knew to be at the then present time working in their hearts. "I know their imagination," etc. Hence, Moses says to them, "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God." Why? That they might choose life, and live by keeping it? Nay, but "That it may be there for a witness against thee." "For I know thy rebellion," he proceeds, "and thy stiff neck; behold, whilst I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the Lord; and how much more after my death?" (ver. 26, 27). "For I know," says he again to them, "that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands" (ver. 29). Surely we need no further answer to those who use Moses' words to prove that salvation depends on human will. If it did, who could be saved?

Joshua's words are sometimes quoted for this purpose, as well as those of Moses, and with as little reason or force. After reminding Israel of the condition in which their fathers were, serving other gods, when the Lord took Abraham from the other side of the flood; after rehearsing to them the wonders which God had wrought, and many of which their eyes had beheld, he exhorts them to fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away other gods, and then he adds, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods, which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and

my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. xxiv. 15). The fact is, he does not call upon them to choose between the Lord and idols. He says, "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose ye," whether ye will serve this class of idols or that. He, through grace, as we know, was resolved on serving the Lord. But when the people, with good intentions, perhaps, but in a spirit of self-sufficiency, declare that they, too, will serve the Lord, how does Joshua receive their protestations? "And Joshua said unto the people, ye cannot serve the Lord, for He is a holy God; He is a jealous God; He will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that He hath done you good" (ver. 19). And when the people still vow and protest, "Nay; but we will serve the Lord," Joshua says to them, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves, that you have chosen you the Lord, to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses" (ver. 21, 22). Ah, yes, to *have our words witness against us is the only result* that can flow from our declaring that we choose the Lord and His service. And as though to show in what a poor condition they were for taking such vows upon them, Joshua immediately exhorts them: "Now, therefore, put away the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel" (ver. 23). There were, then, strange gods among them! Their hearts, too, needed inclining to serve the Lord! Plain proof that they were, as we know the human heart ever is, averse to His service.

Of this we have still further evidence in that part of their history which immediately succeeds. The Book of Judges is but the history of their sins, and of the calamities which these brought upon them, with the Lord's merciful interpositions for their deliverance. Into this I do not now enter. Nor shall I pursue the thread of their history throughout. It would lead me too far. One point, however, must not be omitted; I refer to the ministry of the prophets. It differed

materially from the law simply considered. The law left no room for repentance. It demanded obedience, but failing to obtain that, it had nothing to pronounce or bestow but condemnation and the curse. It was obedience, uniform, unvarying obedience, which the law required; not repentance and a return to obedience. But the prophets were sent to propose, as it were, new terms. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. lv. 7). "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to Me, saith the Lord" (Jer. iii. 1). "Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever, O house of Israel. Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal? When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them—for his iniquity that he hath done he shall die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live — he shall not die" (Ezek. xviii. 25-28). Such was the ministry of the prophets. But was this to prove, any more than Moses' or Joshua's language respecting the law, that it was possible for man, of his own free will, so to turn from his wickedness and do that which is lawful and right, as to live thereby? Surely not. It was a further test—a milder one—to prove whether it was in the heart or will of man to turn to God, and serve and obey Him. It was as though God said, I will not rigorously enforce the claims of My law. It claims uninterrupted and universal obedience. That you have utterly failed to render, and the law knows nothing of repentance. But now I give you an opportunity to begin again.

"If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all My statutes and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him : in his righteousness that he hath done, he shall live."* It was a fair offer to blot out all the past, and begin over again; and this offer was made, be it remembered, to those who were complaining that their destinies were not in their own hands. Could a fairer offer have been made? But need I ask you, my brother, whether it were possible for any fallen man to be saved thus? What, by keeping all God's statutes, and doing for the time to come, that which is lawful and right! Surely this would have been for the doer of these things to live by them, which Paul declares to be the righteousness which is of the law. It was simply affording to those who thought they would have done better than their fathers an opportunity of showing what they could do!

W.T.

(To be continued, D.V.)

* Life, be it noted, is here but natural life, longevity upon earth; there is no promise or mention of everlasting life.

The Murderer.

A TRUE STORY FROM CHINA.

TWO women sat by the roadside to rest and pray for strength to complete their journey of about eight English miles to the city where gospel meetings were to be held. Their feet were bound, but they had walked to these meetings before and, with the Lord's help, could do so again, because they really wished to hear more of the wonderful way of salvation. This time they took a string of cash to buy a New Testament. When they returned home, because they could not read this book, they took it to Mr. Mei, the village teacher. This teacher was much surprised, first at the simplicity of the book, then at much else which he

found there. As he continued to read he found that he himself was a sinner and in need of the salvation revealed therein. As he suffered from asthma and was not able to walk so far, he took a wheelbarrow and had one of the young men push him to the gospel hall in the city. On arrival there he surprised everyone by asking to be baptised. He was told that he should wait and be sure that he understood the meaning of the step he wished to take. He replied, "It is here in the Book, but I am willing to wait and learn more. He was invited to stay a few days and was given the complete Bible to read. The Old Testament interested him so much that he found it hard to stop for food or sleep. He wished to see how the story would turn out. One time he was found laughing convulsively. He was reading the Book of Esther and had come to the place where he read that Haman was hanged on the gallows which he himself had made.

Mr. Mei returned to his home, and we did not see him for a time, but one day he came again. This time he announced that he had come to hide away from temptation. A murder had been committed in his district and he had been asked to take the case in defence of the murderer. This he felt to be wrong and inconsistent for a Christian. He said that they had put the money on the table and when he refused they put down more money. He said that the money was coming to be so much through their adding every time he refused that he was afraid to trust himself and had come away with us until the murder case was settled. It was not long after that visit that Mr. Mei went to be for ever with the Lord. All his relatives and friends witnessed that there had been a great change in his life. The Christians were encouraged, and the heathen were astonished.

The murder case was settled by the payment of money (as most things are settled in China), but the heart of the murderer was most unsettled. He went from temple to temple, and did all that he was told to do to get rid of his burden of sin, but that burden did

not loosen from him. At last he went to our two women who had been coming to our meetings from that district and put before them the question: "Does that new religion which the foreigners are preaching have any provision for the forgiveness of sin?" The women had much to tell him of what they had heard of personal testimonies of sins forgiven as well as much they had been taught from the Book on the subject. He then put to them another question: "Can murder be forgiven?" This was beyond the knowledge of the women. They had never heard anyone testify to having been delivered from the guilt of murder, nor were they sure what the Book said on that subject. The man replied that it would be no use to him unless this worst of all sins could be included, as he was guilty of that. The women said that they would ask the next time they went to meeting, and they did, replying to him after their return what they had been told of the wonderful grace of God to forgive *all sins*. About this time, gospel meetings were begun in that district, and it was my privilege to be present there when I saw a quiet-looking man come in and sit in the back of the men's side. A woman whispered to me, "That is the murderer."

Some months had passed by when we came into more direct touch with the murderer. It was when some were to confess the Lord by baptism. He came forward for examination to take this step. He had been working hard to learn to read so that he could settle for himself the question of assurance from the word of God that his awful sin was forgiven. He spoke of David, of the thief on the cross, and brought forward many scriptures showing the complete redemption from all sin. However, it was thought best that he should wait and give further proof of change in his life. He was quite willing to wait and did give much evidence of a changed life, and, not only this, but he had full assurance in his heart that he had been delivered from the awful burden of his guilt.

I was obliged soon after to leave that part of China

because of failing health. But, some months later, I received a letter telling me that they had had another examination for baptisms, that a number had been accepted, and among them the murderer.

A. M. H.

Brief Notes on the First Chapter of John.

IN the beginning was the Word, in Greek, *Logos*. *Logos* is the intelligence, and the intelligible — reason, the thing thought. *Logos* is the mind of God expressed, the expression of what God is. This Christ was on earth, the *Logos*.

Chapter i. shows us the Person of Christ and its bearing on man, as revealed, and what was required of man to be received, that is, God is Christ-revealed. We also have what that was which that revelation required from man.

This gospel goes back before Genesis. "Was." Whenever you put it the beginning "was." He "became" flesh. "With God" distinct from God. "All things *were made* by Him" (*egeneto*), and John adds, "Without Him *was* not anything *made.*" *Egeneto* makes it absolute. "Only Begotten," always so. Similarly we read, "The light shines."

Theology is man's mind working on the truth of God. Nothing but faith puts God in the right place. If I pretend to know anything of the Godhead, in so doing I deny it. You must know the thing before you know the object. "Why do you not understand My speech; even because you cannot hear My word (viii. 43). "We have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 16) is mind with the intelligence. God sends a messenger, John, who comes and says, "Look at the light," at the sun, but the blind people don't see it. "A light to lighten the Gentiles" is quite different, that is, to manifest them. Chapter x. 1, "If anyone walk in the day, he stumbleth not," that is, if you have *got* the mind

of Christ you will not fall. "Walk in the light"—we are in it.

The current idea is that the light has gradually developed until Christ came. It is not so at all—"the true light now shines."

The full development of man is Antichrist. "The light of everyone"—shining on everyone.

Christ was the Son begotten, not adopted like us. There are two senses in which Christ is Son of God. "He hath raised up Jesus again, as it is written also in the second Psalm, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," Acts xiii. 33—"Raised up" is *not* resurrection. Acts ii. 24, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death" — this is resurrection.

"First Begotten" is in reference to other children; "Only Begotten" is sole, absolute relationship with the Father.

There are three facts in verse 14: "made flesh"; "dwelt among us"; "full of grace and truth." The *first part of chap. 1. to verse 18 is what He is essentially*, and what man is essentially. "Grace and truth came," not were communicated but came. There was no revelation of God in the law. "What is man" occurs three times in the Old Testament. Ps. viii., "What is man and the Son of man?"—Christ glorified; Job vii., "What is man that Thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?"—man in discipline; Ps. cxliv. 3, "Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that Thou makest account of him?"—His vengeance looked for.

Ps. ii., "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," is Son of God as born into this world. The meaning of "grace and truth" is, all that God was for man, and all His truth about man. There was all divine grace and truth in the Person of Christ. Verse 18, "No man hath seen God at any time." It would be poor comfort to be in my Father's house, and not see my Father.

J.N.D.

God's Rich Abundance.

IT is not enough for our God to give us consolation; no, but by His oath and His promise—two unalterable things—He gives us *strong* consolation (Heb. vi. 18). He not only shows us His grace, but we receive the riches of His grace, even the exceeding riches of His grace (Eph. ii. 7). Again, in the same chapter we read not only of the love of God but of His *great* love (Eph. ii. 4).

The Old Testament exhibits the same superabundance. For instance, when God reveals His name to Moses we find it written: "*Abundant* in goodness and truth" (Ex. xxxiv. 6). Psalm xxxvi. reveals to us this rich fullness in God in the lovely words: "With Thee is the fountain of life." In another sacred song we learn that "with Him is *plenteous* redemption" (Psalm cxxx. 7), whilst Isaiah, the evangelist among the prophets, triumphantly exclaims, "He will *abundantly* pardon" (Isa. lv. 7); and Micah declares: "He *delighteth* in mercy (Micah vii. 18).

Comfort is provided in the wilderness, by the wonderful power of our God, and it is more than we can think or pray: "He opened the rock and the waters gushed out; they ran in dry places like a river" (Ps. cv. 41), and God by His Spirit makes us drink of the *river* of His pleasures (Ps. xxxvi. 8).

When the Lord Jesus was here on earth and saw with compassion the hungry multitude, Philip said: "that every one may take a little"; but Jesus gave so much that all were filled, and ate as much as they would (John vi. 7-12). It is a small matter with our God to open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it (Mal. iii. 10).

The oil kept streaming until the widow's son said: "There is not a vessel more"; then, and not till then, the oil stayed! (2 Kings iv. 6).

The only limiting of God's abundance comes from *our* side, never from His side. It is ever the result of our little faith.

Of Christ we read: "full of grace and truth"; and again: "of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (John i. 14, 16). God's love is never exhausted; "God is able to make all grace *abound* toward us" (2 Cor. ix. 8). How wonderful is all this in our eyes! But the Lord of hosts speaks: "Should it be marvellous in Mine eyes?" (Zech. viii. 6). It is God Who only doeth wondrous things (Ps. lxxii. 18).

And if we, by faith, look into the future, how marvellous are the exceeding great and precious promises of Him Who "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think" (Eph. iii. 20).

And now let us ask ourselves, What shall we who are the sheep of His pasture ever want?

Satisfaction? No; for He maketh us to lie down in green pastures.

Refreshment? No; for He leadeth me beside the still waters.

Care? Not at all; for faith can say: He restoreth my soul.

Guidance? Surely not; for He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Fellowship? No, nor that either; for Thou art with me.

Protection? In the presence of Him Who comforts us with His rod and His staff we are quite safe.

Food? Nay; for faith says, Thou preparest a table before me.

Spiritual power, perhaps? No; for Thou anointest my head with oil.

Worldly blessings? Surely not; for goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.

And as to eternal blessing? No; we shall not want even that, for in our blessed Saviour we possess the full assurance of life for evermore, so that faith looking upon Him ends by saying: I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Oh, my God, to Thee can I say: "All my fresh springs are in Thee!" (Ps. lxxxvii. 7, N.Tr.).

From the Dutch.

The Robber Saved.

(Luke xxiii. 39-43.)

WE do not find, except during the three hours of darkness on the cross, that by any sorrow, weariness, or trial, the Lord Jesus was ever hindered from entering into the sorrow of others. None could put Him in a place, except when working out atonement, where He did not enter into human suffering: such unweariness of love do we see in Christ. Still He was light; and the more we look into His history, the more comes out the terribleness of the heart of man. It was never manifested till then. There are amiable natures and unamiable natures; but we never learn what the heart of man is till then. The thing that tries the human heart is, What is its object? not, What are its more natural qualities? "There is none that seeketh after God." Man saw no beauty in Christ. There is nothing in the heart that looks at the Lord so as to find in Him an object and a delight. There is no root till the conscience is reached; there may be attraction, but until the conscience is in the presence and sight of God, nothing is done; it is like the morning dew which passes away. "The same is he which heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself."

Wherever the conscience is reached by God, there is some sense of goodness. Fear and terror may predominate, but there is attraction, and the heart cannot let it go. Faith always gets both: God is love, and yet He reaches the conscience. There is that which reaches the conscience, and that which inspires confidence, when the eye is on Christ.

On the authority of Christ Himself we have the certainty of salvation, that is, the Christian state; and no other suits the Christian. It is the only real Christian state which the word of God owns. The condition of the Christian is the effect of the work of Christ. It is not that there is no conflict, but that Another has taken my responsibility. My place before

God is not the effect of what I have done, but of what Christ has done. Christ is the ground on which I stand before God : if it be so, what has He done for us? He died for our sins; then they must be put away. He is the Judge, but He cannot judge what He has put away. That we might walk with God in peace, He has sent the One Who is to be the Judge first to be the Saviour. Confidence is connected with righteousness now.

In the history of the robbers we have both sides.

In the other malefactor taunting Christ, we see how the heart of man is enmity to God. It was the triumph for the moment of the first man and of Satan, too. It is sad to think what our hearts are if left to themselves. When the heart is led out, where will it stop? Satan is over us. Here, then, we have the triumph of the wickedness of man over the goodness of God. We cannot get rid of Satan's power yet; we may bind it in a sense. The heart of man cannot bear the presence of God. There is not a vanity, not a bit of dress or money, that has not more power over the heart of man than all that Christ has done or is. You never yet found a man enjoying himself who would hear of Christ. The world would not have Him when He came in grace, nor would it now; but it must have Him when He comes in judgment. Take the majority of people in this city, and suppose them let into heaven! They would get out as fast as they could.

In the repentant robber, on the other hand, we see grace. He was crucified on a gibbet; but no matter, gibbet or no gibbet, when God and the soul meet, we have the simple and immense fact that the soul is brought at once into His presence. When God has dealt with the conscience, we make no more promises for the future. Unlike the naughty child that says, I'll be better to-morrow, the soul confesses sin to-day. "Dost not thou fear God?" is the word, not, Are you not ashamed of being a thief?

Have you ever been brought into God's presence? "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom."

If you have not been consciously in God's presence, wisdom has not begun for you. Before Christ you must be, and you must be there in truth: the difference is whether you are before Christ in the fullness of His grace, or before Him in judgment. "We indeed justly." He did not say that the world was guilty, but that he was the guilty one; it is not simply that sin is sin, but that I am a sinner. His thought is that he himself is justly there. It is a personal thing, not merely that God is holy, nor merely that the world is guilty, but that you are guilty.

"This man hath done nothing amiss." He would guarantee the whole life of Christ—it contrariwise was a divine revelation to the soul. Who is there that is a Christian that would not lay down his life for this? "This man hath done nothing amiss." It was a divine revelation of the perfectness of Christ's Person. Could your soul answer for Christ in that way? Here is a man who does so when everybody is deserting Jesus: here is divine faith that He was perfectly sinless: his eye is opened, his heart brought to the consciousness of it. It is not only that he has the fear of God, but he sees the perfectness of Jesus. Heaven was opened when Christ came out for public service; there never was a man before of whom God could say, "That is all I want." Has your heart echoed, and said, "That is all I want"? Nowhere else can the heart so rest when we see the evil around, and the imperfections even of saints. His mind, having got hold of Christ, finds rest in Him. All around is a wide waste of waters, the heart would get wearied, but it turns to Him; and what a rest! Things would be unbearable but for this, but the heart, when it turns there, enters its sanctuary.

"Remember me," said the converted robber. What sign was there that Jesus was Christ the Lord? There was not a cloud on this man's heart, because he was divinely taught. One heart recognises that He is Lord in spite of everything. Pilate had washed his hands before all the people, and given Him up to the Jews;

He was denied by one of His disciples, betrayed by another. Everything was against it. "Lord, remember me"; without a sign, the robber owns Him—how bright to faith! This man had no time to grow, or serve, or walk; but there was thorough conversion, full faith, a sense of what the Messiah was, and belief in His coming in His kingdom. Faith in itself is always certain; it may lead us to doubt about other things, but it is always absolutely certain. The believer has set to his seal that God is true; he does not say, Perhaps He is true. Wherever I receive it as the word of God, I receive it with absolute certainty; if it be not so, I do not receive it as the word of God at all.

"Remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." His whole concern was that Christ should remember him. We see in him boldness with a bold sinner, lowliness as to himself, a sense of the perfectness of Jesus and the knowledge that He would come in His kingdom. Happy are we if we are in the state of this robber! If you are in suffering, in trial, is it the only thing you would care about, that Christ should remember you?

Another thing is Christ's answer to him: "To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." The character of Luke is to bring in present blessing. Before ever the kingdom came, he would go straight to paradise. Faith never looks at my heart, but at the object God reveals. When brought to the consciousness of what I am, my eye rests on Christ Himself. When the thief looks to Christ, he has Christ's answer. The rest given to our souls is the positive answer of God. We have the positive declaration that this robber, taken up for his crimes, was that day absolutely fit for paradise; so perfect is the work of Christ. Observe this robber, and the woman that was a sinner, how they understand Christ, because they want a Saviour! When I come to God with Christ in my hand (like Abel with his lamb), God says to me, You are righteous. By faith I see Jesus is sitting on the right hand of the

Majesty on high; when did He go there? "When He had by Himself purged our sins." Then I know my sins are purged before God. There is no progress here, no such thing as being fitted for heaven. Growth there ought to be in us, if left here, progress in likeness to Christ; but it is never in scripture connected with fitness for heaven : Christ is my title. There is growth, but it is never treated as our fitness. This robber was fit for paradise at once; he went there, any way, that day; I suppose he was fit for it, since he was fit to be with Christ! Suppose I were to make all the progress the most blessed saint ever made, could I say I was fit thus for Christ? God forbid! yet I am fit. Death for the believer is simply that he has done with all that is mortal and sinful.

How little the outside is the truth! The Jews sent soldiers to break their legs: how little they thought they were sending the robber straight to heaven, to be the first companion (there were Old Testament saints, of course) that followed the blessed Lord!

It would be well for us if we were as close to Christ as that poor robber. When the veil was rent, the whole thing was changed. The Old Testament was a declaration that man could not go to God in the light: God did not come out, and man could not go in. The gospel says that God did come out, and man can go in. "We have boldness to enter into the holiest through the blood of Jesus." If sin is there, how can I enter into the holiest? I am in Christ, not in the flesh. Our sins He bore; we have died with Him, and should enter into the holiest. Access is free, the veil being rent; we are accepted in the Beloved. Until the work was done, He did not give up the ghost. Now, as a present thing, we have boldness to enter into the holiest. Are you there? The veil is rent; you cannot have God afar off. There is no more a veil; we are before the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. So full and complete is the revelation, that I see God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ, the witness of salvation accomplished. The glory is in the face of the

One Who bore my sins. In the presence of the absolute light and righteousness of God you must stand, or you cannot stand at all. The world may blind your eyes, but there is no veil on the presence of God.

J. N. DARBY.

The Weaver.

(A TRUE STORY FROM CHINA)

THE young man was a native of the Shantung Province and a weaver of the Shantung pongee. He belonged to the large clan by the surname "Chü" of the village of "Kuan Tao Nan," which name means "South of the Road." The people of this village were specially anti-foreign and anti-Christian. So when an elderly English missionary came to speak in their streets, though they would give him the respect due to his age, they all felt that they knew better than to seriously listen to his message. Though "South-of-the-Road" was only one of many villages systematically visited by this missionary, because the people were specially hard to reach he was specially exercised in prayer for God's working there. But it was not until after this servant of the Lord was called to be with his Lord that the work began in that village.

The young weaver went away to a large city, on business. While there he heard the gospel. Being away from his own people, he felt free to listen and somehow the word entered his heart and convicted him of sin. He went to hear again and again, he believed and made public confession of his faith. He met with no opposition in this distant city, but "a man's foes shall be they of his own house." When the time came for him to return home he decided that, come what may, he would tell his parents that he had become a Christian. When the parents heard it they called together the old men of the village, and "South-of-the-Road" had a new problem to deal with. As they conferred together over the matter of one of their own people having "eaten the foreigner's medicine and gone

crazy," they decided upon a conservative and passive course. They would give notice in the village that no one was to speak to this "wayward son" and no one was to hear him speak. They would keep silence toward him until he should see the error of his way and repent and turn again to his father's gods.

So the time passed by, and the young believer thought that he was not giving any witness for his Lord because he was not allowed to speak. But he had no idea how he was being watched, his every action commented upon, and observations of him being the continual topic of conversation. They said, "He is crazy but he seems to be doing his weaving all right." His parents said, "He is crazy, but he has become so thoughtful in doing little things for us about the home." After some time the mother said that he was a better son than he was before he went crazy. One matter puzzled them much. They noticed that some days he put his weaving aside and spent most of the day reading two books. One of these books, the larger one, he silently read, while from the other he sang and seemed very happy. They wondered much at this, and so much the more when they counted the days and found that it was one day out of seven that he did this. They have no division of weeks in Inland China and only go by the day of the month; but there it was—seven days apart every time were these strange days when he did not weave. As time went on they were more puzzled than ever, because sometimes when these days came around, he rose very early in the morning and went off somewhere, coming home late in the evening. Where did he go? They would watch the next time and some one of them would follow him and see what it meant.

As the feast times came around when they should all worship the idols, they tried to force him to take part But in this they were all the more astonished at his firmness, and, when they used force, they were astonished beyond measure that he should take so patiently and meekly all the suffering which they put upon him. His mother began to soften toward him even though

she was so strongly opposed to the foreign religion. After some months she fell ill and it seemed that she would die. The heathens all have a great fear of death, and as her husband and other sons stood about her, ready to do anything or give her anything she might wish, there came from her the request that her "crazy" son should be brought and allowed to tell her his new religion. As this request was granted, she was not the only one to hear, and soon after the father and the elder brother of the young man became believers. When I visited that village the door was open wide to gospel work. The people not only heard with their ears but with their hearts also. Once when I was speaking to a group of women, telling them how the Lord Jesus, when He was crucified, prayed for His enemies and asked that they might be forgiven because they knew not what they did, a woman spoke out and said that she could quite believe that because of what she had seen the young weaver do when he had been reviled and beaten because he would not worship the idols. She said he only went into the corner and prayed!

Thus did the Lord use the simple testimony of a faithful life. Even when his lips were closed his altered life and patient demeanour spoke loudly and prepared an entrance for the gospel into the hearts of all that knew him. A.M.H.

It is so sweet to trust Thy word alone:
I do not ask to see
The unveiling of Thy purpose, or the shining
Of future light on mysteries untwining:
Thy promise-roll is all my own,—
Thy word is enough for me!

The human heart asks love; but now I know
That my heart hath from Thee
All real, and full, and marvellous affection,
So near, so human; yet divine perfection
Thrills gloriously the mighty glow!
Thy love is enough for me!

Like Thee and With Thee.

WHEN earthly joys, and earthly woes,
And earthly cares are past,
When Thou art come, my Saviour Lord,
And I am home at last,
Ne'er shall this wandering heart of mine
Wander from Thee again,
Ne'er more my love grow cold and faint;
I shall be like Thee then.

When Thou shalt come, my living Lord,
And earth's sad lonely night
Dissolves in heaven's glad radiant day,
And faith gives place to sight;
When Thou shalt take Thy throne and reign,
No more despised of men,
When all shall own Thee as their King,
I shall be with Thee then.

Like Thee and with Thee, Lord, to be
In Thy bright home above;
To love Thee then unchangingly
And fully know Thy love;
Gathered with all Thy saved ones there,
Nevermore to leave Thee,
To praise the grace that saves and keeps,
Nevermore to grieve Thee.

Lord, till that day of glory dawns,
And I Thy face behold,
And all Thy wondrous beauties then
To lightened eyes unfold!
Grant me, a weak frail child of Thine,
More like Thee here to be,
Only to seek in this wild waste
The path that leads to Thee.

ANON.