

THE WITNESS:

An Unfettered Monthly Journal

OF

Biblical Literature, Expository Papers,

Notes of Addresses, Conference Reports,

Questions and Answers, Intelligence,

Poetry, Correspondence, &c.

EDITED BY

J. R. CALDWELL,

Author of "*Shadows of Christ*," "*Things to Come*," "*Earthly Relationships*," &c.

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THE WITNESS:

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

"MOSES: THE LEADER AND MEDIATOR."

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,

Author of "Earthly Relationships of the Heavenly Family."

THE triumph of Jehovah over the enemies of Israel at the Red Sea awakes the deepest joy of the heart of Moses. He sings a song of praise unto the Lord—a song of triumphant faith, and with him, as partakers of his joy, the children of Israel also sing,

And is not this a shadow of the triumphant joy of our Lord Jesus as He rose from the dead, victorious over all the power of the enemy, and ascended to the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, there to wield all power in heaven and on earth on behalf of those whom the Father had given Him?

In Psalm xxii. the sorrows of our Lord Jesus on the Cross are minutely described, and the breathings of an intercourse with God are heard of which the historic narrative of the Gospels gives no account. There, amidst the sufferings and the forsaking, the pains of death and the sorrows of hell, the final request groaned out from the depths of His soul is for the deliverance of His "darling" from the power of the dog. "Having loved His own . . . He loved them to the end." But immediately upon the utterance of this prayer the scene is changed. The darkness seems to vanish, the resurrection glory bursts upon our view.

Again the Holy One is seen; no longer the groaning, pleading, dying Sufferer, but now His prayer being answered, He stands with the loved, and purchased, and liberated congregation gathered around Him, and like Moses

in the midst of Israel, He leads the song of victory. The triumph is His, and ours in Him; therefore in Him we joy, and with Him we shall yet sing.

Well may it be called "precious faith" which has linked us in life eternal to our triumphant Head. Cursed be the unbelief that would drag us down to murmur amidst our wilderness circumstances when we ought to be celebrating the praises of Him who has "triumphed gloriously," and by faith anticipating the inheritance.

In Revelation xv. we find another and a future victory song. It is called "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." The allusion is doubtless to the Passover Lamb, and to the song of Moses at the Red Sea. These two aspects of Redemption are combined—Redemption by purchase or atonement, and Redemption by power or deliverance. The one is Exodus xii. and the other is Exodus xv. Both are ours. The one is accomplished, finished, never to be repeated or added to. The other although surely pledged to us in the resurrection of Christ is yet future. We wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body (Rom. viii. 23); we are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise until the redemption of the purchased possession (Eph. i. 14).

The path from the Red Sea was through a wilderness. The wilderness is the place of trial. The Lord Jesus, the Son whom God had called out of Egypt—rising from the waters of baptism in Jordan and being full of the Holy Ghost—was thither led to be tempted of the devil. But Satan's wiles found no response in the Holy One of God; and wilderness circumstances, however trying—the hunger

and the wild beast—drew forth no murmur from Him. Jesus stood where Israel fell.

The very first lesson of the wilderness—a three day's journey without water—tested the feeble roots of Israel's faith. Unbelief with its inevitable issue of murmuring against God took the place of faith and hope with their never-failing song of praise. And whether we look at that part of their journey which preceded Sinai—during which God dealt with them in pure grace—or at that which followed Sinai, during which, for similar provocations, God dealt with them in judgment, so that the entire generation which came out of Egypt was consumed; we see as far as Israel is concerned only the prolonged corroboration of God's verdict upon what is in man by nature, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "In me, that is my flesh dwelleth no good thing."

But it is in the whole course of God's unique dealings with Israel as His people during these forty years of provocation that chiefly outshines the typical character of Moses as the Mediator. The man who looked on their burdens, who had identified himself with their afflictions, who had faced for them the enemy, and had gone down with them into the depths, is the man whom God selected and appointed to be the Mediator.

And does this not tell us of the testing and the proved faithfulness of Him who is "the Mediator of the new covenant?" Truly it was necessary that He who undertook the office of Mediator should be both "merciful and faithful." Faithful to God, and merciful to the ignorant and erring.

Thus we find Moses "faithful in all his house" (Heb. iii. 5). Never did he keep back from the people one word of God's commands. "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments" (Ex. xxiv. 3). They trembled and quaked at the voice of God—for "they could not endure that which was commanded" (Heb. xii. 20). And even when Moses, filled with mediatorial grace, came forth from communion with God, his face reflecting divine glory, they were afraid to come nigh unto him. But he called unto them, and first the rulers came nigh; afterwards all the children of Israel came nigh; they found their fears were groundless—they

found that in the Mediator the glory that shone so brightly had no terrors for them. To calm their fears he veiled his face, for he must have them at perfect rest in his presence, but when he communed with God it was with unveiled face. But before he was thus honoured in the eyes of Israel it is remarkable how, in chap. xxxii., he stands before God pleading for them as sinners. The Lord had said, "Now, therefore, let Me alone that My wrath may wax hot against them," v. 10. "But Moses besought the Lord his God"—and thus it is written, "The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto His people," v. 11, 14. Thus Moses, His servant stood in the breach. Again he pleads, "Oh this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold, yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." Mystery of faithful, unchangeable love to the people whose cause he had espoused. Type of Him who "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust," who was "made a curse for us," "who delivered us from the wrath to come."

Again, in chaps. xxxiii. and xxxiv., he pleads for the presence of God to go amongst them. Nothing short of this could satisfy the heart of Moses. The Lord had tested Moses. He had said, "I will make of thee a great nation" (chap. xxxii. 10). Again, xxxiii. 14, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest;" but the true-hearted Mediator was not thus to be severed from the people; the very idea of the nation being cut off and his being blessed he resents. If they are to perish, he will perish with them; if they are to be blessed, he will be blessed with them; if they are to wander forty years in the wilderness he will wander with them. And, in all this, was he not a figure of the "One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

Nay, were not these supernatural ways of faithful love but broken reflections of the mind and Spirit of Christ? If the "shadow" were so lovely, so true, so immovable, in his attachment to the chosen people, what must the substance be? When they were "almost ready to stone him" (Ex. xvii. 4) he cried to the Lord on their behalf. When Aaron and

Miriam spoke against him, he made effectual intercession for Miriam's healing (Num. xii. 13). When the people murmured against Moses and against Aaron, and said, "Let us appoint a captain and let us return into Egypt"—and so provoked the Lord, that again He said, "I will smite them with pestilence and disinherit them, and make of thee a nation greater and mightier than they," Still Moses pleads and obtains the answer. "I have pardoned, according to thy word" (Num. xiv. 2, 4, 12, 20). Again, the people murmured against them in Numbers xx. 5, and also in xxi. 5, but never is his patience exhausted; as often as their unbelief turned their necessities into a complaint, instead of a prayer, so often did Moses come in for them to God with his unfailing mediation.

Such are the ways of grace—such the charity that "never faileth," and after this pattern, but surpassing it as far as the infinite surpasses the finite, are the thoughts and ways of Him who is the Mediator between God and men, the Advocate for the erring children. Well is it that, "Having loved His own, He loves them to the end." Were it not that His love is stronger than death how could it continue unwavering as it does towards those who in so many ways deny Him and forsake Him, judge His providence, and murmur against His discipline. May our meditation upon the shadow lead us to a deeper understanding of Him who is the Substance, who loved us and gave Himself for us; in whose face we behold, without a veil, the glory of God; whose will is our law, whose presence is salvation, and under whose triumphant guidance we are not only led forth from Egypt and its doom, but assured of everlasting inheritance.

JAMES says: "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." Those who have already been made perfect in Christ have to be made perfect in the development of the new nature. The perfect stature of Christ has to be grown up into, and the pathway of this growth lies through tribulation; and he who would grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ must be content to walk in the only way that makes such knowledge and grace attainable.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XI.

THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

MATT. XX. 1-16.

Verse 1. "For the kingdom of heaven [the heavens] is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard."

THIS parable is founded on what had just occurred, as recorded in the preceding chapter. The rich young man having gone away sorrowful, the disciples were instructed as to the necessity for divine grace in order to full surrender, since that which was impossible to man was possible to God. Peter having called to remembrance their having given up all, asked the question, "What shall we have, therefore?" The Lord by this parable teaches that the awards of the kingdom, though apportioned on principles of strict justice, were, after all, rewards of grace, distributed in sovereignty, and beyond all proportion to the sacrifice or service rendered. This is not the Saviour calling sinners, but the Son over His own house, employing labourers in His own service. The early morn may suggest the idea either of the commencement of the dispensation, or of the time of conversion, or the period of a call to special service.

Verse 2. "And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny [denariūs] a day [the day], he sent them into his vineyard."

All who enter on the service of the Lord Jesus may enter with the full persuasion that their labour will not be in vain in the Lord; that they serve no hard master, but one whose principle is that the labourer is worthy of his hire; and that, when He comes, He will reward every one according to his works, so that not even the gift of a cup of cold water will be overlooked by Him.

The denariūs, or Roman penny, in value about sevenpence or eightpence halfpenny, was the ordinary remuneration at that time for a day's work.

Verses 3-7. "And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto them, 'Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right [just] I will give you.' And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about

the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, 'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' They say unto him, 'Because no man hath hired us.' He saith unto them, 'Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right [just] that shall ye receive.'

Early in the morning would be at sunrise, say about six o'clock according to our reckoning; the third hour nine o'clock; the sixth hour, twelve o'clock; the ninth hour, three o'clock in the afternoon; and the eleventh hour, one hour before sunset. The length of the period spent in the professed service of the Lord Jesus, although not overlooked by Him, may not always be the criterion by which He estimates the value of the service rendered; but, whether the time be long or short, every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour. The thoughts and intents of the heart, the motives, the measure of self-sacrifice, the opposition encountered, the obstacles to be overcome, the results of the service, all these will be taken into account by Him who trieth the heart and the reins, as well as the length of time occupied in the service.

Verse 8. "So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, 'Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.'"

The day, according to the Hebrew calculation, ends at sunset; when the even has come the day closes. The present dispensation, or day of salvation, which commenced at Pentecost, will come to its close at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering unto Him. One of the first actions of the Lord Jesus after His coming will be to take account of His servants. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Cor. iv. 5).

Verses 9-16. "And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it they murmured against the Goodman of the house, saying, 'These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.' But he answered one of them, and said, 'Friend, I do thee no wrong [injustice]; did'st thou not agree

with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way; I will give [it is my will to give] unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own [in mine own affairs]? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?' So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen."

In the distribution of rewards by the Lord at His coming, there will be a manifestation of three great and glorious principles—JUSTICE, SOVEREIGNTY, and GRACE.

THE HOUSEHOLDER (verse 1), when he engages the labourers, guarantees a full and just remuneration for service to be rendered; and to those sent into the vineyard subsequently he promises, "Whatsoever is just, that shall ye receive." No service, however humble, no work, however small, no sacrifice, however trifling, will be overlooked, but each will receive the due recompense of the reward.

THE LORD OF THE VINEYARD (verse 15) claims the sovereign right to do what he wills in his own affairs.

THE GOODMAN OF THE HOUSE (verse 11) retains to himself the privilege, the exercise of his goodness and grace, whatever might be thought of his generosity.

SOVEREIGNTY will not be exercised at the expense of JUSTICE or of GRACE; whilst the magnificence of the GRACE is manifested in the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, the recompense for light and temporary affliction and service, will be for the honour of the JUSTICE, and the glory of the SOVEREIGNTY displayed. So then if the last are first, and the first last, and some are chosen to especial service, and others chosen to peculiar privilege, all will be alike the subjects of DIVINE JUSTICE, SOVEREIGNTY, and GRACE; and the language of each and all will be "Not unto us, O Jehovah, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy lovingkindness, and for Thy truth's sake!"

VARIOUS USES OF THE WORD

"LAY."

- I. *Lay aside* every weight..... { Heb. xii. 1.
Jas. i. 21.
- II. *Lay down* our lives for the {
Brethren.....} 1 Jno. iii. 16.
- III. *Lay by* in store 1 Cor. xvi. 2.
- IV. *Lay up* treasure in heaven... Matt. vi. 20.

THE KINGDOM.

PART I.

By ALEXANDER STEWART.
JOTTINGS FROM ADDRESSES.

Read Revelation i. 1-6.

THE Revelation [*i.e.*, the unveiling] of Jesus Christ." "He sent and signified it [that is, made it known by signs] by His angel unto His servant John." It was for His servants "who bare record of the Word of God." We can only bear effective testimony to those things that we have seen. "Things which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." Woe be to us if we see with another man's eyes and give another man's testimony. "The time is at hand" *i.e.*, always imminent as if at any moment the curtain may be drawn up. For eighteen centuries the time has always been "at hand."

The "seven Spirits of God," doubtless the Holy Spirit, for none but He could come in between and be named in the same breath as the Father and the Son. "From Jesus Christ—the faithful Witness"—this He was in the past when here on earth: "and the first begotten from the dead:" this He is in the present age: and "the Prince of the kings of the earth." This He will be when He comes in manifestation.

"Unto Him that loved us:" Here is the response on the lips of the saints. "And hath washed (or loosed) us from our sins in His own blood." If we think of sin as defilement, we are cleansed by the blood of Christ: if we think of sin as bondage, we are loosed or liberated by that same precious blood. "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." He has saved us to be effective—to be priests to serve and kings to rule for God in our double vocation. "To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

By "the Kingdom" one means the rule of God, that rule in which by-and-by the saints will be associated with Christ. There are two things inseparably connected in the mind and purpose of God (see Gen. i. 26). "Let us make man in our own image . . . and let them have dominion." Only as man is found in God's image can he have dominion. Very shortly after that the sceptre which God had put into the hand of man dropped out of it, and that sceptre will never be wielded again according

to the mind of God, until it is taken up by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "the image of the invisible God," and, in association with Him, by all those who by the grace of God also bear that image. We have seen these two points in Gen. i. Now turn to the very end—when the great wheel of time has come round—and in Rev. xxii. what do we see? "His name shall be in their foreheads . . . and they shall reign for ever and ever." Because they now fully bear the image of God, therefore they shall reign.

They received this image first in regeneration, when born again—being as to the "new man"—renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10). It was developed in communion with God as they dwelt within the vail and abode in His presence. It is to be fully perfected and manifested in resurrection. And now here is that blessed company to whom God can give dominion.

"They shall see His face and His name shall be in their foreheads." The name in Scripture is expressive of character. When they look at Him they see Christ, and when He looks at them He sees Christ. What a salvation is this! All that you know yourselves to be and mourn over, passed away, and the character of Christ seen for evermore! This is full salvation. It has not come yet, but it is coming.

We have to pass over many books in Scripture before we come to the one which teaches about the Kingdom. Israel had a great deliverer in Moses and a great captain in Joshua, and in the time of the Judges God raised up "saviours" to Israel, but it is not until 1st Samuel that you find the Kingdom. Up till that time there had been no king reigning in Israel, and the first book of Samuel is, I suppose, rightly called "the First book of Kings." This book is mostly composed of the history of four men, Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David. Before David, God's king, came upon the scene the three that went before him failed. Eli did not command his household after him. His sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not. For this God judged him and he was set aside.

Then came Samuel, and there is not a more honoured man than he; but he failed in his sons. God had made Samuel a prophet, but Samuel made his sons judges; they had their

office from him, and they sinned against the Lord and betrayed their trust in Israel. Then for the first time arose the question about a king. "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and said unto Samuel: "Behold, thou art old and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations."

I suppose Samuel had argued in this way: "Very soon in the course of nature I shall be taken away; there must be somebody to keep things right in Israel;" therefore he made his sons judges. That was *his* remedy; and when Samuel's sons went wrong the Israelites argued in the same way: "There must be somebody to keep things right in Israel; therefore let us have a king."

But where was God in their reckoning? He had brought them out of the house of bondage, across the Red Sea, through the wilderness, and into the promised land. But in this matter there was no God before their eyes. They forgot that the living God was well able to take care of the people He had redeemed. In answer to Samuel's prayer, God told him to hearken unto the voice of the people, "for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." Up till that moment Israel had been a theocracy, *i.e.*, a kingdom that God administers Himself.

There is one person in the world who claims to be "the vicar of Christ." A *present* God does not need a vicar. While the Queen lives in this country, there is a Governor-General to represent her in India. The moment you want one to rule over God's people, instead of God, you have lost the sense of a living God and a present God. And this was exactly the case with Israel. Then God declared the manner of the king that should reign over them: "He will take," &c. These words are the keynote of the passage, "He will take." He will serve himself and make a gain of the people over whom he is called to rule.

Saul is an eminent example of this, but the same thing characterises all false rulers, whether in Israel or in the Church of God. The contrast is the great and good Shepherd, who laid down His life for the sheep, and under-shepherds such as Paul, who said, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you."

Thus in an instant we recognise the man

who is truly gifted to rule. The character of God's true rulers is specially marked in Scripture. Moses said, "I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them" (Numbers xvi. 15). Samuel said, "Witness against me; whose ox have I taken?" (1 Sam. xii. 3). Paul, said, "Mine own hands have ministered to my necessities and to them that were with me"; he had walked in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 34, 35). And you remember 1 Peter v. "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." Some may pass these two qualifications lightly, who stop at the last hurdle—"not as being lords over God's heritage." One may say, "I do it willingly; I like the work—I don't do it for pay." No, not pay, but *power*; the desire for place and power may be the motive and not the love of the sheep. In John x. you see "the stranger," "the thief," "the hireling," "the wolf," and the "good Shepherd," all interested in the sheep.

The thief—we know what he is after; the wolf, he scatters the sheep; the hireling, he stops his service when the pay stops, you may be sure. What about the "good Shepherd"—like David, type of Him, Paul, and all such. "He lays down His life for the sheep." If you want to be a ruler, this is the qualification.

There are three statements in John x. The good Shepherd had a life. First, He laid it down; then He took it again; then He gave it away. Such are the ways of the true Shepherd and God's ruler.

EXPERIENCE necessarily leads to hope; for it has dealt with the God of hope. and hence the far-off hope of the future (Rom. v. 2) becomes the source of a present joy, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us." The hope here contemplated is the result of a present or continued outpouring of the love of God into the soul. The trials of the way, and the realization of God in them, are the means by which the heart is enlarged; its capacity is increased, and thus it is able to receive and to return more of the love of God.

"A MAN IN CHRIST."

(2 Cor. xii. 2-4.)

By Dr. NEATBY, Author of "Our Lord's Coming Again."

THE Apostle Paul here was not conscious of anything but this new creation. I do not teach it, but I believe that it was at the moment he was being stoned to death at Lystra (Acts xiv. 5-20) that he was caught up to the third heavens and into Paradise. I believe that his persecutors made as sure as they could that they had stoned a man to death. I don't think they left off before it was pretty sure he was dead, and that his spirit did go unto the third heaven at that moment and there he heard what he could not tell when he came back. Language was not adapted to tell of heavenly things. Language was made to tell of these things that we are familiar with upon earth. If I never used a spoon I should not know what a spoon meant. I use it, I see it, I call it a spoon, and you know and I know what I mean by it, but how can you speak of things you do not know? It belongs not to man to use these blessed heavenly realities. He was full of them when he came back, but there were no words in which to express them; he was full of them, but he could not utter what he had seen. He had seen, I daresay, very little except the blessed God-man in whom he said he was. I think that the moments he passed in paradise were all occupied in gazing upon that glorious face!

I think he was contemplating that peerless face until called upon to return to his mutilated body on the field of Lystra. It was an awful contrast: down from the third heaven of the eternal bliss that God surrounds Himself with, to a poor, bleeding body; perhaps the stones had cut his face about the eyes, and made him look ridiculous; perhaps the wounds affected his tongue; we might speculate but it would be useless. It is stated that the Galatians would have "plucked out their eyes" and given them to the Apostle Paul, and that the Corinthians said, "his letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible." The treatment he received at Lystra may have accounted for these remarks. Now he is face to face with this reality; he is "a man in Christ," he is down again in the world; he was a man in Christ before he went up, and he is a man in Christ now that he is

come down, but he is in special circumstances of human weakness and special infirmity; he has to take up the poor body that has been killed in the service of his Master. He asks that the thorn might be taken away, whatever that thorn was. It was of Satan, mark it—"the messenger of Satan" to buffet him. It was given of God, but it was a "messenger of Satan." Oh, to reconcile these constantly in our experience! I do not know how often Satan gets the liberty he got in Job's case, and, thank God, I need not trouble myself, because God sits upon the throne and He makes all things to work together for good. Satan may act—maliciously act—but God sits above the water floods, above all the power of Satan, and He makes all things work together for good to each of His children. The same circumstance may affect a dozen of his people, it may work opposite ways, but it all does His bidding. Satan may have much to do with our earthly afflictions, but that is in the hand of the living God. The thing is for you and me to see only God's hand in it, to look beyond Satan and to see God's hand. It was so with David. That Shimei should curse was a dastardly mean thing; it came from the "father of lies." David was a man that never harmed that family to which Shimei belonged all his days. He was the greatest friend of his father's family; yet Shimei curses. But David in the spirit of his Master when He said, "the cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it?" only replies, "God has bidden him to curse, let him curse."

So whatever the Lord bids, the Christian accepts. Be it curses or pains, the Christian may take it all as the good gift of a Father's hand. I stand before you as one that has suffered, but I thank God, from my heart for all His ways. I once said—long years ago, when my mother was taken from me—

"If then, in deepest grief,
When sorrows most abound,
Such depths of love and tenderness
In Thee, my Lord, are found,
Do Thou with me whate'er it seemeth good to Thee,
That I Thyself may better know, Thy power may rest
on me."

I do not know whether my present affliction is in answer to that prayer. I did not think as much perhaps as I should have thought when I wrote it, but "I thank Thee Father, Lord of heaven and earth." I only say all things are

to His praise, He doeth all things well. I know it and I feel it.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice." He came to the Lord Jesus; and I would just say here, I think in prayer we go to the Father for our needs as children, and we go to Christ the Lord for our needs in His work and service. I believe the reason he besought the Lord, and not the Father, was that he felt that the thorn in the flesh would interfere with his service for Christ. He was a single-eyed man, he thought only of how it would affect his service in the work of the Lord. He wanted the thorn taken away because it would hinder him in the service of Christ. Perhaps he stammered, or perhaps his eyes were not straight, or his vision was impaired, and this, he thought, would interfere with his work for Christ. He asks three times, that is just as many times as Christ asked. And he gets this answer, not exactly as he would wish, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Now it is all changed. The thorn in the flesh that looked before as that which would hinder his future service for Christ is now a precious thing; he would not part with it. It is still a thorn, and a thorn that pricks always, but "that the power of Christ may rest upon him" is what this man in Christ desires. Come back again to service, he desires "that Christ may be magnified in his mortal body—he desires that Christ may live in him in such fashion that Christ may be seen, and Christ may do His work to His eternal glory. It is most blessed to hear the apostle say, "most gladly therefore will I therefore glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Just think of the contrast! The infirmity—the power of Christ resting upon him. It is Christ turning an enemy into a friend. It is Christ who meets the enemy as Jehu met his—"Turn thou behind me;" and if it was one that could not be turned behind him, he was trodden beneath his horse's hoofs. The Christian is a man that the enemy cannot get at. If he prepares for him a joy, he will only have a joy in the Lord; and if the enemy prepares a sorrow, it is turned to joy.

Such is the Christian. Now, let me put it to your conscience, and to my own before God, for I do desire there may be work for eternity here this afternoon. I desire we may

go away more like Christ than we came—go away with a measure of communion with Christ that we have hitherto not known. I desire it for myself—I need it—and I desire it for you, my brethren. Do you desire this—"that the power of Christ may rest upon me?" Not, "that I may have a great deal of ease"—that is not what he desires: if he desired ease he would not like the thorn; but what he desires is that the power of Christ may rest upon him. Thank God, it does rest. "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." You don't know what that trouble you are passing through is to do for you. You do not know how it is to draw you nearer God. It is one of the mercies in disguise for which you will thank God throughout eternity. Elisha was surrounded with the host of Syria. His servant was in the greatest tremour; he saw the danger in which his master was, and represents it to his master. Elisha turns to God and says, "Lord, open the young man's eyes." He (Elisha) did not need his eyes opened; he had them opened already—he was in living communion. But as soon as his servant's eyes were opened he sees that the chariots of God fill the mountain. My brethren and sisters, they fill the mountain still! They are still around you! The enemy can't get at you—it is like Job of old—there was set an hedge about him. How did Satan know? As dear Mr. Spurgeon once said, he knew because he had been all around to try to get at him, and he could not. God sets a hedge still—a hedge that is all mercy on the one side and judgment on the other. All the judgment is on the side that faces the enemy. But the mercy is at the side that the Christian has to enjoy. "And thy shoes (margin, under thy shoes) shall be iron and brass." I love that reading, because I should not like iron and brass shoes, but I should like iron and brass under my feet. He gives a firm step, he gives security, but it is soft within—under thy shoes iron and brass.

The tenth verse is one of the most wonderful in Scripture. Here is a man, and a man of like passions with you and me, and he says, "therefore I take pleasure (look at it—not "I grin and bear it"), but "I take pleasure in infirmities;" a likely thing to take pleasure in, isn't it? "In reproaches"—again a likely

thing to take pleasure in! "In necessities"—how can you take pleasure in necessities? "In persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake." Here is a list of the things that this man takes pleasure in! I commend them to you, a wonderful list:

"O wordly pomp and glory,
Your charms are spread in vain

for the man that has seen Christ in glory. It is weakness that makes me cling to the strong for strength. "I take pleasure in these things." God knows how little I do it, but I must associate myself with this man in Christ. I do take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak then am I strong. There are three things in which the Christian is said to glory. Mark them: In Romans v. he is said to "glory" and "joy" and "boast"—I think they are all one word in Greek. He is said to boast or glory "in hope of the glory of God." He is also said to "boast (or glory) in God" Himself. But the most wonderful thing is, he is said to "boast" or "glory in tribulations." And why? Because "tribulation works patience, and patience experience (of what God is), and experience hope, and hope makes not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart." Tribulation becomes one link in the chain that links me for ever with the living God. Oh, my brother, be a man in Christ. *You are—be it.* Be it, be content to be a man in Christ, be content that Christ should be glorified, and that you should find your glory in Christ—be content.

We shall soon be through all the sorrow of the way. Our Lord is coming. Oh, beloved, I say it with holy confidence, we shall soon see our Lord face to face. Let us walk with Him during the little while here, and then we will walk with Him eternally as worthy ones in Him, the Worthy One, to the praise and glory of our God.

FITTING FOR SERVICE.

By GEORGE ADAM.

ON the part of all those who are called to serve there is a *need-be* for a previous training. If one would serve with satisfaction to their employers, and with comfort to them-

selves, a fitting for service is needed in the things of this life; but more so in divine things. Scripture, as well as all experience, proves this. We have the record of Moses getting special training for special work for forty years. Joshua served forty years under the direction of Moses before he was called to be the first man in Israel. David also had his apprenticeship to serve before he ascended the throne. We have also "the twelve" chosen by the Lord Himself, and trained under His own eye. Then the apostle Paul had his "three years" in Arabia, as also Timothy served under Paul, "as a son with a father." Instances could be multiplied, but these will suffice to shew the divine principle on which the Lord acts when He calls one to serve Him in ministry. Those who aspire to service without a divine call can jump into service, but those who are in divine leading must wait God's time.

Also, it is well to notice that a *desire* for a certain path of service, or even the conviction that one is *called* to it, do not constitute a fit training for that special work. Moses had the desire to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage, and also a conviction that he was called to do it (see Acts vii. 22-36); but he had to be forty years in the school of God before he was fitted for the work. In these days, when there is such a tendency to rush into service, the great truths taught in the instances we have given should be deeply pondered by everyone who would essay to devote their lives to the Lord's service. There is another truth, or principle, which is much more liable to be overlooked than the necessity for special training before *entering* on any special service. That is the necessity for serving ones being *refitted*; special seasons of being re-emptied and re-filled in the presence of the Lord. It is the want of this refitting in the experience of many of the Lord's servants which accounts for the barrenness of much of the ministry amongst those who know so much truth. When we began our ministry we did so with trembling hearts. There was a salutary sense of weakness which kept us leaning on the Lord for divine guidance and "power." Like king Uzziah, we were "marvellously helped till we were strong" (see 2 Chr. xxvi. 15). We did not know much, and we could not tell out the

little we did know very fluently. But in the days of our weakness and ignorance our ministry had a *grip* in it which, in many instances, has ceased to be felt by those who hear us. Very few may have gone the length which king Uzziah did, but is it not true that there is too much of the handling of holy things with unholy hands? Sinners profess to be converted under the preaching of the Gospel, but so many of them turn out never to have been born again. Saints are pleased and gratified, but they are not "edified." There is much appearance of fruit, but so much of it does not "remain."

Now what is the reason for this lack of power? Is it not true that there is a great lack of this refitting which we have noticed? There are many illustrations of this principle in Scripture, the most notable of which are the prophet Daniel and the apostle John. Daniel made a splendid start in his testimony for his God in Babylon. There is not to be found in Scripture a brighter example of faithfulness to God, and to His truth, than that of Daniel. He was a man who was deep in the counsels of God; a man to whom the Lord told many of His secrets; but even such a man with all his gifts and experience needed to be *refitted* for fresh service. When the Lord was about to reveal to Daniel that vision recorded in chapter xi. he needed fresh preparation for it, as recorded in chapter x. His fitting for previous service would not do. His over seventy years of faithful testimony in Babylon would not suffice. He needed the Lord's special dealing with him to fit him for that special work. That fitting had three stages in it. First, his own exercise of soul. He had three weeks of mourning and fasting before the Lord (vs. 2, 3); then there was his being brought down into a state of complete conscious weakness. He got such a revelation of the divine glory as stripped him of all his own strength, and left him completely helpless (vs. 4-6); and lastly, there was the infusion of fresh strength into him by "One like the similitude of the sons of men" (vs. 16-19).

The case of the apostle John is very similar. He too was *alone with the Lord*. He "was in the Spirit." Rev. i. 10, that was the first stage. Second, he got such a revelation of the Lord Jesus as made him "fall at His feet as dead,"

verse 17. Then there was as in Daniel's case, the "divine touch" which imparted fresh strength, and courage for fresh service. These two cases are very marked, but they illustrate a great principle which serving ones are apt to forget. That is the necessity of having our *self dependence* taken away by the Lord Himself, and fresh power imparted to us. It is worthy of notice that in the experience of these two aged servants of the Lord, it was not so much their "dealing with the Lord;" it was rather the "*Lord's dealing with them*." It is true, that, had they not been exercised in their own souls, and seeking to serve as under the eye of the Lord, they might have been passed by, and some one else called to do the work. Yet our dealing with the Lord about the fitness for His service is not enough. If we are to be kept fresh in soul for work, we need the Lord's dealing with us. After going on for a time in any service for the Lord, however humble, there is a tendency to become *familiar* with our work. When we began, we went direct from our closets to our work, whether it was public ministry, or private visitation. We needed an interview with the Lord before going forth to serve; and we went forth in His strength, not our own. But as we became better acquainted with service, our sense of dependence on the Lord, gradually, and to ourselves imperceptibly, became less and less, until we could serve without having to go direct to the Lord for our message, or for power to deliver it.

One may go on in the power of a "gift" divinely bestowed; or in the power of a capacity for speaking, guided not by the Lord, at all, but by appearances, or circumstances. This kind of service may satisfy ourselves, and also please those who are not in fellowship with the Lord, but it will produce little fruit that "will remain"; and bring no reward on the "crowning day." When one gets into this condition, it is an unspeakable mercy to be taken in hand by the Lord. To have our "strength" taken away, and our comeliness turned into corruption" (Dan. x. 8); to be thus emptied of self, and self-confidence, and cast afresh on divine mercy.

It is a rare experience to be able to "glory in our infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon us." (2 Cor. xii. 9) and an experience which can only be learned in the "school of God."

May the Lord teach those who would serve Him, the need, not only of special fitting before entering His service; but also the necessity of refitting all the journey through, so as to be able to "finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received" (Acts xx. 24).

THE PROGRESS OF THE AGE.

A NEW-YEAR'S SONG—1896.

YEARS are flying, we are dying,
Time is wearing down our frame;
But we live, on Christ relying—

He is evermore the same.
Peerless Prince of Life, how glorious!
Clothed is He with majesty,
Over Time and Death victorious,
Ruler of Eternity.

Years are flying, times are trying,
Shades of darkness fall around,
Law is failing, men are railing,
Strife and lawlessness abound.
Though the sea around us rages,
And the floods lift up their voice,
Refuge strong, Thou Rock of Ages,
In Thee, hidden, we rejoice.

Years are flying; man's denying
All that's holy, just, and good;
Loving pleasure and earth's treasure,
As the Scriptures said he would.
God-breathed Scriptures are derided,
Christ's redeeming, precious blood
Is despised by seers blinded—
Dimly burns the lamp of God.

We are nearing Christ's appearing,
Judgment scenes draw nigh apace—
First the storm, and then the beaming
Of His gracious, peaceful face.
Israel, groping, in their sadness,
Flocking to their land are seen,
Soon they'll view, through tears of gladness,
The despised Nazarene.

Centuries are swiftly flying,
Quickly comes our absent Lord;
For Thyself, Lord, we are crying,
Cherishing Thy parting word.
Accents in our hearts still ringing,
"I will come and take you home;"
So we wait and work while singing,
"Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come."

WHAT IS THAT TO THEE?

"Lord, what [shall] this man [do]." Jesus saith unto him, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me."

"Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple should not die. Yet Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die," &c. John xxi. 21-23.

THEY would have it nevertheless, that it was something to them, and they must know all about it. So they went wrong. Could anything have been more natural than the conclusion they draw from that part of the Lord's words which had arrested their attention? What other inference could they have drawn from it, if they must draw any?

But they overlooked the important part of His words. Had they given heed to that, it would have saved them from the foolish attempt to know what He had not wanted them to know, and from the mistake of saying what He had not said.

May we not here find some deeply important and urgently needed lessons for ourselves?

FIRST.—That we are ever in danger of error when we say what the Word of God does not say, *plainly say*, when we put our own constructions on its language, or draw our own inferences from it.

SECOND.—That the things we find obscure in Scripture are sometimes designedly so.

THIRD.—That our wisdom is to occupy ourselves rather with what the Scripture plainly tells us, than with what it leaves obscure.

There are some things in Scripture very plain, so plain as scarcely to admit of any possible misconstruction. On the other hand some are dark and ambiguous. Which then are these? And why are they so? We may find the key in the passage under notice. All that concerned Peter's faith and walk was plain enough. All that concerned another was left in purposed obscurity. The word to Peter was "Feed My sheep," "Follow Me." And just so much was told him further of his own future, as he needed then to know. The other was nothing to him. But he and the rest would know; and we see the result.

This then, we shall find to be the rule. On all that concerns our walk of faith and obedience, Scripture is plain. On all that, beyond this,

speaks of God's purposes, of what is for *Him* to do, not for *us*, Scripture is more or less obscure.

Take the first example that presents itself. Nothing could be plainer than the command to Adam in Eden, "Thou shalt not eat of it." How different the Lord's declaration of what He would do for redemption from the fall! While it was plain enough for Adam's present need, for his faith and hope, it left the time and way of its fulfilment in utter obscurity. Who could possibly have divined these until it was accomplished? Go through the Scripture thus. The commands to Noah, to Abraham; all in the Law of Moses, or any others that follow. Mysteries there might be underlying; but the thing to be done was always too plain to leave any room for mistake to those to whom they were addressed.

Then of the teachings of the New Testament. If there be questions as to how to fulfil in the spirit the abrogated letter of the Law; if the Lord sometimes used figures, as of bidding mountains to remove; if He employed parables, to enforce principles of broad and general application; these present no difficulties which loving obedience may not solve. Such exceptions are as nothing to the prevailing rule of plain speaking whenever practical walk is involved.

But now turn to the Scriptures which speak of God's purposes regarding other ages and other people, and observe the contrast. Here, beyond a certain limit—to which we shall presently refer—no human ingenuity, no spiritual insight, could avail to form a clear conception of what these will prove to be in their accomplishment.

That it was so in the case of the prophecies already fulfilled, will be admitted by all. And in spite of the confidence with which each school may claim to give us certainty, experience too evidently shews how far off we are from the hope of formulating any clear conception of the circumstances, or the mode in which the unfulfilled prophecies shall be brought about, such as can commend itself to believers generally. The conjectures current as to these vary as much as the points of the compass.

Shall this make us sad? Or rather, seeing it, shall we seek the reason of it, and accept the lesson? "Beyond a certain limit" we said, these are thus obscure. Up to that limit, the pro-

phetic Scriptures, like the preceptive, are simple and clear. If we would but be content with that limit, we should find in them our profit and our blessing.

What then is the limit? It is the application of these truths to our present practical use. For example: In treating 1 Thessalonians iv. 14-17, as a matter merely of prophetic study, what endless controversy has it given occasion for! Take the whole passage, with verses 13 and 18 included, as a message of comfort to the bereaved, and the beauty and force of every word is so clear as to leave no room for difference of thought. The reason is evident. It was written for the latter purpose, not the former. Just so much, only so much is said, and said in such a way, as meets the case of those to whom it was addressed.

Examine every prophetic utterance in the New Testament, and see how far this rule holds good, Matthew xxiv., xxv., and their parallels, were needed to prepare the disciples for the desolation, rather than the deliverance, of Jerusalem at the approaching siege, and for the long period of tribulation before the Lord's return, when at last they would see Him coming in the clouds. For such a purpose this was given, and for that purpose nothing could well be clearer, either for them, or for us. Read these chapters only for prophetic study, and they are full of matter for controversy.

Look at other principal prophetic passages, 1 Thessalonians v., as an exhortation to watchfulness; 2 Thessalonians i. as an encouragement to the persecuted; chapter ii. as a corrective to the undue expectation of the Lord's immediate return;* 2 Peter iii. as keeping us in remembrance of the sure Promise. All there is as clear as we need to have it. Had the Holy Spirit intended us to know more exactly what persons or things 2 Thessalonians ii. refers to, it would not have been given us in such words that the most godly minds differ *in toto* when they attempt to explain or define them. 1 Corinthians xv. may perhaps be noted as an instance of a full exposition, *for its own sake*, of a great prophetic truth, the Resurrection. And here probably the allusion to the oft-quoted words of Psalm cx. 1 can be understood only as we

* In this reference to 2 Thessalonians ii. the writer does not distinguish between the "day of the Lord" and the return of the Lord Himself, but it does not affect the valuable practical teaching of the whole article.—ED.

see its bearing on that event. In this chapter the practical lesson at the close is given incidentally; whereas, in the other Scriptures referred to, the prophetic statements are rather the incidental, with a view to enforce their practical lessons.

The Apocalypse? Can it be said that the attempt to interpret this of other ages or peoples has given us a satisfactory result? Alas, for the fact! Need we dwell upon it? Yet it may safely be said that when it is taken as food for the soul and guidance for the walk, there is scarcely room for a shadow of disagreement. It is full of *comfort* to the unlearned simple believer who does not exercise himself in great matters or in things too high for him. How would those read it to whom it was originally addressed? They were John's "companions in the tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." And to such, all was living power, the thing they needed. Did they occupy themselves with questions as to how these things would fit to future generations? We should not be slow to blame their folly! Yet possibly we in our day are in no better position than they then were to settle these questions. One thing is evident, that if we have the means, we have failed to settle them. The Book thus studied is proverbially enigmatic and hard to be understood. But if we use its teachings to quicken faith and encourage hope, to nerve our strength for overcoming, and save us from backsliding and conformity to the world; ours will be the blessing of those that read, and hear, and *keep* what is written therein, "the word of His patience" (chap. iii. 10), though we may not "*understand*"—for *not* on this is the blessing pronounced.

In such application to our own needs, however great may be the variety of experience, there will be little room for mistake, and less for controversy. Ignorant as we may be—and as we are at the best—of what these may prove in their ultimate fulfilment, the real character and destiny of all around us is so unmistakably portrayed that in any age we may therefrom derive warning, instruction, or hope—lessons which we are in sad danger of letting slip while allowing ourselves to be diverted by speculations as to what may be in the future. If prophecy occupies the time that should be given to Gospel preaching or instruction in righteousness, if it

genders strife and debate rather than edifying in love, how great is our loss!

It may be said "We honour God by studying His Word to know His purposes. The prophets of old enquired and searched diligently what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow."

But to them it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they ministered these things. Of the coming Christ and the glories, enough was given them for their faith and hope. The *what*, or what manner of time, was not for them. Blessed be God! we know the sufferings of Christ and the glory He has entered into as an accomplished fact. And all we need to know, for our faith and hope, of the glories yet to be revealed is given to us. But, search as we will, the *what*, or what manner of time, is yet as dark to us as the future was to them in their day.

John xxi. 22 does not stand alone in its teaching. When Manoah (Jud. xiii.) must needs know further about the future of the promised son, the only answer he could get from the angel was, "All that I commanded her let her observe."

When to Daniel, the "greatly beloved," was revealed the time of Messiah's coming, and the subsequent destruction and desolation of Jerusalem, all beyond was left in obscurity. Of the last week we can at best, only conjecture. When afterward he was given a sight of what would befall his people under the Grecian kings, as it becomes more remote, and he anxiously enquires about the end, the answer is given in such terms that he has to confess "*I heard, but I understood not.*" He must go his way and rest—but he shall stand in his lot at the end of the days.

And when the disciples would know from the Lord "when these things should be," He says of all that goes beyond their own time, "of that day and hour knoweth no man." "It is not for you to know the *times* and the *seasons.*" Their part was to be His witnesses and wait till they see Him come again in the clouds of heaven.

Knowledge which will make us more godly, more watchful, patient, loving, Christlike—let us indeed cultivate it. To be "looking for that

blessed hope, the appearing of the glory" should surely do this for us. But of many of the questions now so earnestly discussed, we may well ask ourselves whether the knowledge of them would bring us any nearer to that goal?

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path." The lamp helps us to walk in safety step by step. The light shines around, and tells us where we are. What is a mile before us we may see to be there, but only when we come to it can we trace our way. As it still retires, still less can we discern; and the far distant hills are but a line of misty blue. There they are—but not for us yet. So it is with God's revelation.

It is for us to give heed to what our Master said to Peter, "Feed my lambs, my sheep," "Follow thou Me," and learn from His teachings how to do so. Of what He has hidden under dark sayings let us remember His word "What is that to thee?"

W. C.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

Replies are invited to the following:—

THE HIRE OF MINISTERING ONES.—Please explain Romans xii. 7, "Let us give ourselves to our ministry" (R.V.) also, 1 Timothy iv. 15, "Give thyself wholly to them," *i.e.*, the requirements of the ministry. Does this not indicate that ministers are not to have another business? Also 1 Timothy v. 18, "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

WHO WAS JOSEPH'S FATHER?—Could any explain why Joseph is said to be the son of Jacob in Matthew i. 16, while he is said to be the son of Heli in Luke iii. 23?

LEAVING FRIENDS AND LANDS FOR THE GOSPEL (Mark x. 29, 30).—Is this Scripture applicable to this dispensation and to the times in which we live, and if so in what sense is it to be understood?

LAYING UP TREASURE.—How are we to understand Matthew vi. 21? Does our Lord teach that we are not to add to earthly possessions, if so, what way are we to interpret 2 Cor. xii. 14, also 1 Timothy v. 8?

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21,

23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

SINS AFTER CONVERSION.

QUESTION 511.—Say if there is sin on us after we truly believe in Jesus. I know there is sin in us as long as life is in us.

Answer A.—Judicially, or in relation to law, and in the reckoning of God there cannot be. As children in the family of God, there may be, and too often is.

The one doctrine is treated of in Romans, chapters iii. to viii.; the other doctrine is treated of in 1 John i. 6 to ii. 2. In Romans, God is seen as the Moral Governor of this world, and man is seen as a subject under His righteous government; in 1 John, God is seen as "the Father," and the believer is seen as a child in His family.

In Romans iii. God appears first as the Judge and, as such, He stops every mouth, and brings in the whole world guilty before Him (verse 19). He then goes on to unfold His own perfect remedy for man's complete ruin; and, on the ground of the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, the Judge becomes the "Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (verse 26). On to the end of chapter v., it is the *guilt* of sin which is mainly treated and disposed of. In chapter vi., the believer is "reckoned" to have been crucified *with* Christ, and thus set free from the reigning power of sin. In chapter vii., the believer is said to have "become dead to the law by the body of Christ," and also, married to Christ, as He who was raised from the dead, and so ranks with Him in resurrection standing. In chapter viii., all creation is challenged to bring any charge against those whom God has declared righteous, on the ground of the death and resurrection of Him who is now at the right hand of God. Also, in Hebrews x. 14, we read, "For, by one offering, He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." So the believer can sing—

"Reach my blest Saviour first,
Take HIM from God's esteem,
Prove that HE bears one spot of sin,
Then tell me I'm unclean."

When we come to look at the believer as a child in the heavenly family, we are upon entirely different ground. It is not God as the Holy One dealing with man as a sinner, but God as a Father dealing with the believer as a child. First, we have the provision God has made for His children, with sin still dwelling in them being allowed to enter into, and walk in 'the

light of His presence (1 John i. 7). Then there is the injunction in chapter ii., not to sin; that is, not to allow the root of sin that dwells in us to act; but "if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins."

God could only justify a believing sinner on the ground of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ; and, as a Father, He can forgive a guilty child on no other ground. No sin in a child of God can ever affect his eternal perfection in Christ; but, if a believer do sin, he will be shut out of the Father's presence and, although still a child, can only get back into the light upon confession. On known sins being confessed, the Holy Spirit, on the ground of the advocacy of Christ, will lead the penitent child back into the light and joy of the Father's presence, and restore the link of fellowship which had been broken by sin.

G. A.

Editor's Note.—God could say concerning Israel, as His covenant people, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel" (Num. xxiii. 21). Yet, speaking to them, He could say, "For thou art a stiff-necked people . . . from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place ye have been rebellious against the Lord" (Deut. ix. 6-7).

According to God's reckoning, the believers at Corinth were "washed, sanctified, justified" (1 Cor. vi. 11)—no sin upon them in His sight. Nevertheless they are rebuked and chastened, weak and sickly, &c., because of sin committed.

Sin is not upon them as a condemning power, but just because of this they are called upon to cleanse themselves "from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. vii. 1).

CHILDREN PRAYING.

QUESTION 512.—What is the duty of parents toward their children when they are able to speak and have some knowledge of right and wrong, with regard to prayers and giving of thanks at the daily meal table, also before retiring to bed and on rising?

Answer A.—Though I can recall no Scripture specially for or against it, it seems to me that no Christian parent who knows the value of prayer will neglect to teach his or her children to pray, and also to pray for and with them. I was brought to the Lord at seven years of age, and my dear father went to be with the Lord in a few months; but, while memory lasts, I shall never forget his prayers for me (and for my sisters and brothers), and how as my own name was mentioned to God day by day, a feeling of solemnity came over my childish heart.

His prayers are all answered, for half of his

children are with the Lord, and the other half are, through grace, all on their way to Him.

Of how many Christian parents may it be said—"Ye have not because ye ask not?"

Answer B.—Children from their earliest years are apt to imitate what they see and hear, and are more influenced by what their parents are, than by anything they are taught orally. Hence the vital importance of parents striving by grace to be what they wish their children to become. If parents are reverently acknowledging God in their down-lying and uprising, and joyfully thanking Him for the daily mercies they receive from Him, the children will intuitively feel the power of their parents' godly example. Without this all other teaching will be comparatively useless. For a parent to teach a child to "repeat a prayer," or to "say grace" before meals, whilst that parent is living in practical neglect of prayer as enjoined in Scripture, can be productive of no good, and will probably do much harm. If children observe that their parents are in the habit of holding intercourse with God in secret, and if they are accustomed to hear their father, if he is at home, and their mother if he is not, pouring out their hearts in thanksgiving and prayer with and for their children, this will do more to lead them to acknowledge God for themselves than all other teaching put together.

At the same time teaching has its place. Proverbs xxii. 6 and Ephesians vi. 4 prove that parents are responsible to teach their children, as well as to set before them a godly example. The injunctions, "Train up a child in the way he should go," and "Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," imply prayerful, careful culture of the heart and mind. This embraces a great deal, but to speak directly to the question: I do not believe that to teach children to say prayers by rote can have a good effect on their spiritual well-being, but rather the opposite. They ought to be taught how very sinful it is to lie down and rise up without acknowledging the goodness of God, or to eat their food without giving thanks to Him who gave it; but it is a better way to help them to express their thanks in simple words which they can understand than to go through a form which may have little or no meaning to their young hearts. I know there are some who believe it is wrong to encourage children to speak to God at all until they give evidence of conversion; but whilst great care must be taken not to make hypocrites of children by teaching them to be religious without conversion, yet we must not go beyond the Scriptures. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise" (Mat. xxi. 16). If the hosannas of children were acceptable to the Lord Jesus, those who have to do with the training of the

little ones should seek to have their thoughts and convictions in harmony with His teachings and example.

In these remarks I have assumed that Christian parents will make the early conversion of their children the main object of all their parental education. G. A.

Answer C.—It is a sad fact that in many Christian households there is no such thing as family reading or prayers. In many cases parents seem to have no control over their children except by physical force. In some households it is impossible for the head, on account of his earthly calling, to be present at a suitable time to read and pray with his children, but the mother is mostly at home, and surely it is her sacred duty, as well as her happy privilege, to read to and instruct her children from the Scriptures (2 Tim. iii. 15), and to pray in simple words that they may understand. This, combined with a consistent life, cannot fail to make a lasting impression on their young minds.

I do not think it is right to force on children, as a religious duty, saying prayers; but to go to the other extreme, and not to teach them to acknowledge God, because they are not converted, is surely far wrong. I am not aware of any scripture that speaks of children praying, and one can hardly conceive of a family condition where there are none present at meals or bedtime able to pray "with the spirit and with the understanding also" (1 Cor. xiv. 15). A simple hymn committed to memory, or a few simple, suitable words, to repeat at meals or bedtime, might be useful; but let them clearly understand that "without faith it is impossible to please God."

Answer D.—Holy Scripture says: "But bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4). And the Lord says: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. xxii. 6). When we remember the early training of that man of God, Timothy, and watch the steadfastness and vigour of his subsequent faith and practice, and observe how closely his early home life and his later Christian life are connected in the life of the Spirit (2 Tim. i. 5 and iii. 14), we are deeply impressed with the incalculable importance of early habits. The cultivation of reverence for God and for His Holy Word is a most valuable matter in the training of children. Assuredly it is right to instruct the child about God, who giveth to *all* life and breath and *all* things—food, and clothes, and home, and every good—and to seek to beget a spirit of gratitude, and to teach expressions of thanks at every meal—thanksgiving to Him who provided the food, to teach them that God is not far from every one of us, and that He wishes them to feel after Him and find Him. Consequently, they ought

to look up to Him every morning and express thankfulness for the mercies of the night, and ask of Him preservation during the day, for He alone can preserve. Thus, also, at night, let them be instructed to see and acknowledge the good hand of God over them all day long, and look up to Him for the blessings of the night. These, we take it, are the foundation principles of the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The child will do well to be found in such habits and such ways whensoever he may be born again, and as he grows old. Although God often saves those who have gone terribly astray, their early history and early habits not unfrequently spoil and mar their whole subsequent life and history both as men and as Christians. God never makes little of the godly training of children, e.g., "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him. . . . That the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of Him" (Gen. xviii. 19). Again we listen to the withering, blighting, blasting message sent to Eli (1 Sam. iii. 13, 14), which stamped his family history with *Ichabod* deeply and indelibly impressed, "because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not." J. S.

Editor's Note.—God is Creator, and as such is worshipped in Rev. iv., whilst in Rev. v. He is worshipped as the God of redemption.

As Creator, He is "the Preserver (or Saviour) of all men, specially of those that believe"—"In Him we live, and move, and have our being"; "From Him cometh down every good and perfect gift."

Apart from the question of salvation and regeneration, it cannot be wrong to teach children that it is their duty to acknowledge God as Creator, Preserver, and Bestower of all good, at the same time instructing them as to their need and guilt as sinners, and God's love to them in and through Jesus Christ.

The result will be a spontaneous expression of thanks to God, or an appeal for preservation or deliverance, prayer or praise which, up to the measure of the child's knowledge, may be perfectly real. The child may or may not be helped to a suitable form of expression by the parent—the child's own language may be simplest and best.

But this is a different thing from teaching a child to say set prayers by rote, and so to allay by religious forms the uneasiness of conscience.

True it is written "they that are in the flesh cannot please God"—but it is one thing to be pleasing to God as a child and a servant, and it is another thing to acknowledge Him in that relationship in which He stands to all as Creator and Preserver and Bestower of all good.

[We have a large volume of answers to the question, "Who was Joseph's father?" We hope to take it up in our

THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

By THE EDITOR

MODERN Criticism with characteristic effrontery has sought to discredit the authenticity of the four Gospels, but especially the Gospel by John. Doubtless the occasion of special hostility toward it is the fact, that in it the Godhead and eternity of the only begotten Son of God are so prominently declared. The earliest year these "higher critics" will allow for its composition is A.D. 170, or 68 years at least after the departure of the apostle John.

But side by side with "modern criticism" other researches have been proceeding, resulting in discoveries of ancient monuments, inscriptions, and manuscripts all declaring to be facts, events which had been called in question by the critics and by Bible haters generally. That such testimonies and corroborations of the things most surely believed among us, are not necessary to that faith which is of God, is true. The opened eye needs no external testimony to convince it that the sun is shining. But they are ever welcome to the believing heart, for they show that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men," and that God in His own time and way will heap condemnation upon those who presume to judge His Word, instead of falling before it, in faith and adoration allowing it to judge them.

One of the most remarkable instances of the result of such researches is to be found in a book, entitled by its author the *Dia Tessarōn*, written by a man called Tatian, somewhere about A.D. 140 to 160.

Tatian was born in Assyria about A.D. 112, and grew to manhood in heathenism. He was evidently a wealthy man, and a traveller through many lands. He was skilled in many arts, learned in pagan philosophies, but dissatisfied with them all. "The more he studied their systems, the more he loathed the impurities of their gods, detested the cruelties of their worshippers, and felt contempt for the avarice and meanness of their priests and philosophers."

It was while in this state of soul, that by what seemed at the time to be a mere accident, but nevertheless under the ruling of an unseen hand, "I fell" he says, "upon certain barbaric books too old to be compared with the learning

of the Greeks, and too divine to be put on a level with their erroneous teaching."*

"Attracted by the simple sublimity of the Bible, which in his eyes contrasted strongly with the emptiness and boastfulness of the pagan philosophers, he soon became a convert to Christianity." Shortly afterward he became a disciple of Justin Martyr, whom he accompanied to Rome.

The Greek words *Dia Tessarōn* signify, "through the four." They were chosen by Tatian as characterising the work thus entitled. It consisted of a compilation, or consolidation, or verbal harmonising of the four Gospels.

The Gospel narratives are dovetailed into one, or interwoven into one consecutive narrative. But this work is so carried out, that no single word in any of the four Gospels is omitted, whilst words which occur in two or more of the Gospels are of course used only the once.

This work was originally executed by him in his native language, Syriac. But this must have involved, first, the mapping out of the whole in the original Greek, and then its translation from Greek into Syriac. The labour must have been enormous, and no one would by any possibility have undertaken it, unless he had himself received the four Gospels as inspired of God, every word being of incalculable value. And not only so, this work having been intended by him for regular public reading in the Christian assemblies—the very fact of his preparing such a work is proof that he knew the four Gospels, and not two or three of them only, were received and valued as the Word of God, in all churches of the saints.

It is therefore absolutely proved by this work, that all the four Gospels were known, and read, and esteemed by the Church generally, to be the very Word of God *long before* the date (say at latest, A.D. 160) when Tatian executed his *Dia Tessarōn*. What, then, becomes of the wisdom of the critics, who without a tittle of evidence assert that the Gospel by John was written by another hand, not earlier than A.D. 170?

As Tatian's object was that the whole of the scriptural records of the life of Christ should be publicly read in the assemblies, once every year, he divided his *Dia Tessarōn* in 55 long chapters.

And that it was very widely adopted, and so read and used by the preachers of that day as

* The Greeks applied the term "barbaric" to everything that was not Greek.

authoritative, is evident, for from the time of Tatian till A.D. 378 it was in constant use in all the churches of Syria, and Armenia, and Persia.

This work was so valued that it was translated at an early date into Latin. This is alluded to by Ebel Jesu (servant of Jesu), a bishop of the Nestorians, in the thirteenth century, thus, "When Tatian, a certain philosopher, had mentally grasped the meaning of the narratives of the Evangelists, and had understood the object of their divine work, he collected from the four of them that excellent work which he called the *Dia Tessarôn*, in which, whilst he most carefully followed the right order of the words and deeds of the Saviour, *he did not add a single sentence of his own*," and, indeed, not one sentence of explanation, or reconciliation, or interpretation from beginning to end. It was also translated from Syriac into Arabic, and from Arabic into Latin, and now for the English reader it is translated by a Mr. Hill into English from a Latin translation, made by an Italian named Ciasca, one of the librarians of the Vatican, and published in Paris in 1883. It is not translated from Syriac directly into English, for the reason that no Syriac copy is known to exist.

How the Syriac version came to be suppressed is a question of deep interest, and any who desire further information we refer to the book before us, and to which we are indebted for the foregoing interesting facts.*

Beautiful indeed is the simplicity of the man, who, though a philosopher evidently of no mean status, becomes so childlike and reverential that he would not add to his work one word of his own. In this way, after the lapse of 1600 years, he being dead yet speaketh, and effectually confounds the modern critics.

It is worthy also of note that with the utmost tenacity the pure Word of God was read regularly and systematically in the early churches. Assemblies from lack of this divine system of instruction are unduly dependent upon men, and greatly losers in breadth and grasp of the entire Scriptures. Especially is this so among poorer and less educated congregations. We need more faith in the power of the Word of God to do its own work through the Spirit, apart from human exposition.

* Tatian's "Dia Tessarôn and the Modern Critics," by Pastor Wm. Elliott. London: J. E. Hawkins. Glasgow: Pickering & Inglis.

THE SOUL WINNER.*

THIS is a volume of lectures and addresses by Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, on "that most royal employment" — soul-winning. Mr. Spurgeon was preeminently fitted to address God's people on such a subject, very few Christians having been so much used as he in winning souls for Christ. Anything, therefore, that he said, on such a theme, is worthy of our careful and prayerful consideration. Some of the chapters of the book were prepared as lectures for the students of the "Pastors' College;" whilst other portions of it were given in the form of addresses to open-air preachers, Sunday school teachers, and other Christian workers. We feel sure that the volume will be used of God, in instructing, encouraging, and helping all who long to be better equipped and fitted as soul winners.

The book is divided into fifteen chapters, and the following, among other subjects, are discussed:

"What is it to win a soul?" "Qualifications for soul-winning—Godward." "Qualifications for soul-winning—manward." "Obstacles to soul winning." "How to win souls for Christ." "The cost of being a soul-winner." "The soul-winner's reward." "The soul-winner's life and work." "Soul-winning explained." "Instruction on soul winning." "Encouragement to soul-winners."

Wise and weighty words are uttered on this most important subject. Mr. Spurgeon had a horror of flimsy and superficial preaching, and speaks thus on the point: "These people do not get a true healing, because they do not know the disease under which they are suffering; they are never truly clothed, because nothing is done towards stripping them. In many ministries there is not enough of probing the heart and arousing the conscience, by the revelation of man's alienation from God, and by the declaration of the wickedness and the selfishness of such a state." Amongst the

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SOUL WINNING

that he specifies are the following:—Humility, thorough earnestness, entire consecration to God, love, unselfishness, and tenderness. Speaking of personal godliness on the part of the

* "The Soul Winner; or How to Lead Sinners to the Saviour," by C. H. Spurgeon. Price, 3/6: to be had at Witness Office,

Gospel preacher, he alludes to an address delivered by Mr. George Müller, at Mentone—"It was just such an address as might be given to a Sunday school, by an ordinary teacher," he says, "yet I never heard a sermon that did me more good, and more richly profited my soul. It was George Müller in it that made it so useful. There was no George Müller in it in one sense; for he preached not himself, but Jesus Christ the Lord: he was only there in his personality as a witness to the truth, but he bore that witness in such a manner that you could not help saying, 'That man not only preaches what he believes, but also what he lives.' In every word he uttered, his glorious life of faith seemed to fall upon both ear and heart. I was delighted to sit and listen to him; yet for novelty or strength of thought there was not a trace of it in the whole discourse. Holiness was the preacher's force; and you may depend upon it if God is to bless us, our strength must be in the same direction."

PERSONAL TESTIMONY.

"Even if I were 'utterly selfish,' says Mr. Spurgeon, "and had no care for anything but my own happiness, I would choose, if I might, under God, to be a soul winner; for never did I know perfect, overflowing, unutterable, happiness, of the purest and most ennobling order, till I first heard of one who had sought and found the Saviour through my means. I recollect the thrill of joy that went through me! No young mother ever rejoiced so much over her first-born child; no warrior was so exultant over hard won victory. Oh! the joy of knowing that a sinner once at enmity has been reconciled to God, by the Holy Spirit, through the words spoken by our feeble lips. Since then, by grace given to me, the thought of which prostrates me in self-abasement, I have seen and heard of, not hundreds only, but even thousands of sinners turned from the error of their ways, by the testimony of God in me . . . It will be bliss beyond compare to meet in yon eternal seats those begotten of us in Christ Jesus, for whom we travailed in birth, till Christ was formed in them, the hope of glory. This is to have many heavens—a heaven in every one won for Christ, according to the Master's promise 'They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever'" (Dan. xii. 3).

Mr. Spurgeon doubtless understood dear old Samuel Rutherford's longings, as contained in the lines—

"And if one soul from Anworth
Meets me at God's right hand,
My heaven shall be two heavens
In Emmanuel's land."

CONCERNING "WINNING" SOULS

he remarks—"To win a soul is a much more difficult thing than to win a city. Observe the earnest soul-winner at his work; how cautiously he seeks his great Captain's directions to know when to hang out the white flag to invite the heart to surrender to the sweet love of a dying Saviour; when at the proper time to hang out the black flag of threatening, showing that if grace be not received, judgment will surely follow; and when to unfurl with dread reluctance the red flag of the terrors of God against stubborn impenitent souls. . . . We win by love. We win hearts for Jesus by love, by sympathy with their sorrow, by anxiety lest they should perish, by pleading with God for them with all our hearts that they should not be left to die unsaved, by pleading with them for God that for their own sake they would seek mercy and find grace. I believe that much of the secret of soul-winning lies in having bowels of compassion, in having spirits that can be touched with the feelings of human infirmities."

He was a firm believer in the power of the Gospel of God's matchless grace in breaking and melting the stoutest and hardest sinner's heart. In addressing a meeting of open-air preachers in the city of London he spoke as follows: "Believe in preaching the love of Christ, believe in preaching the atoning sacrifice, believe in preaching the new birth, believe in preaching the whole counsel of God. The

OLD HAMMER OF THE GOSPEL

will still break the rock in pieces - the ancient fire of Pentecost will still burn among the multitude. Try nothing new, but go on with preaching, and if we all preach with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, the results of preaching will astound us. Go on, go on, go on; in God's name go on, for if the preaching of the gospel does not save men nothing will. Salvation by the sacrifice of Jesus is the ultimatum of God. Rejoice that it cannot fail. Let us believe without reserve, and then go

straight ahead with the preaching of the Word." Amongst the "ways and means" of soul-winning mentioned by Mr. Spurgeon, he had great faith in

"BUTTON-HOLING,"

of which he speaks as follows:—"Let me commend to you, dear friends, the *art of button-holing acquaintances and relations*. If you cannot preach to a hundred, preach to one. Get a hold of the man alone, and in love quietly and prayerfully talk to him. 'One!' say you. Well, is not one enough? I know your ambition, young man; you want to preach here to these thousands. Be content, and begin with the ones. Your Master was not ashamed to sit on the well and preach to one; and when He finished His sermon He had really done good to the whole city of Sychar, for that one woman became a missionary to her friends. . . . We must school and train ourselves to deal personally with the unconverted. We must not excuse ourselves, but force ourselves to the irksome task till it becomes easy. Beloved, we must win souls; we cannot live and see men damned—we must have them brought to Jesus. O, then, be up and doing, and let none around you die unwarned, unwept, uncared for. A tract is a useful thing, but a living word is better. Your eye and face and voice will all help. Do not be so cowardly as to give a piece of paper where your own speech would be so much better. I charge you, attend to this for Jesus' sake."

The Metropolitan Tabernacle pastor had no sympathy with the

BROAD CHURCH

school of theology. Regarding the false liberalism and mock charity of the "down-grade" people he says some strong things. "Their theology," he asserts, "shifts like the Goodwin Sands, and they regard all firmness as so much bigotry. Errors and truths are equally comprehensible within the circle of their charity. It was not in this way that the apostles regarded error. They did not prescribe large-hearted charity towards falsehood, or hold up the errorist as a man of deep thought whose views were 'refreshingly original;' far less did they utter some wicked nonsense of there being more faith in honest

doubt than in half the creeds. They did not believe in justification by doubting, as our neologians do. . . . They were not such easy-going people as our cultured friends of the school of 'modern thought,' who have learned at last that the deity of Christ may be denied, the work of the Holy Spirit ignored, the inspiration of Scripture rejected, the atonement disbelieved, and regeneration dispensed with. And yet the man who does all this may be as good a Christian as the most devout believer! . . . From the pulpit they have taught that sin is a trifle. From the pulpit these traitors to God and to His Christ have taught the people that there is no Hell to be feared. The precious atoning sacrifice has been derided and misrepresented by those who were pledged to preach it. They have given the people the name of the gospel, but the gospel itself has evaporated in their hands. From hundreds of pulpits the gospel has clean gone, as the dodo from its old haunts, and still the preachers take the name and the position of Christ's ministers."

AN APPEAL TO CHRISTIANS.

Mr. Spurgeon's personal appeal is very searching. "I would like to press the inquiry upon you who are saved," he says, "*How many others have you brought to Christ?*" How many, did I say? Is it quite certain that you have led any to Jesus? Can you not recollect one? I pity you, then. The Lord said to Jeremiah concerning Coniah: 'Write ye this man childless.' That was considered to be a fearful curse. Shall I write you childless, my beloved friends? Your children are not saved, your wife is not saved, and you are spiritually childless. Can you bear this thought? I pray you, awake from your slumbering, and ask the Master to make you useful. Do tell the unsaved about Christ and things divine, and make this resolve, every one of you, that if men perish they shall not perish for want of your prayers, nor for want of your earnest and loving instructions. God give you grace, each one of you, to resolve by all means to save some, and then to carry out your resolution."

We earnestly hope and pray that "The Soul-Winner" may be abundantly used in stirring up "ambassadors of Christ" to be "instant in season, out of season," in beseeching and pleading with the perishing to be recon-

ciled to God. While our Lord delays His coming, let us buy up the opportunities, let us redeem the time, and tell out the old, old story in the ears of our fellow-travellers to eternity. Thank God, we still have

"A little while for winning souls to Jesus
Ere yet we see His beauty face to face,
A little while for healing soul diseases
By telling others of a Saviour's grace."

A. M.

THE MODEL PRAYER.—IX.

THE TWO-FOLD CHARACTER OF TEMPTATION.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, Wei-hai-wei, China.

WE now come to the request, "And lead us not into temptation." There is a difficulty in the form of this petition. Are we to pray absolutely to be kept from all temptation, or that the temptation may be so moderated that we will not be overcome by it? In all ages God has tested His people—witness His dealings with Abraham, Job, and the people of Israel. To be free from testing would assuredly not be for our highest good. But the Lord knows our creature weakness and natural shrinking from trial; it may be that He graciously descends to the same in putting this petition on our lips. This view of the matter would be in accordance with His own Gethsemane supplications, for all teaching on prayer assumes that the petitioner always means, "if it be according to the Father's will." I am inclined to believe that the petition may be paraphrased thus—"Bring us not into these circumstances where we would be in danger of falling an easy prey to the assaults of Satan." We will now consider the following three points—

I.—Temptations from God.

II.—From Satan.

III.—How they are to be met or overcome.

I.—TEMPTATION FROM GOD.

A superficial examination of the subject might lead us to fear that on this point the Bible contradicted itself (see Gen. xxii. 1; James i. 13). But since the whole is the Word of God we know that this cannot be. The word temptation is used in two senses; it

has both a good and bad meaning. The one is *tempting*, in our sense of the word, the other is *testing*. Satan tempts; God tests. Satan's object is to involve men in sin and misery; God's purpose is to strengthen, purify, and save men. Yet temptation and testing are closely related to each other, and even when speaking of God's discipline, sometimes one word is used and sometimes the other. If a man does not stand the testing it may end in sin; and when, by divine grace, Satan's temptations are overcome, much spiritual profit is the result.

It is the *Father* who tests us. He does it according to infinite wisdom and infinite love. He knows how much the vessel will stand. And yet it must be a real test or it will answer no purpose. So Abraham was tried severely, and at, seemingly, the weakest point—the love of a father for the son of his old age. But God knew His man. Faith triumphed and Jehovah was vindicated. So it is written, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear" (1 Cor. x. 13). A one-thousand horse-power engine is not put to the same test as a two-thousand. God knows us through and through, and can gauge what each one of us can stand.

Again, temptation endured does not leave us as it found us. When a railway bridge is completed it is tested with several times the strain it will usually have to bear. A gun comes out of the testing-room after being fired with two or three times the charge it is made to carry. But the bridge and gun are not a whit stronger after than before the testing. It merely proves that there is no flaw in the workmanship. Not so with us. Every temptation endured or overcome leaves a man stronger than before. The South Sea islanders are said to have believed that the soul of every enemy killed in battle entered into the one who killed him, and ever after he was so much the stronger. We are more than machines, and every temptation met and conquered leaves us with more power to cope with others yet to come.

Once more, temptations are of various kinds. James describes them as " manifold temptations." A trial suited to one character is of no use to another. The temptation that is adapted to one stage of growth is not suited to another.

The trial that helps in one set of circumstances would be valueless in a different set. "Knowing," says James, "the proof of your faith worketh patience." And Christian patience is more than a merely passive virtue; it is an earnest pressing forward in the paths of righteousness. The more varied the trials of life the more perfect the discipline. And God's purpose in all the testings is that we "may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing" (James i. 4). Character is many-sided, so "manifold temptations" are needed. We are tested by affection and coldness; by health and sickness; by prosperity and adversity; reverses of fortune; sickness and pain, whether of ourselves or others, all test us. The death of husband or wife, of parents or children, of friend or companion, are all used of God for the development of Christ-like characters. Some men are tested by prosperity. We seldom realise the danger of this, but that makes it all the more to be feared. Many a man who has stood well the tests of sorrow and loss has failed woefully when the sun of prosperity has again shone on his path. The man who, with Agur of old, truly prays, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," proves that he knows the hard discipline of life and his own proneness to succumb to temptation.

These temptings will never cease this side of heaven. Day after day, at home or abroad, alone or in company, in joy or pain, God carries on the work he has commenced. There is no relaxation of the discipline. He is training us for eternity, and while down here we are all scholars in the Lord's school, and, as one has said, "In the school of God there are no vacations." Every step upward and onward brings us within the range of other testings. Yet, bitter as the trials sometimes are, they are better, infinitely better, than to be left to take one's own way along the journey of life. But a true child of God never shall be so left. He learns to welcome sorrows and testings, since they teach more of God's grace and wisdom, and make him, in heart and life, more like his Lord.

OF "WITH the Lord thy God," who was the only One prominent in the bundle of life" (1 Sam. xvi).

JOTTINGS FROM ADDRESSES ON

THE KINGDOM.

PART II.

BY ALEXANDER STEWART.

ELI, that is, the priesthood, fails; Samuel, the prophet, fails in his sons, and then comes Saul, the king—just the kind of king they wanted; a grand man—head and shoulders above the rest. But it was "a fair show in the flesh" from beginning to end. But when there was a Philistine army to be conquered they needed another man. David was brought. I notice that typically Saul came before David. So as regards the earth, Anti-christ must come before Christ. First, the king after man's heart, as Christ says, "If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John v. 43). Then comes the king after God's own heart, His blessed Son.

First Saul, and then David, because it was when Saul had failed that God, who always has a resource, brings forward this ruddy and beautiful youth. Why was he the man after God's own heart? I cannot tell, unless it was just this, that when things went wrong David always went to God, just like a child to its mother. Do you remember the last verse of Psalm cxix, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant." After all, I am the sheep, and He is the shepherd—thus constantly David found His resource in God. God put David on the throne. After him came Solomon and a short climax of earthly prosperity—then followed quickly the decadence of the kingdom.

The Devil always has his wedges ready. A split came. Ten tribes are divided from two. The ten tribes pass off the scene by-and-by, and then the two go into captivity. A remnant return, and, historically, the next that is recorded is (Matthew i.), the birth of the Son of God under the rule of Rome. What is the book of Matthew about? Read the opening words: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." But I should have asked "*Whom?*" not "*What is the book about?*" Yes, it is the book and the Person. God's revelation is a book revelation. He said to Moses, "Write in a book," and to John, "The things which thou hast seen write in a book." It is about a Person. "Lo, I

come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me" (Psalm xl. 7). "He expounded to them in all the Scripture the things concerning Himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). This book of Matthew is the book of the generation of that great person called Jesus Christ. Who is He? He is son of David; son of Abraham. First of all, being son of Abraham, He is a Jew, an Israelite. But he also comes of the royal line in Abraham's family; He is "son of David."

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem wise men came from the East to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He that is born king of the Jews?" In this verse we are in royal atmosphere. At the two terminal points of His life He is known under this title. Here, He is "born king of the Jews"—thus He came into this world, and as He went out of it the title on the Cross was, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." He is Head of the Church, which is His body; and He is Lord and Master of the individuals who compose that body. Of whom, then is He king? In the first place, He is "King of the Jews," and His sceptre will also be over all nations, even to the ends of the earth.

The Jews at this moment are just like Cain—his hands red with his brother's blood—as they said, "His blood be upon us and on our children." But God set a mark on Cain that none should destroy him. Look at the Jew—He cannot be destroyed! America is the melting-pot of the nations. Englishmen, Scotsmen, Germans, Scandinavians all go there to settle, and in a very short time they are assimilated, levelled down, and resolved into Americans. But the Jew cannot be assimilated, dissolved among the nations of the earth, or stamped out so as to be lost. They are the monumental nation, let infidels say what they may. There are ten millions of them scattered in all nations, and there is their country waiting for them, as they are waiting for it. But they cannot get it, because the set time to favour Zion has not yet come; but it will come.

In Isaiah ix. 6, "Unto us a child is born." Who is the "us?" This is "the vision that Isaiah saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem" (Isaiah i. 1). "Unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder . . . of the increase of his government and peace

there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even for ever; the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Whoever is slack and lukewarm, the Lord is not slack in this matter.

In Luke i., where the announcement is made to Mary, all that was told her concerning the birth of a son came to pass literally, exactly as it was told her. This also is literal, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father, David, and He shall reign over the house of Israel for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Now turn to Revelation iii. 21—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me upon My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne." Here are two thrones. While I am speaking Christ is on His Father's throne. By-and-by He is going to be on His own throne, *i.e.*, "the throne of His father, David," and "the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

It takes David and Solomon combined to make up a type of the Lord Jesus in that Kingdom which is to come. David was "a man of war," and first had to deal with enemies and clear the field of them. After that came Solomon, displaying the glory of the kingdom, and reigning over a blessed people in righteousness and peace. First of all, when the Lord Jesus comes to take the kingdom, He comes as the man of war. He takes it by judgment. After that He reigns in peace over the house of Israel, and to the ends of the earth. Judgment first, then peace; that is always the order. God first kills, and then afterwards gives life. He first brought us under condemnation, and then afterwards released us by His salvation. Looking along the line of prophecy, the first thing that must happen (not speaking of the coming of the Lord for the Church) is the judgment of Israel and the nations—it will be a short work, but a sure work. I once saw an awe-inspiring sight—Niagara, a great mass of waters rolling over into the rapids below, then spreading out into a broad and peaceful river. This is just like what God is going to do. A short, but terrible period of judgment, and then a long and

blessed time of peace—that is the millennial kingdom.

I would like to say as to this kingdom that perhaps sufficient emphasis has not been laid upon its spiritual character. Generally, in Scotland, people have believed in a spiritual reign, and expected the Gospel to fill the earth. But it is the King first, and then the kingdom. A personal, visible, bodily appearing of Christ. That, no doubt, is the doctrine of the Word. But there is also to be a great spiritual accompaniment, a great effusion of the Holy Spirit connected with that reign, for the earth cannot be filled with the knowledge of the Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Read Ezekiel xxxvi. 22-27. That is what Nicodemus ought to have known—about the “water and the Spirit.” Nicodemus had forgotten Ezekiel xxxvi. *It is there as plainly as in the third of John*—the sprinkling of clean water and putting the Spirit within them. Even the Jew, in the coming day, to enter the kingdom must be born again. Not only will they be nationally a gathered people, but to come into the kingdom they must be a spiritually renovated people.

What about the Gentiles? The Word goes out to them; a gracious, renovating, quickening Word. As the Lord Jesus is personally reigning over the nations the Word of the Lord goes out in the power of the Spirit, and thus a “born-again” people are brought into the kingdom.

A good deal has been said, and truly said, about the Jews going as missionaries to the nations. We are told at the end of the prophet Isaiah that they are going to the isles afar off, and to declare His glory among the Gentiles. But in Isaiah ii. there is another view of the matter (read vs. 1-3). Not only will there be peace—swords beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning-hooks—but there will be large numbers of people who will not need missionaries to go to them. When our blessed Lord Jesus Christ is on the throne of David, and God has fixed His earthly centre at Jerusalem, there will be a mighty attractive power in the Son of God. The people will go up to Him. Like as the Queen of Sheba went up to Solomon, attracted by the report she heard of His wisdom and glory, so will they be attracted to God’s king. Then will be

fulfilled (Psalm lxxii.). Also, Psalm c., “All people that on earth do dwell”—a millennial Psalm—will be appropriate then.

TWO CLASSES WORTH MARKING.

“MARK them that cause divisions and offences *contrary* to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them” (Rom. xvi. 17, 18). There *may* be divisions necessary, if we would keep the faith as pure as when first delivered, and against *such* divisions the Word of God has nothing to say, but *let them first be proved*, for divisions that the doctrine demands can always be plainly proved by the doctrine *itself*. A division that is built on the *faults of men*, rather than on the *truth of God*, and afterwards bolstered up by wrested scriptures, is certainly *contrary* to the doctrine, and it need not surprise us if the baseless structure should fall upon the heads of its promoters. What is our attitude towards such dividers? We are to *mark them*, and *avoid them*. “They serve *not* our Lord Jesus Christ, but their *own* belly.” What a contrast this is to those we are to “*esteem highly* in love for their work’s sake” (1 Thess. v. 13). *Esteeming* and *avoiding* are two very different things.

“Mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample” (Phil. iii. 17.) In this world there are those who *talk*, and there are those who *walk*. Our responsibility is to discern between *empty talkers* and *holy walkers*. Do we ever find the apostle Paul figuring as a leader of division? Never. We find him once separating the disciples from the synagogue (Acts xix. 9), but never once separating *disciples from disciples* as the manner of some is to-day, and *glorifying* in it, as if they were doing God’s service. Brethren, set a mark, aye; and let it be a *deep* mark, on these two classes of men. *Avoid* the one class, and *follow* the other. Concerning a recent movement, a sister said to me: “My *head* held the theory of it, but my *heart* refused to follow it.” May we never go anywhere, if we require to leave our hearts behind us. T. B.

If a brother for a moment forgets that he is an heir of heaven, let me not forget it—in dealing with him. In his darkest moments let me see him in a heavenly light.

THE LORD'S TABLE.

TO Thine appointed table, Lord,
 Comes each invited guest,
 According to Thy gracious word
 We come, and we are blest.
 We bring no merit of our own—
 Thy blood our plea, and Thine alone.

With sins confessed and put away,
 We gather round Thy feet,
 Thy last commandment to obey,
 With homage, O so sweet!
 While faith triumphant lifts her eyes
 Above the earth's obscurities.

Lord Jesus Christ, thus met, we claim
 Thy promise to be here
 With those who gather to the Name,
 Than any name more dear;
 And in these emblems we would trace
 Thy purposes of sovereign grace.

O send Thy Spirit's hallowed fire
 That every lip may praise,
 That He with utt'rance may inspire
 Each heart redeemed to raise,
 Joined in true fellowship as one,
 Its glad thanksgiving to the throne.

J. W. M'CLURE.

REFLECTIONS ON THE EPISTLE
TO THE ROMANS.CHAPTER V.—*Continued.*

"HOPE maketh not ashamed." He who leans on the promises of grace will not give up in despair; the anchor holds in the storm; the straining of the cable tells him that all is safe, although the severe tension is the result of a tempestuous hurricane and rolling seas. When everything around seems most wrong, an inmost consciousness prevails that all is most right. True, the child of faith is for a season incarcerated in a body of humiliation and mortality; but he is a prisoner of hope, and he turns to his stronghold!

THE REASON OF HIS CONFIDENCE

is given in the verses that follow: "Because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," &c. The love of God—His love for

us, not ours to Him—is the great encouragement and stimulant to hope. Our love to Him is, at best, but a flickering flame, rendered unsteady and poor under the influences of earth; a miserable basis for hope to rest upon. But we have known and believed "the love which God hath to us." The Holy Ghost hath revealed it to us; He shed it into our souls like a fruitful and refreshing shower, even as the rain which blesses and strengthens the tender plant (vs. 1-5).

THE PROOF OF GOD'S LOVE,

given in vs. 6-10, in which the expression "*the love of God*" is expanded, will allow of no other interpretation thereof but that it is His own love to us. For it is that love which came to our rescue when we were "without strength," helpless to respond to the righteous demands of the law, the fulfilling of which was a perfect love to God and our neighbour. It is that love which led Christ to die for the ungodly, so unlovable and unloving because so helpless through the evil of their hearts. It is that love which God commends to us as far surpassing the greatest demonstration of human love or esteem.

IT IS KNOWN BY ITS DEEDS

of kindness to usward, for by that love God advanced toward us when we were enemies, and brought us to Himself in holy reconciliation; by that love He delivered us from wrath through the blood of His Son; by that love we are sustained in eternal acceptance and safety in the power of Christ's endless life. Yes, this is the love which assures us that our hope shall never be put to shame. Even when conscious of backsliding and failure there is that in the remembrance of His love that forcibly recalls and restores us. The atmosphere of this love is the presence of God. The genial warmth and fragrant odours of that atmosphere tell that He is very near—*very, very near*. A beloved sufferer once said in our hearing, "I thank Thee, Lord Jesus, that Thou hast come so *close, so very close*, that I have put my hand in Thine, and Thou hast taken it, and thou wilt never, never let it go."

This brings us now to consider the third aspect of our joy:

"WE ALSO JOY IN GOD."

through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom

we have now received the reconciliation" (v. 11). This is the topmost pinnacle of joy. The human soul was made for God, and nothing can ever satisfy it but Himself; estranged by the fall from Him, the only source of real joy, its consequent state of wretchedness and misery is summed up in one expression, "*without God.*" But He came forth in the Person and work of the eternal Son to redeem us to Himself, and thus restore to the human soul its proper and only joy. The God of Eden was the joy of Eden; but that same God is now more fully, intimately, and happily made known to believing hearts than ever our first parents knew Him in Eden.

THE SUBSTITUTIONARY WORK OF CHRIST
in atonement for the guilt of fallen humanity has opened up to us the great treasury—in time past a hidden treasury—of the love of God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and not imputing their trespasses unto them." The Cross is the grand, sublime argument, unanswerable, that God is love. Can anything be more deeply touching and heart-winning than to see the God against whom we had sinned deal in judgment with that divine and blessed Person, the brightness of His glory, about that selfsame sin of ours? How could we rejoice in Him whom we knew not? And how can we know Him so truly as in the cross of His dear Son? May I say with all reverence that

GOD'S FIRST IMPULSE
after man's first sin was love, deep and tender, and worthy of Himself. He who was dishonoured and wronged stepped forth to bless, and was the first to propose the sinners' salvation in that very garden where they had sinned. Oh, it is wonderful—wonderful! Those who pass away into eternal perdition do so in the face of this great overwhelming fact, that love is reached out to them only on earth, and its very righteousness forbids the condemnation of any who will accept it; but that love has *never* an annihilation nor a *post-mortem* redemption to alleviate or terminate the horrors of its rejection—its very righteousness forbids such. Let none be deceived about this. The would-be "love of God" which universalism seeks to preach is as false as the source whence it emanates; it is the "tradi-

tion" of one of the oldest "fathers" on record—the father of lies, though (see Genesis iii.).

GOD'S LOVE COULD NOT SLUR OVER SIN.

In face of God's love, the sinner was at enmity with Him. Reconciliation was essential to salvation. Enmity had to be slain. But how? By the Cross. Was there any enmity in God toward man? Certainly not; God never was our enemy; but righteousness demanded satisfaction, and the enmity was all in man. True, the Scripture says that "God is angry with the wicked every day," but it never says that He is their enemy. Nay, but when He has to speak of judgment through His servant Jeremiah, the language is, "I am pained at my heart." No doubt eternal wrath, in all its horrors, must fall upon the wilful Christ-rejector and evil-doer, but that is when all mercy has been spurned. We fully accord to those who maintain that God never could be reconciled to sin; but we are as fully persuaded that what Scripture teaches is that the sinner needed to be reconciled to God because the enmity was all on the sinners' side.

ONLY A RECONCILED SOUL CAN REJOICE
IN GOD.

When Jesus is known and trusted as the only object of faith—the all-in-all for conscience and heart; when through the power of His peace-speaking blood all guilty fear has vanished, and the enmity is abolished; then God is known—so sweetly known—in His dear Son in whom that happy reconciliation has been received. One look—one tender inclination of the heart to Christ as Saviour—one moment—and it is done, and the happy spirit can bask in the glory of that light and sing—

"My God, the spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights."

The Lord permitting, we will close this fifth chapter in our next paper, with the two headings of Adam and Christ.

(To be continued),

THREE THINGS "LAID UP" FOR BELIEVERS.

- I. Laid-up Goodness.....Ps. xxxi. 19.
- II. Laid-up Hope.....Col. i. 5.
- III. Laid up Crown.....2 Tim. iv. &

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THERE are two ordinances, and only two, which the Lord has left for our observance—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Both speak of death. Baptism is the symbol of our death with Christ. "In that He died He died unto sin once." We who have life in Him are dead with Him. His death is our death out of our former states, in the first Adam, altogether. We are, therefore, baptised unto His death. And as He does not need to die again, baptism does not need to be repeated. The fact of being dead with Christ abides ever true for the believer. Being partaker in the risen life of Christ, he has part in the death of Christ. Christ being our life, the death He passed through is our death. This is declared by us, in figure, by baptism unto His death. Now we live beyond death, and can never die, so baptism is not repeated.

We need to remember, however, that it is *we* who have died; not that the flesh, or sin in us has died, but that we have died to it. It is not, then, our own actual death, though reckoned to be so by God, but Christ's death that is ours. We are to "reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin and alive to God, in Christ Jesus" (Rom. vi. 11, R.V.). In this passage we have the first mention, in the epistle, of the words, "in Christ Jesus." *How* we are "in Christ" is explained in Romans v. 12-21, the consequences following from it in Romans vi. to viii.

But the Lord's Supper was given us by the Lord Himself for constant repetition—a memorial of Himself in death for us; a truth which cannot be too frequently brought before our hearts and consciences. Not only is it true that "he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life," but also, "he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him" (John vi. 54-56). He is first the source of life, and then the continual support and supply of it. This is the reality for faith of which the Supper is the symbol. It is, therefore, a continuous observance of it "until He come." Christ is our life, and then He is the food of everyone abiding in Him. To such the Lord's Supper is an occasion of ever-increasing preciousness, a special season of remembrance of the Lord.

It was first instituted by the Lord on the night of His betrayal, after the Passover had been eaten; which feast was thenceforth to be displaced by it. And, unlike baptism, of which no further revelation was made after the Lord's ascension, it was again communicated to the Church by the Lord in glory, through Paul, in connection with the truth of which Paul was the special vessel of revelation and inspiration, that of the unity of the Church, the body of Christ, because of her union with her risen Head. All the truth about the Supper had not been revealed by the Lord when on earth, as we shall see as we consider it.

There are two aspects in which to view the Lord's Supper. First, that which it signifies to us—what its meaning is in itself. Second, that which we signify, or do, in partaking of it*.

Of the loaf the Lord said, "This is My body which is given for you." The Lord thus places before the eyes, and in the midst of His gathered saints, the symbol of His dead body. The blood is separate from it, therefore it is Himself in death which is brought before us in the loaf. How solemnising, as we surround His table, to be thus brought into the presence of so great a reality as the Lord's death. It is not as He now is that we remember Him, but as He was; it is a calling to mind of Himself when He was in death for us. He for whom it was no robbery to be equal with God, for He was God, not only became a man, but, when found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself even unto death, and that the death of the Cross, bearing our curse and sin and shame, made sin for us, and forsaken of God, because of our sins. With all this before Him on the night in which He was betrayed, He said, "This is My body given for you, this do in remembrance of Me."

The first thing, therefore, in the Supper is that it is a remembrance of the Lord, not only what He has done for us, but of Himself. There will be, according to spiritual growth, different measures of apprehension and knowledge of Christ. We first know Him as our sin-offering, who bore our sins for us. Our

*To any young believers who may read this I would suggest going over all the Scriptures which speak of the Lord's Supper, and putting down on paper what you learn about it under these two heads. It will assist greatly to understand its meaning. Exercise of soul is needed lest it become an unmeaning ordinance, and we fail to discern the Lord's body.

need first occupies us, and what meets it. Then we pass on to feed upon Him as our peace-offering as well, not giving up the first, but adding this to it. And, still further, we see Him as the burnt-offering, His own perfection and sweet savour, in offering up Himself. Besides which there was His life—the meat-offering. His spotless life and perfect work—all the way to the Cross—the One in whom the Father found all His delight. He was always the obedient and dependent One, guided by the written Word, doing nothing apart from the leading of the Spirit. He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. He was always filled with the Spirit and He whom God sent spake the words of God, and always did the things which pleased Him. It is our food and sanctification to remember Him, and to follow Him in spirit, as we remember Him at His table, down into death itself.

There is sweet significance in the Lord giving us the bread as the symbol of His body. It is what He is to us spiritually. "I am the bread of life, he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life; I am that bread of life." "This is the bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John vi.). As bread sustains the natural life, so Christ is the One by whom we live spiritually. Apart from Him all is death. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you" (John vi. 53). This is what the believer does by believing on Him, and of which the Lord's Supper is the figure.

There is no efficacy whatever in either baptism or the Lord's Supper, but when that which they signify is spiritually realised, there is much profit and blessing to our souls in observing them. They are the outward declaration of what is spiritually true of the believer only. Man, led and deceived by Satan, appropriates the figures and ascribes the efficacy to them which belong only to the reality. Baptism

made to be a means of regeneration and the Lord's Supper a sacrificial offering for sin! Marvellous ingenuity of Satan, to thus hide the reality by means of the very ordinances which signify it; and marvellous blindness on man's part to be so deceived!

But God has opened our eyes, so that when we hear Him say, "This is My body," faith looks beyond the figure to Him who speaks, and hears His words, "the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Precious Saviour, we receive from Thine own hands the memorial of Thy body in death for us, and

"With joy and sorrow mingling
We thus remember Thee."

Of the cup the Lord said: "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28). This is the other part of our salvation. Eternal life in Him could not have been given to us except as He was also "the propitiation for our sins." The two things necessary for salvation in every dispensation are eternal life and propitiation. These are brought before us in the bread and the cup. In order to give us life He had to go into death. God could not quicken us unless a righteous ground had been laid to forgive us our trespasses (Col. ii. 13). New birth is therefore salvation, because it carries forgiveness with it. The bread and the cup are both ours. We could not have one without the other. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, *that we might live through Him*. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son the *propitiation for our sins*" (1 John iv. 9, 10). On the one hand, we "must be born again"; and on the other hand, "the Son of Man *must* be lifted up." Thus eternal life and forgiveness go together, because life is in the One who died for us. The bread is therefore His Person—Himself; and the cup, His work.

It is the "blood of the new covenant." A covenant not as the old one, dependent upon man's obedience for its accomplishment; but founded upon the blood of propitiation, its blessings are all ours. He is the Mediator of the new covenant, so that they which are called

receive the promise of eternal inheritance. It purges the conscience and gives boldness for entering into the holiest (Heb. ix. 14, 15; x. 15, 19).

J. J.

(To be continued.)

MAN'S DAY.

(1 Cor. iv. 3, margin.)

IT will, on examination, be found that the word here translated "judgment" occurs in this epistle some seven times, and in every case but one this is rendered "day." If the translators had given us translation merely, and not interpretation, they would have so rendered it in this instance also. In the passages referred to, it is used in two different senses—literally, as in 1 Corinthians x. 8, xv. 4, 31; and prophetically in the following, 1 Corinthians i. 8, iii. 13, iv. 3, v. 5. "Man's day" is not, therefore, a literal day; neither does it refer to individual man's brief life, or to his history on the earth; but to man's history between the fall and the coming of the Lord "to judge and make war" (Rev. xix. 11). It is, therefore, between those two points of time it is running its weary course. Just as a small piece of fine gold will, when skilfully beaten out, cover a comparatively large surface; so it is with many a brief statement found in Scripture, which, when opened up by the Holy Spirit's teaching, will be found to cover ages in their duration, and contain within themselves volumes of history. Such is the phrase, "Man's day." It will cover thousands of years in its duration, and will be the longest of any prophetic period having a relation to the present earth. It may here be said that the "end of the age" will witness its close (Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49).

Two points in relation to this period invite our attention, viz. :—

I. God testing man, and

II. Man judging God.

It was the good will of God when He had created man in His own image and likeness to apply to him the following test, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it" (Gen. ii. 17). There can be no reasonable doubt that this test was in order to show man really what he was, viz., *self-willed*. Under the tempting power of "that old serpent the devil," both the man and the woman dis-

obeyed God, proving their self-will; falling from a state of innocence, and acquiring an inner experience of good and evil. Man was now left to himself with conscience; a judge of actions under which he was soon proved to be *corrupt*. So utterly so, that judgment soon fell upon him. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually . . . all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. vi. 5, 12). Because of what man had become and done, God sent the flood and "swept them all away." Eight alone were saved. What man was then, so is he now. Self-willed and corrupt is man to-day. Next, one out of all the nations of the earth was, by God, placed under the written moral law, which law was a touchstone used to bring out what was really in man. Not that He forced His law upon the nation. He declared His law, and the nation, through its rulers, said, "All the words which the Lord hath said, will we do" (Exod. xxiv. 3). But soon afterward they turned to idolatry; they worshipped the "similitude of an ox that eateth grass" (Psalm cvi. 19-22). They thus proved themselves *lawless*. That same spirit is in man universally; the "spirit of lawlessness" is working in him to-day as much as ever, and will culminate in the Lawless One.

The final test which God applied to man was His Son. Instead of reverencing and loving Him, they hated and slew Him. There was no cause for hatred in Him; so far as He was concerned it was causeless. "They hated me without a cause," were His own words. Causeless hate would seem to be worse than self-will, corruption, or lawlessness. Thus, as we see, God has by various tests proved what man is. He is no longer on "probation." He is not morally and spiritually capable of "improvement," for he is "guilty" before God—"afar off" from Him—"alienated from Him," too. He is under "wrath," being "condemned already," in one word, he is as "lost." Such is man's state and condition before God; and until such is fully and unreservedly acknowledged, what hope can there be of salvation? None whatever. He must know and acknowledge his need before he can have it met. He must repent of his deeds before he can have forgiveness.

MAN JUDGING GOD.

Paul was a minister of Christ, and a steward of the mysteries of God, sent to Corinth to preach the Gospel. His preaching, which was not in human wisdom, but in the power of the Spirit, resulted in the salvation of many, and the formation of a Church upon which were bestowed many gifts. There were some in this Church led on by a self-seeking, self-appointed teacher of the Distrophian stamp, who himself was actuated, like all such, by feelings of jealousy; were judging the Apostle. His body came in for censure. "His bodily presence is weak," said they. His speech also was condemned, for they said it was "contemptible" (2 Cor. x. 10). Even his apostleship was denied (1 Cor. ix. 1). He treated all that wickedness very lightly, as we learn from his words to them, "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's day: yea, I judge not mine own self." Blessed indeed are those servants of God who can in perfect calmness of soul leave the judgment of the service and life with Him who will judge righteous judgment. With such, human judgment will indeed be "a very small thing." It was the spirit of the "present evil age" which had, through carnally-minded men, been introduced into the Church at Corinth, and which found expression in thus judging Paul. How often to-day have we seen this same evil spirit manifesting itself under the hypocritical plea of "judging evil," in its stimulating zeal "cutting off" wholesale, men and women of blameless life, and for no other reason than they could not, with a good conscience, pronounce some sectarian "shibboleth," whilst in some cases, all the time, such sins as drunkenness, dishonesty, and uncleanness were allowed, unjudged, slowly to fester their way to the surface. The spirit of the world is, in things spiritual, quite willing to "condemn the guiltless" and to "justify the wicked," and some of God's people even have been embued with it. Man is ever judging God. In His *creation*, in which His wisdom, power, and divine beneficence are all gloriously displayed. In His *providence*, in which He is ever working for the greatest good of the majority. In His *government*, too, He comes in for judgment from those who would laugh at you did you affirm your belief that the "powers that be are

ordained of God," but who would, at the same time, dilate upon the sovereign will of the sovereign people. He is, too, sitting in judgment upon God in despising His *revelation*. Even some who claim to be "ministers of religion" are loud in their denials of the inerrancy of His holy Word. Christians need not be surprised when they find such get the "ear" of the crowd, for they simply voice the mind of the majority who chose them as their teachers. In all such is fulfilled the words, "The time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside into fables" (2 Tim iv. 3, 4, R.V.) He, too, is condemned by man through His beloved Son. Not merely by the coarse jests and blasphemies of those who have well-nigh lost every sense of shame, but by the intellectual and educated, who, in rounded periods and polished sentences, deny His Deity, refusing to believe that "He is the true God and the eternal life" (1 John v. 20).

Men reject God in refusing His *salvation*. In condemning it they condemn Him. Some because, in their own estimation, they don't need it—they were never "lost;" others because they can save themselves. Some, again, because they trust in man to save them, or to humanly-invented "sacraments" for salvation, whilst they, one and all, reject His "salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

How awful is all this! How great is man's wickedness, and how terrible must the doom be of all who, whilst "condemned already," sit in judgment upon God! For are they not in hardness and impenitence of heart treasuring up unto themselves "wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. ii. 5, 6). Such is the character of "man's day," which began by Satan judging God, and leading the parents of the race to do the same, and which will be suddenly closed by the manifestation of Christ as the judge of the living and the dead. It is the first day of God's prophetic week.

J. H. I.

To be a child of God is a great blessing but a small attainment.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press. THE EDITOR.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

THE HIRE OF MINISTERING ONES.—Please explain Romans xii. 7, "Let us give ourselves to our ministry" (R.V.) also, 1 Timothy iv. 15, "Give thyself wholly to them," i.e., the requirements of the ministry. Does this not indicate that ministers are not to have another business? Also 1 Timothy v. 18, "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

LEAVING FRIENDS AND LANDS FOR THE GOSPEL (Mark x. 29, 30).—Is this Scripture applicable to this dispensation and to the times in which we live, and if so in what sense is it to be understood?

LAYING UP TREASURE.—How are we to understand Matthew vi. 21? Does our Lord teach that we are not to add to earthly possessions, if so, what way are we to interpret 2 Cor. xii. 14, also 1 Timothy v. 8?

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21, 23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

WHO WAS JOSEPH'S FATHER?

QUESTION 513.—Could any explain why Joseph is said to be the son of Jacob in Matthew i. 16, while he is said to be the son of Heli in Luke iii. 23?

Answer A.—The apparent discrepancy between Matthew and Luke disappears if, on the authority of Bleek—cited by Godet in his work on Luke's Gospel—instead of limiting the parenthesis in chapter iii. 23 to the words, "as was supposed," we extend it, making the verse read as follows: "And Jesus . . . (being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph) which was the son of Heli." That is to say, although Jesus was generally believed to be the son of Joseph, He was, in reality, "of Heli."

It seems evident that Luke gives us Mary's genealogy, and hence it is more than probable that Heli was her father. The omission of her name from the ancestral list is in harmony with the custom among the Greeks to trace their genealogies through the male representatives,

speaking of a man as the son of his father, not of his mother. So, in this instance, the Evangelist names *Heli* as the first male link in the chain of our Lord's maternal pedigree, the mother's name getting no mention.

According to Matthew, Matthan was the father of Jacob, who, again, was the father of Joseph; while Luke tells us that Matthat (identical, no doubt, with Matthan) was the father of Heli—Heli being, presumably, father of Mary. To speak of the Lord Jesus as "the son of Heli" would be in accordance with various Bible precedents, where one and another are called sons of their grandfathers. See, for example, Daniel v. 2 and 2 Samuel ix. 7. Compare also Matthew i. 8 with 1 Chronicles iii. 11, 12, where it will be found that Joram was at least the great-grandfather of Ozias (Uzziah) whom he begat. Godet says that in the Talmud, Mary, the mother of Jesus, is called the daughter of Heli (Chagig 77. 4). Assuming that this was so, then, while Jacob was Joseph's father, Heli was his uncle to start with, and after his marriage to Mary, his father-in-law as well.

D. R.

Answer B.—Let us carefully notice what is stated in the Scriptures referred to. "And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ" (Matt. i. 16). "And Jesus Himself, when He began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli" (Luke iii. 23, R.V.). Jacob begat Joseph. Jacob, therefore, was Joseph's father. Joseph became the son of Heli by virtue of his alliance with Mary, whose genealogy Luke gives, and this brings out another important point, namely, that Jesus was the son of Joseph in a similar legal sense—the Greek word *nomizo*, rendered "as was supposed" in our translations, meaning, literally, "to reckon as law."

H. M.

Answer C.—Among those who have diligently studied the genealogies recorded in the sacred Scriptures almost all agree that the genealogy written by Matthew is that of Joseph; and, except a minority, who conclude that the genealogy written by Luke is also that of Joseph, all are agreed that this genealogy is that of Mary. As Joseph and Mary were both descended from David, the genealogy of the one must coincide in a degree with that of the other; and this concurrence has led some to assert that both genealogies are Joseph's, and others to affirm that both are Mary's. Between the two, however, there is an important divergence—Joseph's lineage is traced by Matthew from David, through Solomon; Mary's is traced from David, through Nathan, the elder brother of Solomon; consequently Joseph derives his descent from Jeconiah (Jehoiachim); Mary her's from Neri. Now.

according to the word of the Lord by Jeremiah (chap. xxxvi. 30), no descendant of Jeconiah (Jehoiachim) would inherit the kingdom; so that Joseph, though of the blood royal, could not transmit a title to the kingdom. But this disqualification does not attach to the descendants of Neri, so that the legal right to the kingdom would be transmitted through Neri's descendant, Mary. Through His mother, then, our Lord is both son of David and heir to David's throne. He was "born king of the Jews." Further, according to Jewish law, descent must be shown in genealogy, not through a mother alone, but through the father. Accordingly, Joseph, by becoming the husband of Mary, and son-in-law of her father Neri, became, by law, son of Neri—a son-in-law standing, in genealogy, in the place of a son.

Moreover, betrothal among the Jews being so valid and sacred as to be virtually equivalent to marriage (see Deut. xxii. 23, 24), Joseph was virtually husband of Mary before the angel announced the then future birth of the Messiah; so that, before His birth, the Messiah was, according to law, son of Joseph; by actual conception, son of Mary—and, by "the power of the Highest," Son of God. J. O.

Answer D.—The discrepancies between the genealogies of Christ in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, have been a subject of sneers of infidels from the earliest times. But the truth is, that Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, descended from Solomon, whilst Luke gives the genealogy of Mary, the mother of Jesus, descended from Nathan, another son of David, by Bathsheba (1 Chron. iii. 5.) It was not the custom of the Jews to exhibit the genealogy of females as such, and therefore in Luke it is said, "Joseph the son of Heli," who was really Joseph's father-in-law, or the father of Mary. F. P. S.

Answer E.—1. Matthew could not (because writing for the Jews) trace the descent through Mary, because the names of women were not allowed to be introduced in the genealogies.

2. Luke writing for the Gentiles, has no such difficulty in tracing the descent through Mary.

3. Joseph was son-in-law of Heli—and Jesus was considered, according to law or custom, to be the son of Joseph, as he was considered to be the son of Heli.

4. Further note, that in the same genealogy, Salathiel (son of Jeconias), also was son-in-law of Neri.

5. Joseph and Mary were both descended from Zerubabel—Joseph from Abiud his eldest son (Matt. i. 13), Mary from Rhesa, the youngest (Luke iii. 27).

* See Greenwell's *Dissertations on the Harmony of the Gospels*, and Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature*.

6. In the person of Zerubabel, the two branches of David's family (those of Nathan and Solomon), were united by the marriage of Salathiel with the daughter of Neri. Thus Jesus united in Himself all the privileges of the whole family of David, being in very truth thus "The Son of David." A. W.

Editor's Note.—In addition to the genealogy in Matthew, we find Joseph is addressed by the angel as Son of David, see also Luke i. 27, also ii. 4; and was therefore of the royal house, though occupying an humble position in society.

That the Lord Jesus must also have been descended from David through Mary His mother, is evident to all who accept the Scriptures, from such passages as Acts ii. 30, connected with 2 Sam. vii. 12, Acts xiii. 23, Rom i. 3. The terms of these passages express more than the supposed or legal relationship which He bore to His reputed father Joseph, and must apply to His being born of the virgin. It is, therefore, hardly conceivable that His descent from David should not be traced through His mother, seeing that it was by her that He became "seed of David according to the flesh."

In the words of the angel to Mary (Luke i. 32), "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David," it is intimated that as her son, He was Son of David, and so heir of the throne. There are thus sufficient grounds, apart from the genealogical table of Luke, to regard the Lord Jesus as the Son of David through His mother.

With these references to a well-known and indisputable fact in view, the difficulties concerning the two genealogies, or any apparent discrepancies therein, become comparatively unimportant. Nevertheless we doubt not the above replies give the truth.

From the peculiarity of the Mosaic law, it became quite possible for one to be spoken of with perfect truthfulness and propriety as the son of two different persons. For example—Obed could have been called legally the son of Ruth's first husband, Mahlon or Chilion, whose inheritance and property became his, on the principle of Deut. xxv. 5, 6, as well as the son of Boaz. As the legal son of Joseph, the genealogy of the reputed father is given: as the son of Mary and without any earthly father, her lineage becomes His.

Whilst, as the foregoing answer (B) points out, one may be legally constituted "the son of" without being actually son, as in Luke iii. 23—there is no instance in Scripture of the term "begat," as in Matt. i. 16, being used concerning any but an actual blood relationship. We therefore conclude that Matthew gives the actual genealogy of Joseph, and that Jacob was his father.

JOTTINGS FROM ADDRESSES ON THE KINGDOM.

PART III.

By ALEXANDER STEWART.

"THE King of the Jews!" The first question in the Old Testament is, "Where art thou?" The first question in the New is, "Where is He?"

There was a full presentation of Him who was born King of the Jews to the people of Israel, and if they had received Him, no doubt then and there the Kingdom would have been set up. But they rejected Him, and He was received up into heaven.

In due time, however, the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will bring to pass all that is written concerning Him. By-and-by He will be set on the throne of David. He will come in the David character to clear the scene by judgment, after which He will reign in the Solomon character as Prince of Peace.

No doubt, in that day, that born again people, those who shall have been "born of water and the Spirit," will be the glad and willing messengers to the heathen; but more than that—the attractive power of the Son of God will be felt.

The nations shall flow to God's centre, even to Jerusalem, where God's King shall sit and reign.

Moreover, passage after passage shows that at that time there will be a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit. There will not only be the coming back again of the Son of God, but the energy of the Spirit of God testifying concerning Him.

Let us now read some verses in Daniel ii. This is the chapter that tells about Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Possibly he had forgotten the dream, but there was no one who could tell either what the dream was or the interpretation of it, until at last the secret was communicated to Daniel. Then he was able, in all humility, to give the interpretation to the king. Daniel uses the expression concerning God, "Wisdom and might are His." God gave the "might" to Nebuchadnezzar, but He gave the "wisdom" to Daniel; but the might had to come to the wisdom, and the wisdom shone superior to the power.

Here is the interpretation (verses 27 and 28): "There is a God in heaven." This is charac-

teristic of the book. It is not a God dwelling between the cherubim at Jerusalem: He had relinquished that place. The glory of God had been sinned away by the people. Now He is known as "the God of Heaven," and the coming Kingdom, whereof we are to speak, is "the Kingdom of Heaven," *i.e.*, a kingdom administered from heaven.

Verse 30: "As for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom, that I have more than any living"—the modesty and the humility of the man are conspicuous.

Verses 31 and 32: "This image's head was of fine gold." The metals depreciate in *value* as you get down. They did not deteriorate as regards *strength* until you come to the very toes of the image.

Verse 36: "This is the dream," &c. The difficulty which had proved too much for the wise men of Babylon was not only to interpret the dream but to revive it to the mind of the king. But this prophet did both. The secret was indeed revealed to Daniel; but before that, and while he was yet troubled about the matter, he got the other three godly Hebrews to have a prayer meeting with him about it. And when he gives the interpretation, he does not speak in the singular but in the plural. An instance, this, of the grace that characterised the man.

Verse 37: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom . . . and hath made thee ruler over them all," &c.—I suppose the largest grant ever given to a man since Adam.

Verse 39: "After thee another" . . . to rule over "all the earth." The boundary is universal monarchy. Many kings have reigned over portions of the earth, but these were given dominion over all the earth.

Verse 40 gives us the fourth kingdom.

Verses 41 and 42 give the character of this kingdom. Iron mixed with miry clay, or what we might call "earthenware." Partly strong and partly broken, or rather brittle or breakable.

Verse 44: "And in the days of those kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom." Here it is the active intervention of God "A kingdom that shall never be destroyed." Here, then, are four monarchies, and a fifth to come after these, the last one known, and "it shall stand for ever."

Verse 46: "Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel." He did not remember that this was not revealed to Daniel for any wisdom he had.

Verse 49: "Then Daniel requested of the king" for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and they were set over the affairs of the province of Babylon.

Daniel had them in fellowship with him in the prayer meeting, and now in the day of prosperity, unmoved and unchanged, he is reminiscent of what had gone before, not thinking of himself, but anxious, when the time of recompense came, that they should share in the reward. This was fellowship.

In chapter iv. Nebuchadnezzar had another vision, and Daniel was again called to interpret for him. In verses 24 and 26 we have the interpretation of the dream. The sentence upon Nebuchadnezzar was to be for a limited period, viz., "seven times." But it is added: "Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee after thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule."

You might write these words over the first chapter of the book as being really the theme of the prophecy, "The heavens do rule."

Further down Nebuchadnezzar says: "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." But that is true always about God. It is true now, as we say, providentially. He sets up one kingdom and puts down another. But what we read concerning the fifth monarchy is that by-and-by there will be an active intervention of God in the affairs of men, differing from His ordinary providential rule, and that, setting all other kingdoms aside, He shall set up a kingdom which shall fill the whole earth and which shall stand for ever.

Therefore it ought not to have been a strange sound in the ears of the people of Jerusalem and Judea when John the Baptist arose and said that the Kingdom of Heaven—literally, I suppose, "the kingdom of the heavens"—was "at hand," or "had drawn nigh."

The Lord Jesus was born under the rule of the fourth monarchy of Daniel 11.—the kingdom that was "strong as iron."

From Luke we learn that there went out a decree that "all the world should be taxed," so here was the fourth kingdom already in

power, and there was nothing left to wait for but the fifth—that kingdom which the God of Heaven was to set up.

But the King came in a way for which the Jewish nation was little prepared. The kingdom was presented to them in a form at which they stumbled, and at which they are stumbling to this day.

Now we come to the Gospel by Matthew, and having remarked upon the genealogy before, I don't go back upon it further than to observe that we have in chapter i. the genealogy of the King. At the very beginning of the book His character as King is stamped upon it. Until you come down to David, others are simply named; but it is written, "Jesse begat David the king," and again, "David the king begat Solomon," &c. Thus the emphasis is laid upon the kingly character of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then in chapter ii. it is the birth of the King. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Herod was troubled at these things, and well he might be. Having gathered the chief priests and scribes together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born? They were quite well posted up, and knew all about it. But men may be very well versed in the Scriptures and very orthodox, and have no heart for the Lord Jesus Christ.

They answered Herod rightly—"In Bethlehem of Judea."

Now, the third chapter is the announcement of the King. "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" or, if I may be allowed to render it, "the kingdom of the heavens draweth near." I need not follow further the testimony of John the Baptist; but in chapter iv. there is the testimony of the King Himself after His temptation. Verse 17: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." There it was, in the Person of the King. His word was with power, and His deeds were with power, for He wrought the miracles we read of as well as preached the gospel, so that there was a full presentation to the people of the Governor who should rule over Israel, and who was promised to sit on the throne of David.

What then? They would not have Him.

In Matthew xii. 22 we read that He healed a man that had a devil (a demon). "All the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?" The instincts of *the people* are often truer than the instincts of those who rule over them. They began to be conscious that *the son of David, God's King, had come amongst them.*

Verse 24: But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of devils."

The Lord's reply—"If Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself: how then shall his kingdom stand?"—shows that it is the question of "the kingdom." "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

Well, there it was, but they would not have it, and that is what led up to chapter xiii., which I now wish to look into.

(To be continued.)

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XI.

THE PARABLE OF THE SINGLE EYE.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

MATT. VI. 22, 23; LUKE XI. 33-36.

Matt. vi. 22, 23. "The light [lamp] of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single [clear, unmixed], thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that [the] darkness!"

Luke xi. 33-36. "No man, when he hath lighted a candle [lamp], putteth it in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick [the lampstand], that they which come in may see the light. The light [lamp] of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single [clear, unmixed], thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light; as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light [the lamp by its bright shining doth give thee light]."

WHEN a clear, bright lamp is brought into an apartment and set upon the lampstand, the whole room will be filled with its light; but if the lamp be covered with a bushel, or the ordinary corn measure, the light will be obscured and the room left in darkness, however brightly the lamp itself may shine.

What the lamp is to the apartment, the mental eye is to the whole inner man. If the mental eye be simple, clear, and unprejudiced, the whole understanding will be enlightened, and the truth under consideration will be rightly and fully understood. But if there be *error, prejudice, or misconception in the mind*, the mental eye not being clear, there will be more or less obscurity in the understanding, or a totally wrong view taken of the subject considered.

When our Lord here speaks of the "single eye" and the "evil eye," He is referring to the condition of the eye itself—whether the humours of the eye be clear and unmixed as in its natural condition, or whether the eye be diseased and the humours mixed as in cataract, &c.; it is not a question whether the eye be looking at one object or many, as is frequently understood. A person with a healthy eye, looking from a hill-top, may see a thousand objects distinctly; whereas another with a diseased eye may have a difficulty in clearly discerning one single object.

When the Scriptures are read with some favourite prejudice fostered in the mind, some opinion adopted and pertinaciously adhered to, some perverted truth or erroneous doctrine continually present, the full, clear light of revealed truth is prevented from shining in its full brilliancy and clear conviction into the mind; and however frequently the Scriptures are thus read the veil remains unremoved, and it may be the very light itself becomes darkness because the truth itself is thus perverted. Our wisdom, therefore, would be continually and prayerfully to be on our guard lest on Scriptural subjects we either form opinions of our own, or accept the opinion of anyone else. But with a simple, childlike mind let us ever come to the Word of God, prepared to receive its full, undimmed light, under the immediate teaching, revealing, and application of the Spirit of God, earnestly sought and followed.

THREE THINGS THE BELIEVER SHOULD "LAY UP."

- I. Lay up God's Commandments, Prov. vii. 1.
- II. Lay up Knowledge.....Prov. x. 14.
- III. Lay up Treasure in Heaven...Mat. vi. 20.

T. B.

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.—XI.

"THE ROCK."

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,
Author of "Separation from the World," &c.

"That rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians x. 4).

IT was at the commandment of the Lord (Ex. xvii. 1) that Israel took the journey which led them to Rephidim. That "no water" could there be found for the people to drink was well known to the Lord who led them. Faith would have recognised in the trial only an opportunity for God to display the fulness of His resources. Thus faith can rejoice where unbelief breaks down. But all the wilderness journeys, and every test to which they were subjected, only served to make evident the unbelief of their hearts and the insubjection of their wills.

The fact that the rite of circumcision had been entirely neglected during all the forty years (Josh. v. 7) of their wilderness journeyings is, of itself, evidence that they were not willing to be subject to God, and that period has been aptly called "the wilderness of unjudged flesh."

And the fact that every trial at first elicited only murmuring and evil speaking against Moses, and against Jehovah, showed up too plainly the evil heart of unbelief that possessed them.

But whether it be at Rephidim, or in the wilderness of Sin (Ex. xvi. 3, 4), or "by the way of the Red Sea" (Num. xxi. 4), Israel's murmuring only served as an occasion for Jehovah to set forth in beautiful type and shadow the great redemption work which, though at that time in the far future, was, nevertheless, all along the only ground upon which longsuffering mercy was extended to them.

How constantly the work accomplished on Calvary was before the heart of God, in His gracious dealings with His people of old, is witnessed abundantly in all these foreshadowings.

In the case before us (Ex. xvii.) Moses was commanded to take with him of the elders of Israel, and to smite the rock which is in Horeb with the same rod wherewith he had smitten the river in Egypt.

Jehovah promised to stand before him there upon the rock—thus identifying Himself with that which was to be smitten

The rod was a rod of judgment. By its stroke the river of Egypt had been turned into a river of blood (Ex. vii. 20). And though the result now is not death, but life, yet it is a rod of judgment still, by which the rock is smitten and cleft.

Forth from the smitten rock, freely and abundantly, gushed the water which was life as well as refreshment to them.

Even so was the judicial rod lifted up against the Christ of God. "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow . . . smite the shepherd" (Zech. xiii. 7). The stroke He bore was the stroke of judgment against our sins—and having finished the work He bowed His holy head in death.

But it is at the subsequent piercing of His side, when from His heart flowed the blood and the water, that the Spirit makes a special call to faith. "He that saw it bare record; and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, *that ye might believe*" (John xix. 35).

It is here that faith can drink of the water of life freely, as it flowed from the cleft in the side of the smitten Rock.

But again we have the rock as the source of blessing in Numbers xx., only this time the Hebrew word is altered. The word used in Exodus xvii. signifies a low down rock—a "bed-rock." The one here used signifies an exalted rock—"a cliff." The two words are found together in Psalm lxxviii. 15, 16. In verse 15 it is as in Exodus xvii., and so it is written, "He gave them drink as out of the *great depths*." In verse 16 it is as in Numbers xx., and so it says, "He caused waters to *run down* as rivers." These two words are never used interchangeably—each has its own specific meaning. The first, as we have seen, points to Christ in His humiliation, as smitten in judgment by the rod of God. The second as clearly points to Christ as the lifted up, or exalted One, from whom, because of His previous sufferings and death, now flows, in divine fulness, the stream of living water—the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Those who believed on Him at any time were quickened souls—they had life; but now believing in Him as the glorified Son, at the right hand of God, they have "life more abundantly."

Faith grasps the word of life; the believing

one is quickened, and possesses eternal life, and is also sealed by the Spirit, baptised in the Spirit, and caused to drink into the Spirit. (see 1 Cor. xii. 13).

All is free. Freely as Israel drank of the stream that sprang up out of the depths in Exodus xvii., so freely may the sinner now drink of the life that flows for him out of the depths of Calvary's sorrows; and as freely as they drank of the water that flowed down from the cliff in Numbers xx., so may every believer now drink and be filled with the Holy Spirit. All that is needed is the thirst of the soul after God, the living God.

The reason the saints are not filled with the Spirit is that they are filled with other things. The exalted Lord is waiting for empty vessels that He may fill them, for thirsty souls that He may satisfy them.

"They drank of the spiritual Rock which followed them." It is not to be supposed from this that the people of Israel were followed in their journeyings by the literal rock. It was the spiritual Rock—which is Christ—who followed them all through those forty years of provocation. Not the rock—but Jehovah—was the true source of all the grace that flowed to them day by day in a thousand forms. That same Jehovah of the Old Testament—the Christ of the New Testament, is our Rock—the source of all the grace—the abounding grace that meets our need to-day.

The judgment of the Lord upon Moses for smiting the exalted cliff in Numbers xx.—having had no authority to do so—shows that it was a serious offence. The rock that was smitten in humiliation was not again to be smitten in exaltation. It marred the typical significance of the action, and God did not fail to show his displeasure at the liberty Moses took. A warning this to those who would take liberties with the ordinances of the Lord—perverting these so as to obliterate their typical significance, as, for example, in the substitution of sprinkling for immersion in baptism.

Moses was angry. Though the meekest man on the earth, he failed where he excelled. He lost his temper, spake unadvisedly with his lips, sanctified not the Lord before the people, smote the rock twice, and for this, notwithstanding his urgent beseechings, was not suffered by Jehovah to lead Israel into the inheritance.

"The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

As surely as fleshly zeal arises spiritual power is lost. The love that "is not easily provoked" is a needed qualification for such as would go before the flock. That some who are "soon angry" have occupied prominent positions is the shame, and sorrow, and loss of the Church to-day.

The title Rock is frequently applied to Jehovah in the Old Testament. According to Hebrew usage it signified "strength," as where it is written, "Blessed be Jehovah, my strength" (Psa. cxliv. 1, also Psa. xviii. 2), it is literally "my Rock." Also, the expression "In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength" is literally "the Rock of Ages," upon which beautiful expression is based Toplady's exquisite hymn, "Rock of Ages cleft for me." Thus used the simile is full of interest and instruction.

In Exodus xxxiii. 21, 22, Moses is placed in a cleft of the rock—the place of safety—while the glory of the Lord passed by. In Deuteronomy xxxii. 13, Israel is made to "suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock." In Isaiah xxxii. the man is as the shadow of a great rock (cliff) in a weary land. In Canticles ii. 14 the believer is the dove hid in the cleft in the exalted cliff, far above the reach of aught that can hurt. In every case, "that rock was Christ." It is He who is to us, spiritually, all that the rock is to those who make it their shelter, or derive from it their sustenance.

Again, the rock is the foundation. "Upon this rock will I build My Church." "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11).

In Psalm xxxi. 2 the rock (bed rock) is the foundation of a house of shelter; in verse 3 the exalted cliff is the Psalmist's fortress, inaccessible to the foe. In Psalm lxxi. 3, again the two words occur together—first, as the habitation, easy of access, a continual resort; next as an inaccessible fortress.

But time and space would fail to exhaust the type, or even mention the many passages in which the rock is referred to as the place of safety and blessing. Happy are they who can experimentally say with the Psalmist, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the Rock (strength) of my heart, and my portion for ever" (Psa. lxxiii. 26).

"THOU REMAINEST."

(Heb. i. 11).

"THOU remainest"—livest ever,
On God's throne, exalted high!
Thine from Thee no power shall sever—
"Thou remainest"—ever high.

"Thou remainest!" Blest endurance,
In an ever-changing scene!
Calm us, Lord, with this assurance:
"Thou remainest"—Peace serene!

"Thou remainest!" All undying,
All unchanging is Thy love;
On Thy faithful Word relying,
"Thou remainest"—this we prove!

"Thou remainest!" Time's stream flowing,
Loved ones go from love's embrace;
Many gone, and others going—
"Thou remainest"—Lord of grace!

"Thou remainest!" Consolation
To the heart, when sore oppress!
'Mid surrounding desolation—
"Thou remainest!"—This is rest!

"Thou remainest!" Time's sun setting,
Breaks a bright, eternal day!
Sorrows of the path forgetting,
"Thou remainest"—ours for aye! D. R.

PREACH THE GOSPEL.

BROTHER, the Master hath need, much need, daily need of you. Thousands, and tens of thousands of men and women are dying in their sins. Although everyone now preaching the Gospel were a flaming fire in the service of his God, faithful as Latimer, bold as Knox, eloquent as Whitfield, and glowing with the zeal of Martyn, the work is greater than all together can accomplish. The call is clear and plain to *every one* of us, "Go ye into all the world, and *preach the Gospel to every creature*" (Mark xvi. 15).

An indignant country will not suffer the interests of nations, and the triumph of armies, to be sacrificed to *routine* and the mere forms of office; much less should these be tolerated where the interests of Christ and the cause of souls are at stake. Where sinners are perishing, where opportunity offers, where a door stands

open for the Word, where the rule, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40), is not outraged and violated, in God's name preach the Gospel. Be not content to do good unto those who will *come to you*, but go out to sinners and "do good unto ALL men" (Gal. vi. 10), as God gives opportunity.

Has any man the glorious power of speaking for Christ? Oh, let us not tie his hands and feet or stop his mouth, but rather "LOOSE HIM AND LET HIM GO" (Jno. xi. 44), following him with our prayers and praises, as he goes forth to do battle for the Lord.

There could not be a more glorious work than to preach Christ. He surely would not demean but rather dignify his office who should descend from a throne before which nobles are bending, to bow his own knee to God by a peasant's bed; or leave his palace for some lonely cell, to watch, and weep, and pray with one whom crime had consigned to death. As the planets that roll and shine above us, so surely shall *they* shine who spend and are spent in the service of the Lord Jesus (Dan. xii. 3).

The man, however lowly his condition, who on his journey through life has led even one soul to the Saviour, has not lived in vain, nor laboured for nought. He has achieved a great, undying work. Let him be content to live by men unpraised, and by the world unknown: his works are known in heaven. He has raised a monument to his memory more enduring than brass or marble. Others may have filled the world with the sound of their names, but he has helped to fill a throne in heaven. Others may have won an earthly renown; but he who, being on the Rock himself, has helped to pull another out of the depths, he is the man who shall wear heaven's honours; to him the Lord will say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. xxv. 21). Weak in yourselves, but strong in God, go forth on this Christlike enterprise; the motto on your banner, the prayer of your heart, this wish of Brainerd, "O, that I were a flaming torch in the service of my God!"

Angels could never preach the Gospel as can redeemed men. How could they? They have never felt the stings of conscience, they have never hung over hell's fiery gulf, nor have they seen the narrow ledge on which they stood crumbling away beneath their feet. They have

never felt the tortures of remorse, or fled for refuge to the blood. They never thirsted for salvation, for they never sinned, and so how could they preach like Paul, or how could their bosoms burn with this apostolic fire—"I could wish myself accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh!" (Rom. ix. 3).

It is they who have had experience of guilt who have felt the serpent's bite—the poison burning in their veins—and have known the stings of conscience, but are now enjoying the peace, hope, love, life, and liberty that are found in Jesus, who are the fittest to preach the Gospel. No angel would leave heaven to be a king, and fill a throne; but which angel would not think himself honoured to be a preacher of Christ? Yet how slow *we* are to appreciate the honour that is ours!

Brethren! let others trifle away the invaluable hours if they will. Let *us* go to men and plead for Christ; let *us* go to Christ and plead for men—the cry, "Lord save us, we perish" (Matt. viii. 25); changed into one as welcome to the Saviour's ear, "Save them, Lord, *THEY PERISH*"

T. G.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

WE now turn to the instruction contained in the first epistle to the Corinthians, the only epistle in which the Lord's Supper is referred to. In chap. x. 14-33, the apostle exhorts the saints to flee from idolatry, on the ground that partaking of the Lord's table forbids any association with the idolatry around them. "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the tables of demons." This is an important principle for our souls; association with the Lord at His table involves dissociation from all idolatry. Satan's work is ever to introduce something that shall displace the Lord—some rival to Him. "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." The apostle, in this passage, puts the cup before the bread, for he is not speaking of the order of its observance, but of the moral effect it is to produce upon us. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not fellowship with the blood of Christ?" What can be more solemn, and what more holy, than this fellowship? Such a fellowship is to set us apart from everything

that defiles, or is contrary to His character. "The loaf which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?" We now get the truth of the Church's unity connected with the partaking of the one loaf. "For we, being many, are one bread, one body, for we are all partakers of that one loaf." It is not that the one loaf represents the Church's unity, it represents the Lord's body which hung upon the Cross; but we show we are one bread by partaking of it. The loaf is Christ, our partaking of it shows our common participation in Him, and that, therefore, we are one body. There is but one Christ—an undivided Christ—symbolised by the one loaf, and the Church partaking of it manifests her unity. The *loaf* does not manifest the unity of the Church; it is the partaking of it which does that. This shows how important it is, not only to break bread, but to come together to break bread.

To refuse to allow a saint of God to partake, who is not a wicked person, and therefore not excluded by scriptural discipline, is a solemn interference with and intrusion upon the Lord's rights at His own table, as well as with the privilege of the saint to partake. We are not masters but servants, and as the table is not ours but the Lord's, we have no right to prescribe to the Lord who shall be His guests. His Word directs us only to exclude those who may righteously be characterised as wicked people. We are not merely told to put away from the Lord's table, but "from among ourselves" (1 Cor. v. 13). And we are not merely told not to receive at the Lord's table one who brings not the doctrine of Christ—the true doctrine of His person (1 John iv. 1, 6)—but "receive him not into your house, neither salute him" (2 John 10). Evil doctrine which undermines the faith leads to "evil deeds" (verse 11). No mere mistake or error excludes. It must be that character of evil which touches the foundation and overthrows the faith (1 Tim. ii. 18), and which constitutes the person not merely mistaken, but wicked; his "words will eat as a gangrene." Error as to the subjects or mode of baptism, for instance,* does not make a true Christian a wicked person. There must be well-defined leprosy to necessitate exclusion, in order that others may not be

* Those who hold the dogma of "baptismal regeneration" are liable to the charge of fundamental error.—Ed.

defiled. There are other ways pointed out in Scripture for dealing with what is short of this. There needs to be the most careful discernment to pronounce upon leprosy, for which the priest who is much in the presence of God is alone competent (Lev. xiii. 2).

As to being still connected with a denomination being ground of exclusion, how many sincere souls are there who have not light or strength to at once break with former associations, so sacred in their eyes; but who, if excluded until they have this light, are kept out from the only place where they can get it. They cannot, however, be *scripturally* excluded on that account, for they are not "wicked persons." Moreover, we would falsify the true character of our fellowship and narrow its sphere by doing so, for we would be saying practically they are not of the body of Christ. We constitute ourselves sectarian if we require another to leave a sect in order to break bread, for we set up a condition which his conscience does not conform to. As to coming into fellowship, if he is born again and baptised by the Spirit into one body, he is in the fellowship which is expressed and manifested at the Lord's table. This is the fellowship of the Father and the Son, into which every believer has been brought, and if there is another which he has to join, it is an extra scriptural one, and not of God. To keep the unity of such a fellowship will have the approval of its adherents, of course, but as it is not the unity of the Spirit, it has not the approval of the Lord. The unity of the Spirit, which we are exhorted to keep, embraces all who are baptised by the Spirit into one body, and this is what is to be manifested by all partaking of the one loaf at the Lord's table. May we be kept from making the table of the Lord the expression of the fellowship of any party or sect, instead of that of the whole body of Christ.

There is another thing which we do at the Lord's table. "As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup we announce the Lord's death, until He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26). It is not to be discontinued until then. The need of His death for us must be constantly kept before our souls, lest we forget the lesson it teaches us of our own worthlessness, and His love and grace. It is our confession of Him, and of His death for us, and involves self-

judgment on our part. If we eat and drink without exercise of soul and self-judgment we eat and drink unworthily, and are guilty in respect of the body and blood of the Lord. We would thus be eating and drinking judgment to ourselves, instead of blessing, for we should incur the Lord's chastening because of not discerning the Lord's body signified in it. In the early Church many were weak and sickly in body on this account, and some had fallen asleep—they had sinned unto death.

All true saints are worthy to partake, but apart from self-judgment none can partake worthily. Let our souls, then, be exercised always to discern the Lord's body.

We have thus in the Lord's Supper:—

1. The Lord's body, the bread of life by which we live.
2. His blood shed for the remission of sins.
3. We remember Him.
4. We announce His death until He come.
5. We manifest we are one body by all partaking.
6. We judge ourselves in order to discern the Lord's body.
7. We are chastened of the Lord if we do not judge ourselves.

In the early Church, at Jerusalem, they appear to have taken the Lord's Supper from house to house—not to have had any place of collective gathering except the temple. But after the revelation of it to Paul we read of the disciples coming together to break bread. Unity is expressed by it. May we be kept from making it anything less than the expression of the unity of the body of Christ. J. J.

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WE learn more perhaps from things contrasted than from things alike. Luke viii. has Jesus for the actor; His disciples are onlookers and hearers only. From beginning to end of chapter His course is one of triumphant victory, all nature, demons, disease, and death yielding to His will. In the following chapter the disciples are the actors, sent forth, fully commissioned and richly equipped, to continue the work He had begun; but how pitifully sad the record. Self-confidence, impatience, slumber, powerlessness, aspiring to place, bigotry, and its concomitant readiness to judge, is the disfigured record. Let us gaze in this glass, not forgetting what manner of men we are. P. H.

CHRIST: THE SOLE OBJECT OF PROPHETIC
AND APOSTOLIC

WITNESSES.

“To Him give all the prophets witness.”—*Acts x. 43.*

It is said that in a remote and mountainous part of Spain there stands a lonely convent, remarkable for containing a beautiful device in sculpture, by which Christ is represented as the central object of a group of prophets and apostles, each one significantly pointing to Him. Some say such actually exists; others, that it is but a legend. Be that as it may, the truth thus symbolised is according to the teaching of God's Word, and opposed to that of the apostate Church of Rome.

It may be but a legend, yet some say
That in an ancient convent far away
A goodly group of sculptured figures stand,
Each pointing t'ward the centre of the band.
The centre figure is supremely fair,
For Christ, they say, is represented there,
And those around are prophets who of old
Did God's revealed will to man unfold;
With them the twelve apostles are combined,
While Christ is the *one* Object thus enshrined.
Though but a work of art and man's design,
The truth embodied in it is divine,
For prophets and apostles all unite
To testify of Him, the Life and Light.
His own distinctive witness each one bears
From earliest ages down to later years.

PROPHETS.

Hear the old *law-giver* from Sinai cry,
With pointing finger and exulting eye,
“Behold the kingly Prophet like to me,
The antitype of all the off rings see.”
Samuel declares Him the anointed One,
Prefigured once in Jesse's youngest son.
The royal psalmist strikes his sacred lyre,
And cries with fervent and poetic fire:
“Behold the One of whom I sweetly sung
When like a pen descriptive was my tongue;
At times the music, in low, plaintive wail,
Would melt in anguish over Calvary's tale,
Till, in prefiguring His awful grief,
In one great cry my spirit found relief.
Meanwhile I tuned my harp afresh, for lo!
Triumphant strains *would* in high measure flow
From those same chords, until I seemed to rise
With the ascending One above the skies.

I heard in spirit the angelic band
To those within Heaven's towers give loud
command:

‘Fling open wide your golden gates that He,
The King of Glory, in His victory,
May enter in.’ But, ‘Who is this great King?’
Is asked. With shouts that made the blue
vault ring,

The answer was returned, ‘Who can it be
If not the Lord of Hosts in majesty,
The mighty Conqueror over death and sin—
Fling open wide your doors and let Him in.’
I saw Him on the throne at God's right hand,
And heard the mandate given of high command
To every angel, that they bow the knee
In worship to the Lamb of Calvary.

I saw Him as God's equal there on high
Receive the homage of Heaven's minstrelsy,
And heard the Father say that there His seat
Should be until a stool beneath His feet
His enemies were made; until that day
When He on earth His glory will display.”

Isaiah points to Him, and can but grieve
That but a few the good report believe;
“Behold Him wounded for our sins,” he cries;
“Oppressed beneath our load of guilt He dies.
All we from God like sheep have gone astray—
Have turned every one to his own way—

But God hath laid upon His Servant all
The consequences of our dreadful fall;
By Him the mighty work was fully done,
The Father's law made glorious by the Son.
Because of this, in Time's great final day,
God shall Himself divide the human prey,
And with the strong, the stronger far than he
Shall have the lion's share, the victor's fee.”
To Him the prophet *Jeremiah* points and cries,
Tears like a river streaming from his eyes:

“Say, is it nought to you, ye passers by,
Did ever Sorrow's surges swell so high?
Bethink you of the wormwood and the gall,
The bitter cup He drank for sinners all;
Remember this, and truly humbled be—
Think of His grief, and say: ‘It was for me.’”

Ezekiel shows Him at the temple door,
From henceforth to illumine its courts no more
Till Israel is prepared His claims to own,
And welcome Him as heir to David's throne.
Hear *Daniel* cry: “Behold in Him the stone
I saw in vision, peerless and alone,
Who earthly power shall into pieces break,
And to Himself the misruled kingdoms take.

His saints, now lowly, then with Him shall reign,
And royal dignity through Him obtain."

Hosea points us to His constant love

T'ward the backslider who from Him will rove;
Shows how He draws with cords, allures and
pleads,

While faithfully exposing gross misdeeds.

He is the Husbandman in *Joel* shown

Who comes to reap the harvest He has sown.

Amos presents Him as the Builder who

Will raise up David's ruined house anew.

The prophet *Obadiah* loves to sing

Of that great day when Jesus shall be King.

Hark! *Jonah* speaks: "A picture I was made

Of Him who in the heart of earth was laid;

Three days and nights were mine in silent
gloom,

Then I emerged as He did from the tomb."

The peaceful Ruler is what *Micah's* pen

Depicts: "Both sword and spear," he says, "shall
then

Be beaten into pruning-hook and plough,

And every nation to His law shall bow."

Nahum proclaims Him slow to wrath, yet shows

How He will take swift vengeance on His foes.

Habakkuk sees Him clothed in dread array,

And, trembling, contemplates His awful day;

But *Zephaniah* marks Him take His place

In midst of Salem, fraught with saving grace,

Securely tranquil, resting in His love,

Enthroned and owned Messiah from above.

Haggai beholds Him in the holy shrine

Flooding the temple courts with light divine,

Not as of old, within the veil concealed—

That veil is rent, and glory is revealed.

Next *Zechariah* shows Him King of Kings,

And *Malachi* declares how on His wings

All healing will be brought when He shall rise,

Like the bright orb that gilds the eastern skies.

APOSTLES.

Matthew doth clearly prove the Holy One

To be both Abraham's and David's son;

Two lines from David both converge in Him

Who came the lowly babe of Bethlehem.

Mark gives no lineage; 'tis his task to show

The perfect Servant's pathway here below,

Each moment fully occupied until

It could be said a Man had done God's will.

Luke, with a pen most graphic, loves to trace

His line to Adam, head of all our race,

And Him, as Son of Man 'mid men, portrays

Our kinsman Saviour, full of love and grace.

But *John* soars higher far, and shows that He

Was God's eternal Son, who earth and sea

Created, ere what we call time began—

Proclaims Him God's love-gift to fallen man.

Then *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, the chosen three,

As witness-bearers to their Lord agree;

They saw Him die, and followed to the grave

His body—marked the stone rolled to the
cave.

Thence, rising, He appeared alike to all

His chosen ones, and afterwards to *Paul*,

Who, foremost of the witness-bearing band,

Preached Jesus and His Cross from land to
land.

Last, but not least, there falls upon the ear

From Patmos' lonely isle a record clear

Of what *John* heard and saw and felt when he

Beheld the Son of God in majesty.

That bright *unveiling* to His servant given

Shows Christ the centre of adoring Heaven,

And summing up each record of the past,

Leaves us alone with Him, "the First and
Last!"

Thus prophets and apostles have one theme—

Unitedly they testify of Him,

The Christ of God: yet all together fail

To paint His beauty, or tell half the tale

Of His infinite excellence; for mind

That is but finite could not comprehend

The ocean fulness that from Him outflows,

Or the deep debt that each redeemed one owes

To Him. Yet *we* may bear a witness true

To Jesus and the resurrection too,

And He Himself ere long will own and praise

The feeblest witness that to Him we raise.

A. W. P. S.

THE COMPASSION OF CHRIST.

By the Late JAMES KENNAN, of Dublin.

IN the New Testament six Greek verbs are translated, "to have," or "be moved with compassion." Of these, the first to claim attention is that used in Mark vi. 34 and viii. 2 (*splanchnizomai*), "Jesus was moved with compassion." It is also used of Him in the corresponding passages, Matthew ix. 36, and xiv. 14, and xv. 32, describing the Lord's compassion for the *multitudes*, and in Matthew

xviii. 27, the parable of the lord of the *wicked servant*.

Luke xv. 20—The father of the prodigal.

Luke x. 33—The good Samaritan, which clearly illustrates *His own* compassion for *individuals*, as do also Matthew xx. 34, Mark i. 41 and ix. 22, and Luke vii. 13, which record His compassion (without parable) on the *blind*, the *leper*, the one possessed by a *demon*, and for the *bereaved*. What an insight these Scriptures give us into the *heart* of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Bloomfield says on Matthew ix. 36: "The word (*splanknizomai*) occurs neither in the Septuagint nor the classical writers, and seems to have been formed by the New Testament writers from *splankna*—bowels, for there the Jews place the seat of sympathy—by a metaphor taken from that *yearning* which is felt in pity or other kindly affections."

Robinson's Lexicon says that the 'profane writers *chiefly* use the word for the upper viscerie (heart, lungs, liver).

Genesis xliii. 30—"Joseph's bowels did yearn over his brother"—seems to illustrate the force of the word as applied in the Gospels, though a different expression occurs there in the Septuagint.

Note that in *every* place where the word occurs the inward feeling is *manifested* in active succour. His heart is the heart of one who has *power* and *supplies* for *every* need—the need of the multitude and the need of the individual, whether bodily, mental, or spiritual. Philippians iv. 19—"My God shall supply *all* your need according to His riches in glory by (or in) Christ Jesus."

If we further consider Matthew ix. 36 and the other four similar passages we may note that there was no *petition* or *cry* to the Lord for help for the multitude. His own eye saw they were as sheep without a shepherd, and that they needed *food*. Neither the multitude nor the disciples seem to have thought of appealing to Him. How like to Isaiah lxiii. 5, "I looked and there was none to help . . . *therefore mine own* arm brought salvation unto me!"

How this should stir *our* hearts for the *multitude* of the *saints* who, in so many places, seem "as sheep without a shepherd," and famishing for bread! We may be sure that the Lord sees every needy one, and that it is

according to *His heart* that they should be "taught many things" (Mark vi. 34), and "be fed" (v. 37).

He is still the *Shepherd* of Psalm xxiii. 1, 3, 5. Although the *verb* used in the Gospels, as already referred to, does not occur anywhere else than in the twelve passages mentioned, yet the root noun (*splanka*), bowels, is used in the Epistles in a similar sense; see 2 Corinthians vii. 15—"inward affection"; Philippians i. 8, "long after you in the *bowels* of Jesus Christ;" ii. 1, "if any *bowels* of mercies;" Colossians iii. 12, "*bowels* and mercies;" 1 John iii. 3, 17, "shutteth up his *bowels* of compassion." Thus we are taught that our hearts should be moved for our brethren.

In Luke i. 78 we are taught that the coming of Jesus was because of "the *bowels* of the mercy [margin] of our God." When *God's heart* is moved His *hand* must needs open, and where He opens His hand "He satisfies the desire of every living thing" (Psa. cxlv. 16).

What encouragement this is to fervent prayer, not only for ourselves, but for "*all* the flock of God." We may be *confident* that it is His will they should be guided and fed. In Psalm lxxviii. 38 we read that, being "full of compassion, He forgave their iniquities and destroyed them not," for all their backslidings and transgressions, and the last verse tells us that He raised up David, to "feed them according to the integrity of his heart, and to guide them according to the skilfulness of his hands."

In the Gospel narratives we see that it was in *desert* places, away from the world's business, the Lord taught and fed them. Is it not often so? There must be quietness, withdrawal from the voice of the scribes and Pharisees, and not a hasty hour, but all the day long at His feet. And note, in John vi. 26, how few seem to have really taken into their hearts the wonderful words He spake to them, but they knew He had *fed* them. O! to be enabled so to present Christ that *souls* may be *fed*, then they won't fail to come again. Souls may weary of wonderful teaching, but those who have got a *meal* will not need much pressing to come for another.

"THEIR SINS . . . will I remember no more." As facts, they remain; as sins, they are blotted out.

"THE DAY OF SALVATION."

By J. HIXON IRVING, Author of "Life Booklets."
(Isa. xlix. 8; 2 Cor. vi. 2.)

THIS, the second day of God's prophetic week, is variously described, for not a few terms are made use of to set forth its character.

It is called the "acceptable year of Jehovah" (Luke iv. 19); the "hour" (Jno. iv. 23; v. 25); "a little while" (Jno. xvi. 16, 19); the "last days" (Heb. i. 2); the "to-day" (Heb. iii. 8, 13, 15; iv. 7); the "acceptable time" and the "day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2, R.V.). "Man's day" and this, run on during the present period side by side: the same moment of time sees them both speeding on to their end. And yet how different they are in character. The one is marked by man's attitude toward God in judging Him; whilst the other is characterised by God's attitude toward man in offering to justify him freely by His grace through redemption which is in Christ Jesus. How great and vivid is the contrast!

The term, "the day of salvation," is part of the Spirit's application of a quotation from Isaiah xlix. 8, of a passage relating to the Messiah and Israel. It is a part of Jehovah's reply to His son, who in spirit is saying: "I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain." "In an accepted time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee." The truth of the words were fulfilled in His resurrection from among the dead, for He was saved out of death (Heb. v. 7). At that time began the "day of salvation." It had its dawn in His resurrection, when he became the first fruits of the sleeping saints. No one need infer from the name and nature of this period of grace to the Gentiles that God did not save believing men during past ages. The river of His salvation began to flow at Eden's gate. During the patriarchal period it was ankle deep; during the Mosaic it was knee deep; but during our Lord's ministry it might be said to be loin deep; but now it is a river to "swim in"—during this season of rich grace, the grace of God which bringeth salvation,

CHRIST IN HEAVEN,

exalted at the right hand of God, all authority therein, and also on the earth, given into His

hand. What a change in the ways of God with men did the entrance of Christ into heaven make! Only those who scan with reverent gaze those ways understand, and even they but feebly at best. It is refreshing to remember that a coming day will enable the "wise to understand" most fully what His ways of grace, through His highly-exalted One, were.

THE SPIRIT ON THE EARTH.

The exaltation of Christ, and the consequent beginning of His mediatorial work, resulted in the Spirit's presence on the earth. His work on men is to convict them, through the Word, of "sin" for their unbelief and rejection of Christ, and of "righteousness" because of His being seated at the right hand of His Father, and of "judgment" because that through His death, resurrection, and exaltation the god of this age—the prince of the power of the air, the Evil One—has virtually been judged. His work began in Jerusalem on that memorable "feast of harvest" when three thousand were convicted, converted, and saved (Acts ii.). He has continued working to this end, and will do so whilst Christ is on His Father's throne.

THE SALVATION OF GOD TO THE GENTILES.

The "salvation of God" was sent to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile (Acts xxviii. 28). This is of pure free grace, and grace alone (Titus ii. 11). Therefore grace is reigning through righteousness unto eternal life unto all who believe, and to those alone. This salvation is *in* Christ, for He through death and resurrection "became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him" (Heb. v. 7-9).

It is proclaimed in the gospel (Romans i. 16, 17) that the glad tidings reach many, but yet it cannot be said to all who hear them, "It is the gospel of your salvation" (Eph. i. 13). For the salvation of which the gospel is a proclamation is only to be received and possessed by faith (Rom. x. 9, 10). There is no possible way of escape from the wrath to come for those who neglect or despise this great salvation (Heb. ii. 3). Man is busy inventing ways of escape, but all his efforts will not avail him if the God-appointed "way of salvation" be not accepted.

During this day of salvation, the "elect

according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Pet. i. 2) are being saved. He is not yet engaged in "converting the world," but in taking out of the Gentiles "a people for His name" (Acts xv. 14)—a people who bear His name, as He said, "upon whom My name is called" (Amos ix. 11, 12, with Acts xv. 17). Would God all upon whom that "honourable name" has been called, recognised and rejoiced in this truth (James ii. 7). It is far from that, though. Is it not mainly because the "sure word of prophecy" (2 Pet. i. 19) is a sealed book that men are ignorant of the true character of this age and of God's purpose therein? The prophetic word is not sealed to humble-minded, prayerful, believing souls. The "election of grace" of this age is by the One Spirit being formed into one body in the Lord: "the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 23). This is one of the main features of this time, and is the key, so to speak, with which to unlock the casket of the prophetic word. Did those who compose the body—the church—understand in power its origin, nature, and glorious destiny, what a revolution would take place, what a reformation would be witnessed! How many would arise and shake themselves from the ecclesiastical dust! What a gathering together "of the children of God that are scattered abroad" (John xi. 54)! Perhaps this happy consummation has in some instances been retarded by those who, while they have held to the truth of the "one body" as a theory, have in their practice sadly denied it. Though this be too true, yet there is much cause for thanksgiving that so many of the grace-saved ones are, consistently with the truth of God, giving expression to the oneness of the body—the Church. There is room, too, for supplication that during the remainder of the "little while" there may be a more widespread and manifest expression that all saints are "one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another" (Rom. xii. 5).

THE CLOSE OF THE DAY.

"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. xiii. 12), for the Lord is at hand. This day of rich grace bringing salvation will not for ever be prolonged; it must close, and that soon. How soon it may be we

know not. When Christ shall "appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28), then its end will come. To those who fear Him, it will be bliss without alloy, for their salvation will then be perfected. Saved in spirit from all infirmity, in soul from every trace of depravity, and in body from the sin-produced power of mortality and corruption, they will worship and serve in unhindered and endless delight.

But, oh! so different will it be with those who have heard the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed and have refused to believe them. There will be no escape for such. How can there be? So far as such are concerned, God's resources have been exhausted, but without avail; there is, therefore, nothing left for them but a "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation" (Heb. x. 27; 2 Thess. i. 6-10). Should these lines be read by an unsaved one, I would beseech them to weigh well these words of the Holy Spirit: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." By faith in Him who is exalted to be a Saviour—the Saviour—make it your day of salvation.

FIVE PHASES OF REVIVAL.

Revive <i>Me</i>	{ "Thou wilt revive me" (Psa. cxxviii. 7).
Revive <i>Us</i>	{ "Wilt thou not revive us again" (Ps. lxxxv. 6).
Revive Thy <i>Work</i> ...	{ "O, Lord, revive Thy work" (Heb. iii. 2).
A Revival of <i>Sin</i>	{ "Sin revived, and I died" (Rom. vii. 9).
A Revival of <i>Care</i> ...	{ "Your care of me is revived" (Phil. iv. 10, M.).

A revival of *me* will lead to a revival of *us*, and this to a revival of *work*; this will lead to a revival of *sin* (sin will be seen in its exceeding sinfulness), and as the mighty convicting work rolls on, assemblies who have forgotten about the Lord's servants will have their *care* revived, and begin again to send to their necessities.

SAUL, head and shoulders taller than any in Israel: another Saul, less than the least of all saints—Paul signifies little.

BOCHIM.

IN Judges, chapter i., Israel is seen in different stages of failure. Benjamin, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Zebulon suffer the Canaanites to dwell among them; the Asherites and Naphtali dwell among the Canaanites. Dan permits the Amorites to remain in possession, though making the enemy tributary. All this was short of the command of God, and illustrates the various grades of failure in His children. Doubtless the thought was that by shirking conflict present ease and comfort would be secured.

"Fondly my foolish heart essays
To augment the source of perfect bliss,
Love's all sufficient sea to raise
With drops of creature happiness."

But God in His grace brings them into a state of soul it would well become saints of God in this day to emulate.

"And an angel of God came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers: and I said, I will never break my covenant with you." The place of privilege—deliverance out of Egypt into Canaan. It is well to notice that this is in direct ratio to the responsibility. We see this in verse 2, chapter ii. "And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land: ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?" "Responsibility to separate was what God laid down to them." "But," says He, "ye have not obeyed My voice: why have ye done this?" A question on a specific point. Will not the Lord thus deal with us too? May we have increased grace to judge ourselves, that we be not judged!

Their enemies were left in the land to prove them (verse 22, chapter ii.): "That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not." And in connection with this responsibility, they were brought by the messenger of Jehovah to contemplate a wondrous contrast, viz.: *the faithfulness of God* contrasted with *their unfaithfulness*. Their spirits were moved thereby—they wept as they viewed the contrast. Deeply stirring must have been that scene, weeping so sore that the place was ever after known as "Bochim" (weepers.) Weeping

not for national defeat or loss in battle, not on account of the outpouring of the displeasure of the Lord in some form of physical chastisement, but the contrasting of the dealings of their faithful Redeemer and Guardian with their own moral and spiritual declension, brought them into a condition of godly sorrow, working repentance to salvation (see 2 Cor. vi. 10). In connection with this, saints have to seek grace, that, on the one hand, depression from a sense of unfaithfulness may not obscure their view of Christ; and, on the other hand, against over elevation, and absence of brokenness of spirit. Circumstances arise calling for deep humbling before God, yet by faith Christ must be kept in view, like Bunyan in the house of Interpreter; he is shown into an empty room, and observes *a spider clinging to the wall*. "The spider is in kings' palaces and taketh hold with her hands," Bunyan wept. Conscious of his own depravity, he saw in the clinging spider a view of himself clinging by faith to Christ. So Israel, though deeply moved to sorrow and tears, "sacrificed unto the Lord" (verse 5). Faith triumphs through the blood. Well would it be for God's dear children if they had more Bochim experience—weeping yet triumphing.

A. O.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

LEAVING FRIENDS AND LANDS FOR THE GOSPEL (Mark x. 29, 30).—Is this Scripture applicable to this dispensation and to the times in which we live, and if so in what sense is it to be understood?

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21, 23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.—Does 1 Timothy iv. 10 assert universal salvation? "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we

trust in the living God, *who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of them that believe.*"

THE TIME OF PENTECOST.—Why is the Day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts ii. usually reckoned as being fifty days after the Passover, also ten days after our Lord's ascension? According to Leviticus xxiii. 15, is not Pentecost reckoned from the first day of the feast of first-fruits, and not from the Passover?

DAVID'S HATRED TO THE INFIRM (2 Sam. v. 6-9).—Why were "the *blind and lame*" smitten and hated of David's soul?

ABUSES IN MINISTRY.—What are the Scriptural means of preventing abuses in ministry, without curtailing the liberty of the Holy Spirit to speak through whom He will?

SUFFERING: ATONING OR MARTYRS?—What suffering is it that is spoken of in 1 Peter iv. 1? "Suffering for righteousness sake," or "suffering on the Cross and our having died in Him"?

"MY FOOLISHNESS."—Can the words in Psalm lxix. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

THE HIRE OF MINISTERING ONES.

QUESTION 514.—Please explain Romans xii. 7, "Let us give ourselves to our ministry" (R.V.); also, 1 Timothy iv. 15, "Give thyself wholly to them," *i.e.*, the requirements of the ministry. Does this not indicate that ministers are not to have another business? Also 1 Timothy v. 18, "The labourer is worthy of his hire."

Answer A.—While there are undoubtedly those, like Timothy, who are distinctly called to give themselves "wholly to them"—"prayer and to the ministry of the Word"—it by no means follows that a man who continues to abide with God in the calling to which he was called may not be, in the truest sense, a minister of the Word. The same apostle who exhorted Timothy, as quoted, laboured with his hands as well as "in word and doctrine."

Such as are manifestly called of God, apart from "another business," to "do the work of the evangelist," pastor, or teacher, ought to be supported. "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. vi. 6)—*i.e.*, the one being instructed in "spiritual things," is to minister to his instructor in "carnal things." "Ministry" is a comprehensive term, and may refer to spiritual or temporal matters. "Let us give ourselves to our ministry" may refer to the *temporal* needs of others, inasmuch as it is preceded by *prophesying* and followed by *teaching*, and we may find its illustration in such as the house of Stephanas, who "addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints"—this ministry being extended to the apostle himself, though

absent (1 Cor. xvi. 15-17). "If any man *speak* . . . as the oracles of God; if any man *minister* . . . as of the ability which God giveth," &c. (1 Pet. iv. 11). Many a Christian man's ability thus to minister will be according "as God has prospered him" *in his business*, while such, of course, may—thank God, in very many cases do—also "speak . . . as the oracles of God"—true ministers of the Word. D. R.

Answer B.—We do not think that Rom. xii. 7 teaches that one ministering as a member of the body of Christ ought to be without a secular occupation. The teaching of this portion of Scripture seems rather to be that each member, when he ascertains what he is fitted for, by the measure of faith which God has dealt to him, and the grace given, is to exercise himself in that same line, whether it be ministering, or teaching, or exhortation, or something else. Verse 3 warns not to think more highly than he ought to think; that is, not to fancy he has all the functions of the various members of the body in his own person.

However, as the questioner suggests, certain men were separated entirely to prayer and the ministry of the Word, such as the apostles (Acts vi. 4), Barnabas and Saul (Acts xiii. 2-4), Timotheus (Acts xvi. 3, and 1 Tim. iv. 15), and no doubt many others, on to the present time. We cannot here touch on the credentials which would prove they were called of God; suffice it to say, credentials there should be. The saints have a direct responsibility to the Lord to attend to the temporalities of such as are called of God to give all their time to prayer and ministry of the Word. The whole doctrine is evolved in 1 Corinthians ix., and less or more fully alluded to in many other places of New Testament. In this Scripture (1 Cor. ix. 7), three illustrations are given. *First*, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?" This alludes to the evangelist who goes right into the enemies' camps and wins captives for Christ. *Second*, "Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" This alludes to the labourer who devotes his energies to gather together and organise the saints into assembly, order, and propriety. *Third*, "Who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" This alludes to continuous pastoral and shepherd work in the same place. Then at verse 8—"Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?" So, illustrations are given from the law not to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Those ministering about holy things to live of the things of the temple, and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar. The responsibility of caring for ministering ones in the New Testament is cast

upon the saints in such words as these—"Now, if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do" (1 Cor. xvi. 10); "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 14). "The Gospel" here, as in many other places, means the whole range of the good news which God graciously makes known to men. J. S.

Answer C.—The first of these verses deals with the various gifts in the Church, or the division of labour in the things of God.

The injunctions given teach that each one is to exercise the gift he has received, and to keep to the work to which he is called. Amongst those who have been taught the liberty of the Spirit in ministry, it has been a fruitful source of confusion, and some have attempted to do work for which they were never qualified.

Gospel testimony has suffered much by some attempting to preach who were not fitted, or, if they were fitted, by going far beyond their measure. Saints and churches have also suffered much, by some who were called to do the work of an "evangelist" turning aside to become "pastors and teachers." The whole passage enjoins that every one is to "wait" on his own special work.

The next passage (1 Tim. iv. 15) applies primarily to those who have been called away from their secular occupation, to give themselves wholly to the work of the ministry—such as Peter, James, and John (Matt. iv. 18-22), Barnabas and Saul (Acts xiii. 2); also those mentioned in 3 John 7. The injunction to such is, to give themselves "wholly" to their work, so that "their profiting (or progress) may appear to all."

This is a wide subject, and cannot be gone into in answering a question. Suffice it now to say, that much heart-searching before the Lord is needed, lest one should be imitating others, or should mistake a desire of their own for a call from the Lord. This passage forbids slothfulness in the service of Christ, and is an indirect warning against a ministering one trading in truth which has been learned in the past. The teaching here is in keeping with the injunctions given to Ezekiel (chap. iii. 1), and to John (Rev. x. 9-11). "Eat this roll." "Take the book "and eat it up." Those teachers and preachers who move about from place to place are in special danger of giving to others what costs themselves no exercise of soul before the Lord, and no fresh study of the Word.

The last passage cited (1 Tim. v. 18) teaches that those whom the Lord has called to the ministry, and who have given themselves wholly to that work, have a claim on their fellow-saints.

1 Corinthians ix. 3-14 is clear on this point, embracing both pastoral teaching and evangelistic work. Whilst this is true, there is no such thing in Scripture as a stated salary, or preaching for pay. The MASTER who calls the servant will see to his need; and if he is called to "suffer with Christ" for the truth's sake, his reward in the glory will be all the greater. It is no easy matter, in these days of worldliness and carnality, for the Lord's servant to keep a "single eye," quietly and steadily going on with God Himself, getting all his directions from the Lord, and looking to the Lord alone to meet all his need. G. A.

Editor's Note.—It seems clear in the New Testament that the Lord's servants might be in either position; i.e., either supporting themselves by their own labour, or receiving supplies for their temporal need from the Lord through His saints.

There were circumstances and occasions on which Paul judged it right to support himself and those that were with him. (See Acts xviii. 3; 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8; Acts xx. 33-35; 1 Cor. ix. 15; 2 Cor. xi. 7-12); Phil. iv. 10-16).

If the reader will patiently examine the above Scriptures it will be evident to him, 1st, that there are some so qualified and called that they have authority from the Lord to receive support from the saints, in order that thus they may be the more at liberty to labour in spiritual things; 2nd, that there were times when, through the failure of the churches to respond to this divine claim upon them, it became a necessity for the Lord's servant to labour for his own support; 3rd, that because of the covetous ways of professing servants of Christ there were churches from whom he would not receive support, preferring to labour with his hands.

It is noticeable that when Paul alludes to his having laboured with his hands *as an example*, it is when speaking to a company of elders who had been by the Holy Spirit constituted "overseers" or "bishops" (Acts xx). It was to them specially that he had set this example. The work of an elder, overseer, or pastor, is mainly a local charge; unlike that of an evangelist, which involves more or less itinerating. Therefore, the elder may much more readily support himself.

It is a question whether the system of a salaried ministry being now all but universal, it is not even more necessary in Britain in 1896 than in Achaia about A.D. 60 for the Lord's servants to labour for their support. On the other hand—in these days of excessive competition and labour struggles—there is a lamentable lack of leisure to visit and care for the sheep, as well as for prayer and study of the Scriptures. Both sides ought to be well weighed.

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.—XII.

"THE RED HEIFER."

(Numbers xix.).

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,
Author of "Separation from the World," &c.

IN the Epistle to the Hebrews the key is given which unlocks many of the Old Testament types, and this is one which affords special instruction. It is referred to in Hebrews ix. 13, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

The "red heifer" was specially a provision for the wilderness. The people were there liable to many defilements. Some of these were of such a character that the defilement passed off at the even (see Leviticus xi. 24, 25, 27, 28, &c., &c.). Others required that the defiled person "bathe himself in water, wash his clothes and be unclean until the even" (see Leviticus xvii. 15). Still even in this instance there was no necessity for the defilement remaining longer than the setting of the sun.

Probably this lifting away of defilement was connected with the time of "the evening sacrifice," which, as it was killed and consumed and ascended in smoke from the altar, was accepted by Jehovah as cleansing the people from ceremonial defilements, at least of the nature above specified.

But there were other defilements of a deeper and more serious kind, which are named in Numbers v. 2, viz.: leprosy, an issue, and defilement by the dead. It is for this latter kind of defilement that the ordinance of the red heifer was appointed.

These could not be removed in one day—a period of seven days at least must elapse before cleansing could be effected. The touching of the dead body of an unclean beast was defiling, but that was removable by the evening (Leviticus xi. 24). But defilement through touching even the bone of a man was of such a nature that seven days must elapse ere it could be cleansed.

Leprosy and the issue indicated a diseased condition of the person, and fitly represented the uprising and breaking forth of inward corruption.

But one personally sound in health, and by no fault of theirs, but by the force of circumstances for which they were in no way responsible, might become defiled through contact with the dead body of a man.

One only ever lived whose touch, instead of conveying defilement to the living, conveyed life to the dead. In Him there was no response to evil presented from without. As a sunbeam enters the filthiest scene and retains its purity, so the Son of God, though coming in daily contact with sin and corruption in every form, remained the "holy, harmless, undefiled" One, and "separate from sinners," though ever their Friend.

How different with us! Alas! the contact with the dead of daily life never fails to involve the necessity for cleansing. The eye, the ear, the senses, are inlets for evil too readily received, and ever liable to be taken advantage of by Satan.

As the mariner becomes aware of the proximity of an iceberg by the lowering of the temperature, so does the contact of daily life with a dead and corrupt world lower the spiritual temperature and exhaust spiritual vitality. Happy is he who so "girds up the loins of his mind" as to "keep his garments unspotted from the world."

The heifer was to be without "spot" as well as without "blemish." The "spot" would be that which the eye could most readily detect, and answers to the perfection of the Lord Jesus as seen by man. "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" was the challenge with which He silenced His adversaries.

A "blemish" might be unperceived, or it might be internal, and thus would represent that which only the eye of God could detect.

But even searched by the omniscience of God, the Holy One was "without blemish."

Another requirement was that it should be one "upon which never came yoke."

The yoke was for the controlling of the animal. The young bullock, unaccustomed to it, kicked and chafed under it until its will was broken and it yielded submission to the authority it did its utmost to resist. An animal which had so been broken in, rendered obedient by compulsion, could no more have represented the obedient Son of God than one which was spotted or blemished.

Of Him it is written, "Thy law is within My heart." "I delight to do Thy will, O My God." "Therefore doth My Father love Me because I lay down My life that I may take it again." "No man taketh it from Me; I lay it down of Myself." "As the Father hath given Me commandment, even so I do." "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work."

There was no yoke required; no opposing will to be broken; no bias to the right or to the left to be rectified. For Him to know His Father's will was to do it, and to do it joyfully and perfectly and exhaustively.

As the ox requires the yoke, so the bit and the bridle are for the horse and the mule. The contrast to this is, "I will guide thee with Mine eye" (see Psalm xxxii. 8, 9). They need the control of force because of their lack of understanding. It is our privilege to be dealt with not as "beasts," without understanding, but as children instructed and educated: not as those who have to be goaded and stricken, but as those to whom a glance of the eye has the force of an imperative command.

The "backslider" is not merely one who slips back, but one who pulls back, who "withdraws the shoulder," chafes against the yoke, and so causes himself wounds and suffering. Hence the expression, "I will *heal* their backslidings." But this can only be when the will is broken.

Eleazar and not Aaron was to act in this instance.

The priest who officiated in this ordinance became himself defiled, and could not until the evening be admitted to the place of the clean (see verse 7).

Aaron, being specially a type of Christ as High Priest, was debarred from incurring a defilement that would have even temporarily suspended his priestly representation of the people of God.

His first act was to bring her forth outside the camp.

From Numbers v. 2 we learn that this was the place of the defiled.

From Numbers xv. 35, 36 it is seen to be the place of judgment on the guilty.

The death of the offering took place outside the camp, and there in a clean place were the ashes that remained laid up and kept.

It was all a provision for the unclean, therefore it all transpires in the place where it is required. The salvation of God is brought nigh to those who need it. "The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy mouth." The Cross was "without the gate." It was not within the holy precincts of the temple that the Lamb of God was offered up, where those who needed most the cleansing were excluded, but out where the guilty and defiled, the Gentile and the Jew alike, could find access. And all the grace procured by the Cross is now brought down in the Gospel to the sinner. The bread is, as it were, put into his mouth, the water is at his lips, the Word is sounding in his ears, the serpent is lifted up before his eyes.

Thus are the provisions of grace brought to those who need them, whether guilty sinners or defiled saints.

One was to slay the heifer before Eleazar's face. In the anti-type this was carried out by the wicked hands of man. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified Him" (Ac. ii. 23).

"He poured out His soul unto death"—it was the voluntary act of the Son of God. He had power to lay down His life, and He had power to take it again. But the guilt of His death lay at the door of the Jewish nation. They were His "betrayers and murderers" (Acts vii. 52).

The next step was the sprinkling of her blood, by Eleazar, directly before the tabernacle of the congregation, seven times.

The death was unto God. Jehovah was the first to be considered. "He offered Himself without spot to God." The seven times sprinkling implied perfection. The tabernacle was Jehovah's dwelling-place. Therefore was the blood sprinkled before it in recognition of the prior claim of Jehovah. The cleansing of the defiled was the end in view, but the claims of God must first be satisfied, His law magnified, His righteousness vindicated.

Jehovah's response to the cry, "It is finished," was the rending of the vail. His claim had been met by the sevenfold sprinkled blood; that being accomplished, the grave could be opened and life and immortality brought to light (see Matt. xxvii. 51-53).

(To be continued.)

REFLECTIONS ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

CHAPTER V.—*Continued.*

IN our last paper we were occupied with the expression, "the love of God," and we traced its expansion through verses 6 to 11, until we reached the wonderful statement, "we joy in God;" and special emphasis seems to be laid upon the fact that it is through our Lord Jesus Christ we do so.

All the rays of quickening and enlightening truth are focussed in Christ; they converge toward Him as their object because they emanate from Him as their source. This is

THE SALIENT POINT TO GRASP

here, from verse 11 and onward. Just now, in passing, I wish to make a remark which may possibly facilitate our more readily apprehending the force and beauty of this important section of our chapter. A comparison of the authorised revision of A.D. 1611 with that of A.D. 1881 will show that in the former, verses 13-17 are treated as parenthetical, while in the latter they are rather emphasised as being both a continuation and an expansion of the particular phase of the argument which commences at verse 12. Now, which of the two are we to follow? Here again the context convinces me that the punctuation in the later revision is the correct one.

Now, first of all, we have two great personalities contrasted, namely,

ADAM AND CHRIST,

the "first Adam" and the "last Adam" of 1 Corinthians xv.; the one a living soul, and the other a "life-giving Spirit"; the first man, of the earth, earthy; and the second Man, the Lord from heaven.

Through the first, sin enters the world, involving all his descendants in death; through the second, righteousness enters, giving to all who believe in Him eternal life. One offence, one act of disobedience on the part of the first Adam, brought condemnation upon all men; one righteousness, one act of obedience on the part of the second Adam, brings justification to all who believe in Him.

THE FALL AND THE CROSS

include a melancholy interval of time between

them. The fall commenced the history of man as a sinner, through one man's disobedience; the Cross, the great culmination of the second Man's obedience, was the judicial end of that history before God for everyone that believes in Jesus; the Cross, I say, for that is the prominent thing before us here; while it is perfectly true that the whole life of Jesus our Lord on earth was one unbroken obedience to God. But it is in the death we find the great remedy for sin. Of course His whole life was for us as well as His death, but it is in the death we find redemption. The reason why this death of Christ is so all-important lies in the fact that since the fall death reigned by the first Adam, and over him; and if salvation were to be effected, it could only be through the second Adam slaying death in His own dying.

MOSES AND THE LAW

come in as a test or proof of man's true condition as a sinner, a member of a fallen race under one fallen head. The law inflicted death as a penalty; but death was in the world long before the law hurled its righteous anathemas at the guilty head of the sinner; it reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had never received any prescribed law to break. Adam transgressed by overstepping the divine limitation as to the fruit he might partake of; then death reigned over his posterity in consequence, because sin was transmitted through descent, and death by sin—the one true and only exception being the ever-blessed Son of God, our most holy Lord Jesus Christ, God over all, blessed for ever.

Hereditary descent rendering the sons of fallen Adam helpless to extricate themselves,

DIVINE GRACE WITH ITS FREE GIFT

comes forward to the rescue. Adam, by a contrast, at once impressive and touching, is presented as a "figure of Him that was to come," even the predicted Deliverer, the seed of the woman. If the first Adam headed a race ruined by his own disobedience, the second Adam, dying and rising again, will head a new race, even those He redeemed to God by His blood, out of the ruin of the first Adam. The moment I believed in Jesus I was justified, born again, and made to stand in Christ, my risen Head, simultaneously; just

as the moment I first breathed I was born a sinner, under a fallen head, Adam. This is true of the weakest believer.

Would to God that the great truth of

CHRIST'S HEADSHIP

were reverently learned and confessed in these days of loose thoughts and careless statements about His most adorable Person! The very fact that the Holy Ghost calls Him the "*last Adam*," in signification of this headship of a new creation, precludes all thought of His having been involved federally in the ruin of the first Adam. On this vital point Holy Scripture speaks powerfully and positively. It was His entire moral and physical separateness *from* sinners that constituted Him so effectual a Saviour *for* sinners. Blessed be His name for His voluntary humiliation! His be all the glory!

Raised from the death into which He descended of His own voluntary will for our sakes, He brings us into living union, by faith, with Himself at the same moment in which He justifies us, the ungodly, by faith without works.

AN IMPORTANT INQUIRY.

To which headship do you belong now? Are you in the old Adam, or in Christ? By nature you belong to the former, and unless converted to God by grace, you must also have the doom and disgrace of Adam's ruin throughout eternity. But if you have accepted Christ, then by grace you are in Him, you belong to His Headship, as one of the new and heavenly creation. Who will refuse such a transfer? Who would not reign in life by one Jesus Christ, rather than be reigned over by death in Adam?

GRACE

is indeed a charming sound! What wonders it has wrought, and yet how little it is understood. The inborn legality of the heart will always "out" directly the conscience is brought into contact with God. To any really anxious inquirer who may read these "Reflections" I say, trying to work before you have peace will only make you feel worse and worse. Why, the law was given only to make sin appear as hateful as it really is. It is when people give up their own efforts as a bad job that grace

comes in abounding over all their sin, with peace and pardon for the troubled spirit. But remember that

SIN REIGNS AS MONARCH OF ALL IT SURVEYS

in the unsaved man, and its baneful rule is not wanting in sorrowful demonstrations of its existence all around us. At last sin hands over its dominion to the "king of terrors," grim, relentless *death*, who then sways his weird and desolating sceptre over his victims. Only think of this, the unsaved one is the slave of a despot. Intellect, possessions, position, abilities are all pressed into service, and the man is just *fettered*.

But let a man get saved, and immediately there is

A NEW KING ENTHRONED.

Grace mounts the throne from which it deposes sin. Grace reigns. Sin is still in the nature of the believer, but it dare not reign under a normally Christian condition. It has been dethroned, and that without even a request to abdicate. There is as wide a difference between sin *existing* and sin *reigning*: as there is between the rebel in irons and his conqueror in royal state.

Now, just as absolutely as sin reigned unto death once, so grace is to reign through righteousness unto life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord. Yes, thank God, it is in Him, whose Lordship is undisputed, whose authority is absolute! Sin was a destroyer: grace is a restorer; sin introduced curse: grace introduced blessing.

GRACE REIGNS IN THE GOSPEL.

so freely preached everywhere in the name of Jesus Christ. It is a gigantic power pervading the present age in battle-array against the evils of the age. It meets sin, the great *obstruction*, and overcomes it with powerful *destruction*, weakens its energies by corrective *instruction*, and rears up over its ruins a sublime *reconstruction* of the moral constitution. It transforms the mind, reforms the ways, because it conforms the man to Christ by that power of regeneration which brings him into a new creation under the second Adam. This is salvation and conversion.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XII.

*THE PARABLE OF THE BELIEVING
LITTLE CHILD.*By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

MATTHEW XVIII. 1-14.

Verses 1-4. "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying: 'Who is the greatest [greater] in the kingdom of heaven [the heavens]?' And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven [the heavens]. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest [greater] in the kingdom of heaven [the heavens].'"

THE disciples inquire of the Lord Jesus concerning greatness in the kingdom of the heavens. The Lord calls a little child, who, it appears from verse 6, was a believer in Him, and set him in the midst of them, and having taken him up in His arms, according to Mark ix. 36, He teaches them that, in order to enter into the kingdom of the heavens, conversion is absolutely necessary. Man is born in sin and shapen in iniquity. The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; therefore, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," or enter into it (John iii. 3-5). Greatness in the kingdom is measured by humility, emptiness, and subjection. The less of self and the more of Christ, the greater; none of self and all of Christ, the greatest.

Verses 5, 6. "And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me. But whoso shall offend [stumble] one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a large millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

The Lord Jesus identifies the little child with Himself, which is expressed by His taking him up in His arms; so that whoever receives such an one in His name receives Him, while an offence committed against such a little believing one involves stupendous guilt, and exposes to the severest judgment.

The OFFENCE here spoken of consists especially in putting a STUMBLING-BLOCK in the way of the young believer, so as to turn his steps aside from the paths of righteousness,

holiness, or of truth; enticing him into sin, or away from the grand fundamental truths of the Word of God.

Verse 7. "Woe unto the world because of offences [occasions of stumbling], for it must needs be that offences come; but woe unto the man by whom the offence [stumbling-block] cometh."

The Spirit speaketh expressly that in the last days perilous times shall come, and the Scriptures abound with warnings as to the departure from the faith and truth of God which is characteristic of the times of the end. Scriptural and Divine truth must needs be thus tested, but woe to the originators and propagators of doctrines which are subversive of the faith of the unwary and the young.

Verses 8, 9. "Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend [stumble] thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend [stumble] thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire [the Gehenna of fire]."

There is an inseparable connection between divine truth and life; between life spiritual and life eternal. Hence the vital importance of maintaining the truth of God, and the fearful danger of imbibing and maintaining deadly error. When vital truths are in question it is not a mere matter of opinion, or of following this or that leader, but a question of spiritual life and death. When it comes to this, no personal or relative considerations, dear and important as they may be, even as a right hand, or foot, or eye, are to be allowed to have a moment's weight. The consequences or results are eternal; for, whatever the false theology of the present day may affirm, there is eternal life for the overcomer, and there is a Gehenna of fire—and that fire is everlasting—for those who surrender the truth of God, and accept the lie of Satan.

Verses 10, 11. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven [the heavens] their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven [the heavens]. For the Son of Man is come [came] to save that which was lost."

To be a son or daughter of Jehovah God Almighty gives a dignity superior to anything earthly, whether of birth, rank, or wealth,

whether the child of God be old or young, rich or poor, of exalted or of humble rank. Such an one is born of God, regenerated and indwelt by the divine, eternal Spirit; and though by nature lost, the Son of Man came into the world to save him, at no less cost than by the sacrifice of Himself. The world may overlook and despise them, but those holy and mighty angels, which stand before the Majesty of heaven and earth, recognise in them the heirs of salvation and everlasting glory, and are sent forth to minister to them while sojourners on earth.

Verses 12-14. "How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of [over] that sheep than of [over] the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven [the heavens] that one of these little ones should perish."

There is a striking similarity between this parable and that in Luke xv. 3-7. There it is the LOST sheep sought and found; here it is the sheep that had GONE ASTRAY sought, found, and restored.

With regard to the expression, "one of these little ones," it is important to bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, in verse 6, "One of these little ones WHICH BELIEVE in Me." Thus we learn that it is a young believer who has gone astray, over whom the Father's heart is yearning. One of these young or weak disciples has been corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, the stumbling-block of false doctrine has been put in his way, his steps have been turned aside from the paths of piety and truth, and he has been driven out to wander in the dark mountains of doubt, delusion, and error; but the Good Shepherd who died for him is seeking his restoration.

The Church of God has need to seek, by the aid of the Spirit of God, the restoration of the wanderer; while the heavenly Father is waiting with outstretched arms to welcome his return, for it is not His will that one of those believing little ones should perish. The recovery of such from the error of his way is a matter of special joy to the Father, the Spirit, and the Son, and to all who are in fellowship with them (James v. 19, 20; Jude 22, 23).

THE MODEL PRAYER.—IX.

THE TWO-FOLD CHARACTER OF TEMPTATION.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, Wei-hai-wei, China.

II.—TEMPTATION FROM SATAN.

AS we have seen, Satan tempts in order to involve us in sin. He is man's inveterate enemy, and a foe of no mean mettle. The Bible speaks of him as "the old serpent the devil." He is old and *experienced*. For well nigh 6000 years he has studied the human heart; he knows the most of us better than we know ourselves; he suits his temptations to different characters and temperaments; he is a skilful fisher of men; he knows, alas, too well! the baits for different individuals; and he is as a serpent—*cunning and insinuating*.

Again, he is likened to a roaring lion—fierce, bold, and determined. Who would dare to face a lion, the king of the forest, when he is determinedly seeking his prey? Yet better face a lion of the forest any day than, unaided and alone, meet the onslaught of the lion of the pit. Again, he takes the form of an angel of light, and then he is most of all to be dreaded. No mortal man is a match for this awful being. Yet he is just a *creature*, with all a creature's limitations, and, apart from the individual's own consent, he can involve no one in sin. He can only tempt us *to the extent that God allows him*, and God often uses his assaults for the good of His people.

Satan designed to wholly destroy Job, but God knew His servant, and allowed Satan to do his worst against Job, short of taking his life. It but served to rid him of a few rags of self-righteousness and the dregs of his earthly wisdom; and it is instructive to notice that in the New Testament, when the Patriarch's testing is referred to, Satan, the instrument, is quite lost sight of (James v. 11). We can see "the end of the Lord" with Job, though we may not discern the end of the Lord with ourselves. But we know that the object of the Lord, in all the ways He leads, is our present and eternal good.

It may be that the case of Job suggested to the enemy a mode of procedure with the apostles (see Luke xxii. 31, 32). Not content

with possessing Judas, he desired the whole twelve. Satan designed to get rid of genuine wheat; God used him only to sift away a little of the chaff. It will be noticed that though the words were addressed to Peter, it was the whole band that Satan had requested to get into his power. And all this had taken place though they knew nothing of it. Our Lord recognised that Peter was the foremost of the apostles. For good or bad he always took the lead. Satan also knew it, and probably had special designs against him. Peter overcome, the others, he might have thought, would soon follow. Leaders among God's hosts have been in all ages the objects of Satan's particular attacks. Destroy a pillar and the house will soon fall; entice a guide into the pit and the sheep will soon follow. So that the leading men among the assemblies should be especially and constantly remembered in prayer. The Scripture speaks of "chief men among the brethren" (Acts xv. 22), and one pities the company of disciples where there are not such known, loved, and highly-esteemed for their work's sake.

Notice, the Lord did not pray that Peter should not be sifted, but that during the trial his faith should not fail or be eclipsed. (It is the root from which we get our English word, eclipse.) And though Satan partially succeeded, the apostle came out of the trial a humbler yet truer man than he had been before. So shall it be in the case of every genuine believer in Christ. Satan's furnace, though heated seven times hotter than usual, shall never destroy one bit of the true gold of heaven.

III.—HOW TO TREAT TEMPTATIONS.

(1) Trials from God must be *endured*. Our Father loves us too well to permit us to wholly escape them. He knows how necessary to our training they are. At times He hedges us in so that we cannot avoid life's testings. Any unusual occurrences, that even remotely touch us, should lead to exercise of soul as to the lessons to be learnt from them. We should neither treat them lightly nor faint under them. The blessedness belongs to the man who *endures* temptations (James i. 12). He has both a present and eternal recompense. We truly call those blessed who endured temptation, as Abraham,

Job, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, and others; and through God's tender pity and compassion you and I, fellow-believer, shall soon stand among the company of those who have endured temptation, and have entered into their rest; and when the Lord comes we, with them, shall receive "the crown of life which the Lord promised to them that love Him."

(2) *Temptations from Satan must be overcome.* The adversary can never get any more advantage over us than we allow him. The petition, "Lead us not into temptation," is a confession of self-distrust and dread of temptation, and if we live in the spirit of this request we shall not unnecessarily expose either ourselves or others to circumstances that would likely lead to a fall. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, is our great weapon for overcoming all the assaults of the enemy. Thus Christ, our Leader before us, has conquered, and so must we. The Bible is a complete armoury in which may be found a weapon by which we can overcome every onslaught of the foe. Yet this alone is not sufficient. A mere intellectual grasp of the Scriptures will only make us heady and high-minded. So, combined with it, there must be constant watching and prayer (Mark xiv. 38; Eph. vi. 18, &c.). For, without doubt, the oft-quoted lines of Dr. Watts are true, and

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

(3) THERE ARE OTHER TEMPTATIONS

that are to be *fled from*. Peter assures us that in resisting the devil he will flee from us. Paul exhorts Timothy to flee youthful lusts and covetousness (2 Tim. ii. 22; 1 Tim. vi. 11). It is most helpful for a Christian man to know his own limitations, whether of moral strength, mental ability, or spiritual gift. Joseph fled temptation and was cast into a prison; but the prison cell proved but the stepping-stone to a king's palace. David, in an idle hour, dallied with temptation, and brought distress upon himself and a curse on some of his descendants. Lust and murder marred the lives of more than one of David's sons. These things are recorded for our instruction, that we may follow the example of the one and turn from that of the other. Timothy had all his life been under godly influences; he was a truly converted

man, and a gifted and honoured servant of the Lord, yet, as we have seen, Paul does not hesitate to warn him to flee youthful lusts and idolatry. And perhaps, to some of us, the two-fold exhortation is not altogether superfluous. There are

SEVERAL PRACTICAL LESSONS

that I would like to point out ere I stop.

(1) We must endeavour to distinguish between Satan's temptings and God's testings. "For God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man." If the devil is the father of a sin, the mother thereof is corrupt human nature. The origin, course, and end of sin is thus described: "Lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and sin when it is full grown, bringeth forth death."

(2) Let us never think that we are tempted beyond endurance, or that our temptations are more than other people's; God weighs each temptation and adjusts it to our strength. It is in love that He tries us, and with the temptation He also makes a way of escape, that we may be able to endure it (1 Cor. x. 13).

(3) Often, in answer to prayer, the Lord gives grace to bear the trial, rather than wholly removing it. It was needed, or it would not have been sent. For God to remove it too soon would be to defeat His own purpose. But He does not leave us to bear it alone; whatever the trial, He whispers, "My child, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 7-9).

(4) Should a brother stumble, let us remember that "he was tempted." Had we been in the same circumstances we, too, might have been overcome. The young and inexperienced are most severe on the lapses of others. The older saint, who knows the power of indwelling sin and of a cruel tempter, is humble and self-distrustful, and errs, if at all, *on the side of mercy* (Gal. vi. 1).

(5) Let us ever keep in mind the end of the Lord with us, the object He has in view. If we do not, temptations will be perplexing and discouraging, and we shall faint by the way. But as we consider the goal to be reached, the end to be obtained, we can even "count it all joy when we fall into manifold temptations" (James i. 2).

CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST.

TO close my eyes, and like a child to rest,
My head close nestled on Thy loving breast,

Confidingly I whisper, Lord, to Thee,
How weak I am, and what I long to be,
Confessing how I wander, yet my feet
Seek ever for this calm and safe retreat.

I cannot stay away! the false world smiles,
Vain pleasure calls me on, and Satan wiles;
Yet 'midst it all, my soul longs for the rest
I only find upon my Saviour's breast.

How sweet it is, this foretaste here of heaven,
My wanderings confessed, my sins forgiven,
Communion sweet, unbroken, love and grace,
No cloud to hide the beauty of Thy face,
Sweet peace, that passeth understanding here,
Deep love that casteth out all thought of fear,
Calm rest in which my spirit can rejoice,
And in the stillness listen for Thy voice.

O Master, speak a single word of love,
That I Thy tender faithfulness may prove.

I listen; lo! the answer sweet I hear,
How could I ever have a doubt or fear?
Oh, joy supreme, oh, matchless love Divine,
I hear Him whisper to me, "Thou art Mine."
My soul bounds forth in rapture and in love,
All doubt and fear my spirit soars above,
Then at His feet with chastened joy I bow,
And answer, "Lord, my portion blest art Thou,"
For I am His, and I can call Him mine,
Yet marvel at His grace and love Divine. J. A. W.

SERVICE.

"We may each serve Him none the less that our spheres are different. You, He calls to *action*, me, to *patience*." "Let Him choose for me how I shall serve Him; be mine the one aim of doing, or of bearing, His will, in most perfect and joyous devotedness."

"One good I covet, and *that one alone*—
To do Thy will, from selfish motives free,
And to prefer a dungeon to a throne,
And pain to comfort, when it pleases Thee."

"It is the *quality*, not so much the *amount*, of service that is worth caring for." "No man can serve God otherwise than by doing His will, and that blessed will can be just as delightfully served by *patience* as by *labours*. We glorify God, not by mere doing, nor by mere giving, but by what we are." J. D.

JOTTINGS FROM ADDRESSES ON THE KINGDOM.

PART IV.

By ALEXANDER STEWART.

THIS chapter (Matt. xiii.) begins with the parable of the sower. Verse 10: "And the disciples came and said unto Him, 'Why speakest Thou to them in parables?' He said unto them, 'Because it is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven [or the heavens], but to them it is not given.'"

Now, all along, up to this point, we have been speaking of a kingdom that is not mysterious. There is nothing mysterious about David ruling in Jerusalem or Solomon after him, or in the rule of Nebuchadnezzar or the Medes and Persians, or the Greeks or the Romans, and I may say, neither is there anything mysterious in the reign of our Lord Jesus Christ when He shall come back in visible glory.

Whatever a "mystery" may be beside, it is something that requires to be explained. The kingdom which is the subject in these parables requires to be explained, and it is of this kingdom that I am now going to speak.

The seven parables of this chapter describe this kingdom in mystery, as it exists at this present moment while the King is in heaven, and yet the kingdom is going on.

Take now the Lord's interpretation of the parable of the sower. He seems very far away from a kingdom and kings when we have an humble parable like this.

"Behold a sower went forth to sow." Not a man with a crown on his head, but, as you have seen, a man going through the fields with a sack of seed.

I presume this sower not only represents the Lord Jesus Christ, but all those also who have followed Him since in the sowing of that seed which is the Word of God.

But in the Lord's interpretation we get the results of the sowing. The results differ in every case, but the seed is the same in all. First of all, it is the Evil One who snatches away the seed sown by the wayside. In the third—the thorny ground—it is the cares of this world that prevent the seed coming to fruit. The first shows us Satan opposing; the third shows us the world; and it is not difficult

to interpret that which lies between. "When tribulation and persecution arise because of the Word"—what is so trying and painful to flesh and blood?—"by-and-by they are offended," and so it is proved that the Word had no real lodgment in their heart.

In the first case, the devil prevailed; in the second, the flesh; in the third, the world; and thus the sowing of the good seed was rendered nugatory.

In the fourth, the seed did come to fruit, because it was sown in good ground. That is where the Holy Spirit prevails.

Two things I would like to say. There are many here who preach the Gospel. Every time it is preached the same is happening. But first, take care that what we are sowing is the seed of the Word of God. Sawdust won't do; gravel won't do; gold dust won't do; it must be the Word of God. Another thing we must see to is that the man is right who sows the seed. "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" It is good to have the message right, but it is good also to have the messenger right. Paul wrote to Timothy, "Take heed," not to the doctrine first, important as that is, but first "take heed unto thyself," and then to "the doctrine."

Two preachers were comparing notes; one remarked, "It is extraordinary that some are continually being brought to God through your preaching, and next to none through mine." It was Saturday night, and shortly the other replied, "I must be off to *steep the seed*."

The seed was the same, but the process through which it passed in the soul of the man made the difference.

It is one thing to preach the Gospel, and another thing to preach the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven in saving power. But even so we may expect the devil to prevail in part; the flesh in some, the world in others, but blessed be God! as regards one part the Holy Spirit will prevail.

Another thing I have to say is this, there is a secondary sense in which these differences apply to Christians. I don't suppose we ever listen to the Word of God ministered to the saints but one or other of these forces prevails. With some it is in at the one ear and out at the other. Others enjoy the Word, but it

leaves no permanent effect on their lives. In others the cares of this world, specially with the poor, and the deceitfulness of riches, specially as regards the rich, these choke the Word, so that in measure fruitfulness is hindered.

But there is the other force, the power of the Holy Spirit making fruitful in differing degrees, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundredfold.

We now come to the second parable; that of the tares and the wheat. This is not a sowing with varied results, but a good sowing and a counter sowing. Two sowers are now in the field, not one. "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man." "The harvest is the end of the world" [or age], meaning this present dispensation. It is a mixed kingdom, for there are in it those who "offend" and "do iniquity."

The one sower sows good seed, *i.e.*, "The children of the kingdom." The other sows tares, that is a sort of imitation wheat, right in among them; so that the aspect presented by the whole is a mixed thing of wheat and tares, and this is the kingdom of heaven. This indeed is a mystery, and requires an explanation. And yet this is the aspect that the kingdom presents here and all over the world in what is known as Christendom, and this is to continue right on till "the end of the age."

The servants asked, "Shall we root up the tares?" He answers no, not till the end of the age; then the separation will be made, not by men, but by angels, and at the command of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But mark, this has nothing whatever to do with discipline in the church. This is not church discipline, but kingdom judgment; two very distinct things.

Now is not the time for taking out the heretics and burning them, even though we could be sure as to who were the true and who were the false. Matthew xiii is kingdom judgment at the end of the age. 1 Corinthians v. is church discipline on a flagrant sinner.

(To be continued.)

"SHE pleaseth me well," said Samson. Does she please the Lord? let us rather ask. Young man, let your wife be both a child of God and a Godly child.

REGINALD RADCLIFFE.

MRS. RADCLIFFE has done good service in publishing these "Recollections"* of her beloved husband. Reginald Radcliffe was indeed a "burning and a shining light," and his removal from earth on 25th October, 1895, was mourned by all who were privileged to know him. The service of the Lord was no pastime to him. From the earliest days of conversion until his departure to be with Christ he was "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Few have been so much used as he, not only in soul winning, but in encouraging and stirring up Christians to whole-hearted service for their soon coming Lord and Master.

Mrs. Radcliffe's reminiscences of the "Revival" days of precious memory are most refreshing and inspiring. Many of the principal actors in that wondrous work of grace are brought before us. Amongst those mentioned are Brownlow North, Lord Kintore, Hay MacDowall Grant, Richard Weaver, Duncan Mathieson, The Duchess of Gordon, John Hambleton, W. P. Lockhart, Gordon Forlong, Denham Smith, and T. S. Henry.

Mr. Radcliffe, though a Liverpool solicitor, was enabled to spend a large part of his time in the Lord's work. When a mere youth he went to London for the sole purpose of preaching the Gospel in the open air. "Instant in season, out of season," described the man.

One who knew him intimately bears testimony to his Christian character in the following words: "His consecration to the Lord Jesus was an absolutely unswerving and complete surrender, and from the earliest time of my recollection of him, he loved the Saviour's work. He delighted to be engaged in it, and he felt it impossible to be silent. He preached in all possible places in the name of the Lord. It was most uncommon, unusual, and unfashionable in those days; but he ever spoke simple words which thousands, aye, hundreds of thousands, never forgot. During an acquaintance of nearly fifty years, I can verily say that I never knew him do an inconsistent act."

An old friend of his, a Liverpool gentleman, said: "I never knew a man who so deliberately

* "Recollections of Reginald Radcliffe," by His Wife.
Price 4/6, post free, Witness Office, Glasgow.

kept himself in the background and pushed others forward. There are many in Liverpool, and throughout the whole kingdom, to bear testimony to the fact that it was the stimulus received from Reginald Radcliffe which prompted them to devote themselves to Christ. He was filled with the love of Christ and love for his fellow-men. He forgot himself to work for his Master; and his devoted life is before us now as a solemn lesson to all who profess to be followers of the Lord Jesus."

He had an intense, burning passion for the salvation of souls; and whenever a door was opened of the Lord, he gladly entered it with the message of mercy, lovingly yet faithfully warning the perishing of their guilt and danger, and urging them to flee to Christ, the sinner's Friend. Probably the most fruitful Gospel campaign he had was in 1859, in the

NORTH OF SCOTLAND.

This was truly a remarkable blessing. The "granite city" (Aberdeen) came in for a large share of it, very many professing to accept of Christ as their Saviour. Dr. H. M. Williamson, then Presbyterian minister of Huntly, and now of Belfast, gives a graphic sketch of the work. The spiritual condition of Aberdeenshire at that time is thus described by him: "Any profession of personal salvation, as possessed and enjoyed, was branded as presumption, hypocrisy, or self-righteousness. The district was called, spiritually, 'the Dead Sea.' The preaching of morality, instead of salvation by grace, for half a century, had covered large districts with immorality, illegitimacy, drunkenness, and covetousness." "It would require," he adds, "a volume to recite the triumphs wrought by the Spirit of God through prayer and the preaching of the Word." "The

SECRET OF THE BLESSING,"

he remarks, "which came from God to the awakening of whole districts, the quickening of Christians, and the salvation of multitudes, was prayer, continued, fervent, believing, expectant." "There was never anything very striking in Mr. Radcliffe's addresses in the way of depth of thought, or freshness of illustration, or novelty of interpretation. Through communion with the living Christ the Word came forth with living and life-giving

power. While sojourning at Huntly Lodge it was Mr. Radcliffe's wont to wander in the woods, alone with God. While thus holding communion with God, through His Word, some text or truth apprehended him, so as to take possession of him. Thus held by the truth, when the evening came and the meeting was held, he poured it forth like a torrent of lava, blistering the conscience, awakening the sleeper, terrifying the careless, and in the bright light of the Spirit revealing the Lamb of God. The Word at his mouth was a hammer, it broke the rocks; it was a fire, it melted the hearts of men. Then followed the meeting for inquirers, when, with Divine wisdom and tenderness, he was found binding up the broken-hearted, pouring in oil and wine, and pointing clearly to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Speaking of an address delivered by him at Gartly, near Huntly, Dr. Williamson says: "The whole address did not occupy above twenty minutes, but the people were melted like wax before the presence of the Lord."

At Rothiemay, we are told on one occasion "The church was crowded, and he commenced his address; but as he went on, we who had come with him, felt the absence of the power of God, and with sinking hearts began to call upon God. He, too, felt that God was not speaking by him. He suddenly paused, said we must appeal to God, and he poured forth his soul in prayer. As he prayed, the house was as if shaken; every heart was moved; a great awe of God fell upon all, and God wrought mightily." We give a

PART OF AN ADDRESS

delivered by him as reported in the *Revival*—now the *Christian*. "You say, because I have sinned, therefore God hates me. If there is one lie more direct from the devil than another it is this. It is a lie of the devil to say that God hates you because you are a sinner. Satan is a liar from the beginning, and the father of it; he lied to our first parents when he said, 'Ye shall not surely die.' If you say God hates sin, you say truly, yea, the sinner unconverted, whether he be minister or no minister—whether he be polite and respectable, or whether he be abominable and unclean—I say he is corrupt, polluted, foul, and stinking

before God. Until he is converted he daily breeds pestilence and does evil."

Once he wrote the following words: "When I take a peep into heaven I see there my Lord; and His name is love. On His heart I see love to me, even to me, Reginald Radcliffe; yes, what love to me, who of all men should be damned. When I try to count this love I find it is infinite and unfathomable. If I lived a hundred years I could not count the grains of it; then how much does Jesus love me? Infinitely! I am set to swim in an ocean of love. I am infinitely under the surface; and infinitely from the bottom; and infinitely surrounded. Would I could bring thousands to swim here!"

"PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE."

In the open-air and inside, in halls and drawing-rooms, in churches and chapels, in riding-schools and boarding-schools, in theatres and music-halls, in prisons and casinos he is seen telling out the story of the Cross. At Bristol and Barnstaple, Norwich and Manchester, Glasgow and Liverpool, Perth and Stirling, Dublin and London, Exeter and Aldershot, we find him casting the Gospel net on the "right side of the ship," and beckoning his "partners" to help him in drawing it to "shore." Not content with heralding the message of mercy throughout the British Isles, his heart of love yearned over the perishing in other European lands. In the early part of 1861 we find him and Mr. T. S. Henry preaching in the Napoleon Circus, in Paris, to 3,000 persons. The interest in the work in the metropolis of France increased and deepened, and though neither he nor Mr. Henry could speak French, all that they said having to be conveyed to the people through interpretation, a mighty work was done. Halls, schools, ball-rooms and churches were crowded. Dr. Monod, a devoted French pastor, declared that he had seen "more souls converted in the five or six weeks of Mr. Radcliffe's labours in Paris than in the forty-two years of his own ministry in the same city. Not a meeting was held without conversions. The very policemen at the door were seen weeping on account of sin."

God having so clearly set His seal to his Parisian visit, Mr. Radcliffe visited Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and

Russia, preaching through interpreters to large and attentive audiences. Eternity alone will reveal the incalculable good done through these "missionary journeys." In later years of his life he was greatly used by the Lord in stirring up Christians to active, aggressive Gospel effort. He had no sympathy with clericalism. The last time we heard him was in a large meeting of Christian workers in London, when he pressed upon believers their responsibility in sending or carrying the message of reconciliation to the millions who were dying in midnight darkness. He told of a Church of England curate who asked him by what or by whose authority he preached. "Let him that heareth say come," was his characteristic reply. He threw himself heart and soul into every movement that had for its object the evangelisation of the heathen. One of his sayings was this: "If there were more abiding in Christ, there would be less abiding in Britain."

He visited large centres in England, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and the United States, and pressed the Lord's claims on Christians, urging them to carry out His last command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Once whilst speaking on the feeding of the five thousand, he said: "Imagine the apostles are here distributing the food, and that this great assembly is the hungry multitude waiting to be fed. They go to the first row of benches distributing the food, and to the second, to the third, and the fourth, and so on to the eighth row. But at the end of the eighth row they stop, turn back to the first, and feed those eight rows again, pouring bread and fish into their laps, and piling it almost over their heads, nearly smothering them with the food, thus leaving the starving multitudes behind and uncared for. What do you think the Lord would say if He were there? 'Here, Andrew, Peter, John, what are you doing? Don't you see the starving multitudes beyond?' And have we not, in Britain, been feeding those nearest to us over and over again with the bread which our Lord has given us, while we have neglected the multitudes beyond? What should we answer? Should we say: 'Charity begins at home'? Alas! charity stops at home; and has been stopping at home the greater part of eighteen centuries."

THE HOME CALL.

Through his arduous labours and efforts in the Lord's service he became very feeble, and in the end of 1890, owing to the weak action of his heart, his journeys were given up. Much of his time was spent in prayer and meditation on the Word. On the morning of October 19, 1895, he had a sudden and serious attack of illness, and on October 25 he passed into the presence of Him whom He loved and served. Two days before his home call Mrs. Radcliffe observed a sweet smile on his face, and perceiving that she looked inquiringly at him, he said: "I was praying my prayer I love so much." "Was it 'Thy will be done on earth as in heaven'?" "No. 'Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.'"

Almost his last words were these: "I want, I want, I want the Christians to go over all the world spreading the glad news."

Let us thank God for such men as Reginald Radcliffe, and pray that others may be raised up by Him to carry on His work. We are living in Laodicean days, and need men of God to arouse us from our spiritual slothfulness and easy-mindedness. Most heartily do we commend "Recollections of Reginald Radcliffe" to the readers of *The Witness*.

A. M.

SELF.

"THE old self is crucified, dead, and buried, and we have nothing further to do with him, except to see that we keep him in his state of death. Let us leave him, then, in his grave of death and shame."

"The one great enemy of God in every soul is self. Self works in many forms, but the chief of these is self-will. I dare not say that no man is a true Christian who has not as yet succeeded in getting self-will exterminated, but I cannot think him to be one who does not groan under it, abhor himself because of it, and cry to God for deliverance from what he abominates. It is the sin of *sins*. Let the Christian dread nothing as he dreads this; it is the very citadel of man's depravity, and the source of all his misery."

"We have given Him all that we have, when we give Him our will; and we have withheld

everything from Him, while we spare our self-will."

"The least temptation to any sin should fill us with horror."

PROMISES TO THE MEEK IN THE PSALMS.

The meek shall eat and be satisfied, xxii. 26.
The meek will He guide in judgment, xxv. 9.
The meek will He teach his way ... xxv. 9.
The meek shall inherit the earth ... xxxvii. 11.
The meek shall see and be glad, lxix. 32 (mar.).
The Lord lifteth up the meek ... cxlvii. 6.
He shall beautify the meek with salvation... ... cxlix. 4.

You will notice these seven marvellous promises are all to the MEEK. They embrace satisfaction, guidance, instruction, inheritance, gladness, up-lifting, and beauty. To make these seven blessings ours ought to be the first concern of our lives. How can it be accomplished? By taking on the yoke of Him who was *meek and lowly in heart* (Mat. xi. 29). T.B.

*Correspondence.**WORK AMONG LEpers.*

Green Point, Cape Town, Jan. 28, 1896.

BROTHER FISH and I returned from Robben Island yesterday afternoon after our very happy and very blessed eight days' work there, during which time we held twenty meetings, nearly three each day. We had four most successful evenings with the magic lantern, and Brother Fish was even more taken than myself with the clearness with which the Gospel was declared by means of the pictures.

The male and female wards being distinct, the meetings were held each morning for the females, afternoon for the males, and evenings alternately. It was all in Dutch, so that the addresses were all given by myself, Brother Fish not caring to risk speaking in Dutch. He, however, most heartily supported me, and prayed in English, and often we prayed together privately. We thus laboured and rejoiced together. Fish visits the island every week, and goes from ward to ward, sitting down at the bedsides of the patients and reading to them individually. It is here where he excels, and where he has a gift that is, I think, rare. He has a sympathetic nature and manner, and the lepers regard him as a special and true friend. There are between 250 and 300 male lepers, and over 200 females.

The disease, I notice, is different in the different patients. In some it proceeds very slowly.

I know personally some cases that have developed comparatively little in the last ten years, while I came across one very sad case, that of a former stationmaster, where it burst out upon him in one night.

The hands, feet, and face are the chief points of attack, and blindness not infrequently results, together with many other sad disfigurements. The hands and feet and other members painlessly and gradually disappear. It is sad beyond degree to see them sometimes moving along on their knees because they have no feet left; but while there is, as a rule, little pain, sometimes there is great and excruciating pain.

I saw by the report of Dr. Impey that he says "nothing can be done for the disease"—a sad confession from one who is supposed to be an authority. Of course the saddest aspect is the feeling that they are for the rest of their natural lives prisoners, without being offenders, and separated from their wives and families by force for ever. Their relatives and friends are always permitted to visit them and send them anything they please.

The officials on the whole are very kind to them, and I am much impressed by the patience and attention bestowed on them in the leper wards as well as in the lunatic asylums.

We felt that, in order to our carrying on a successful work, we should first get the officials on our side, so I went personally with Brother Fish and interviewed first the doctor, to whom I was introduced on the little vessel. Dr. Tod is a Roman Catholic, but he most willingly gave me liberty to hold the meetings. Next I saw the Commissioner, whom I found to be an old acquaintance. He also gave the necessary permission, and we got the freedom of all the wards. On the evening of Monday the 20th we had our first meeting, which was fairly attended, and on Tuesday evening our first lantern illustrations of the Prodigal Son. There were some 250 lepers present, beside a number of the officials, including the Commissioner. It was a never-to-be-forgotten sight, these 250 lepers congregated together, and to hear them sing was inspiring. The meetings during the day were not so well attended as those in the evenings, but the attention given to the Word of God was very deep, and often both speaker and listeners were moved to tears. I did not, as a rule, hold "after meetings;" still, I invited troubled souls to stay behind for private conversation, and with such we often conversed. We found in both male and female wards quite a number of real believers, and what struck me was not only the clear testimony given by them, but the grasp many of them had of God's love to them even in their deepest affliction. O, indeed, there is no better school than that of affliction, and here on the island I

found many broken hearts and contrite spirits' where God dwells and where the sweet savour of heavenly grace seems to flow out. It contrasted strongly with the hard, money-loving, grasping, and cold, heartless condition of Johannesburg, where I seem to labour among stones. We cannot sum up the number of conversions; we did not try to even get at them. We went on day after day opening out the Scriptures, and had the joy of hearing some confessing Christ, but Brother Fish will be better able in time to discover the real fruits of the work. The poor creatures overloaded us with thanks, and even that really fine man the Superintendent of the male ward—a Roman Catholic—said, when we thanked him for his kindness, "Why, I have to thank you, for I received much blessing myself," and expressed the hope that we might come again.

I must give you a few incidents that are worth mentioning. There is a man named L—, a former stationmaster at —. Nine or ten years ago, when Charles Roberts and I held meetings there, we were much persecuted by the lewd fellows of the place, and among our persecutors was this L—. When I met him on the island lying on his bed a helpless leper he greeted me with joy, and with many burning tears told the following: "When the five doctors examined and declared me a leper, I swore I would never leave my house excepting as a corpse. I felt like a maniac, and one night, undressing my upper clothing, I walked 'into the open fields with bare feet, hoping through the night to catch a severe cold or to bring about death. I returned towards morning with feet sore and swollen, but it did not bring about the desired result. I then resolved to shoot myself; my gun was loaded, and I had only one cap, so I put the muzzle into my mouth and pulled the trigger with my toe, but the cap missed fire. I wept, and groaned, and longed for death. At this time a letter from a Christian friend reached me, and in loving words he entreated me to yield in submission to God. I also then heard God's voice in my ear saying, 'Not your will, but Mine.' I recognised this as God's voice, and I knelt down and surrendered myself to God. When I rose I said to my wife, 'My darling, I am ready now to submit to God and to the laws of the land, and to go to Robben Island, now I am here a leper, but I thank God for it. I would not for anything return there to my old, sinful, and awfully wicked ways.' But O the grace and the mercy that found and redeemed and saved me. Mr. Goch, I mocked and jeered at you. Thank God, He has forgiven it, and I ask you to forgive it; but now I know I am His child and forgiven, my sins all cast into the sea of forgetfulness."

I cannot adequately tell the story, nor tell more now of the pathetic scenes and things I saw there, but the above is an example of that which gladdened our hearts beyond measure.

I hope to start for Johannesburg soon again and resume work in the Gospel Hall.

From Mr. Goch, South Africa.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

* * * We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but we must call attention to the extreme length of most of the Replies.

The result is that only one or two questions can be dealt with in our limited space for each month.

In future the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

LEAVING FRIENDS AND LANDS FOR THE GOSPEL (Mark x. 29, 30).—Is this Scripture applicable to this dispensation and to the times in which we live, and if so in what sense is it to be understood?

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21, 23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.—Does 1 Timothy iv. 10 assert universal salvation? "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of them that believe."

THE TIME OF PENTECOST.—Why is the Day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts ii. usually reckoned as being fifty days after the Passover, also ten days after our Lord's ascension? According to Leviticus xxiii. 15, is not Pentecost reckoned from the first day of the feast of first-fruits, and not from the Passover?

DAVID'S HATRED TO THE INFIRM (2 Sam. v. 6-9).

—Why were "the blind and lame" smitten and hated of David's soul?

ABUSES IN MINISTRY.—What are the Scriptural means of preventing abuses in ministry, without curtailing the liberty of the Holy Spirit to speak through whom He will?

SUFFERING: ATONING OR MARTYRS?—What suffering is it that is spoken of in 1 Peter iv. 1? "Suffering for righteousness sake," or "suffering on the Cross and our having died in Him"?

"MY FOOLISHNESS."—Can the words in Psalm lxi. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

LAYING UP TREASURE.

QUESTION 515.—How are we to understand Matthew vi. 21? Does our Lord teach that we are not to add to earthly possessions; if so, what way are we to interpret 2 Cor. xii. 14, also 1 Timothy v. 8?

Answer A.—I have never understood that passage as a prohibition against the increase of earthly possessions, but rather as forbidding a believer to set his heart upon them. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them (Psalm lxii. 10). A Christian man who is "diligent in business" may, by the blessing of the Lord, have an increase of his earthly possessions without making a "treasure" of them, in the sense in which that word is used in this connection.

The disciples in Pentecostal days "sold their possessions, and parted them to all as every man had need." No doubt this was a manifestation of the power of grace in their hearts, and as being so would be accepted by God; but there was no written revelation requiring them to do so. "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" (Acts v. 4). This proves that the self-denying liberality of these early disciples was purely voluntary on their part. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God (1 Tim. vi. 17).

Rich believers are not charged to sell their possessions, or give away their riches, but to hold them and use them for God; not to trust in them—in short, not to put them in the place of the direct providence of God.

There may be, and doubtless are, some who are led of God to lay out all they have of this world's goods in His service, and trust to Him for their daily needs. There are others who may be led to give away their riches as fast as they come in, and if these things are done as to the Lord, it will be accepted by Him, and will be owned by Him in the "coming day." But those who do so have no warrant from Scripture to make their liberality a rule for others. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, and 2 Cor. ix. 7, give us God's prin-

ciples as to giving: "As God hath prospered him," and "according as he purposeth in his heart." Those who teach on this subject ought to bring the claims of God to bear on the hearts of believers, so as to help them to be conscientious and large-hearted in giving to the Lord; but no *pressure* beyond the power of grace ought ever to be used. "Labour not to be rich" (Prov. xxiii. 4), and "They that will be rich," &c. (1 Tim. vi. 9), are injunctions which need to be much pondered in these days of worldliness, when getting rich is becoming so much an aim in life. 2 Cor. xii. 14 and 1 Tim. v. 8 by no means teach that it is the duty of parents to lay up riches for the future lives of their children. It is the *natural order* for parents to lay up for their children, and not children for their parents. And to "provide for one's own" does not mean that a man should lay up money for the maintenance of his children after they are able to provide for themselves. Eccles. v. 10-15 teaches solemn lessons on this point.

This is one of the questions to which Romans xiv. 5 would apply: "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." G. A.

Answer B.—We are just to understand Matt. vi. 21 the simple way the Lord has spoken it. If we lay up treasures upon earth our affections will be towards earth; but if our hearts are occupied with the Lord and His return, we will be found laying up treasure in heaven, to receive a glorious percentage at the judgment seat of Christ. The Scriptures nowhere teach that we are not to add to our earthly store. There may be the years of plenty, but the word of our God in Psalm lxii. 10 would help us here: "If riches increase, set not your heart on them." The evil is not in the riches increasing, but the setting of the heart on them, and if we hold this world's goods with an iron grasp, we will find that God's word in Prov. xi. 24 and xiii. 7 will be verified in our experience to our deep sorrow here and to our eternal loss (in reference to reward) at the judgment seat. I think 2 Cor. xii. 14 might be easily understood if compared with 2 Cor. xi. 9-12, also Acts xx. 33-35. It is glorifying to God for one to labour so as to provide for his own, and specially for those of his own house; but it brings no glory to God for one to labour to be rich (Prov. xxiii. 4, also 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10). C. C.

Answer C.—The whole section (verses 19, 20, and 21) should be read together. Our Lord is plainly warning His disciples against worldly covetousness and self-aggrandisement, concluding His serious admonitions by the words in verse 21: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," inculcating the truth that "the love of money is the root of all evil," which, if embedded in our hearts, would cer-

tainly prevent our "seeking those things which are at the right hand of God."

In 2 Cor. xii. 14 the apostle speaks of the care and thought that should minister to the earthly necessities of the Lord's labouring servants, and introduces the scriptural maxim that the parents should lay up for the children, *i.e.*, make provision for those for whom the Lord has made them responsible. This is emphasised in 1 Tim. v. 8 by showing that an unbeliever might exercise natural care, and exhorting Christians to the same from more than a high and noble sentiment. Nothing in all this is contradictory; in fact, the lesson may be drawn from all the passages taken together, to love and care for others more than ourselves, thus drawing us away from selfishness, and all its attendant evils, to more ennobling aspirations and ideas than the accretion of the sordid treasures of this world. (Compare Luke xii. 16-21.)

E. S. J.

Editor's Note.—Twice over in the book of Proverbs is the ant referred to as illustrating the principle of diligent labour and foresight. She prepares her food in the summer and gathers it (into store) in the harvest, and so is provided against the winter.

The instruction given by God to Joseph to make use of the seven years of plenty to provide against the succeeding seven years of scarcity was of the same character.

It is a mistaken idea of faith which regards it as forbidding such courses. "If any provide not for his own, specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. v. 8).

To limit this "provision" to a day or a week is altogether to miss its true significance. Every man ought to consider that in some shape or form he will surely have his "winters" to face as well as his "summers." There will be times when employment fails, or when health fails, or when business, once prosperous, becomes unremunerative. These are no exceptional circumstances—they are the rule. Anything else would be exceptional indeed!

To provide, means to foresee, and it is the duty of every man who has others depending upon him to make provision when it is in his power to do so. This is a totally different principle from laying up treasure with a view to worldly aggrandisement, or allowing what is laid up to become the heart's treasure or trust. Those who trust in riches will find how insecure are their "securities," and those who set their affection on them will suffer in the withering of their spiritual life and in the loss of future reward. But the man who improvidently spends all he earns must in the "rainy day" be debtor to the one who has acted more prudently.

THE MODEL PRAYER.—X.

THE FINAL DELIVERANCE.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, Wei-hai-wei, China.

THE last three petitions of this prayer bring before us the beginning, progress, and goal of the spiritual life. It commences with the pardon of all our past trespasses and sins, it continues as a life of discipline and temptation, and terminates in a complete and eternal deliverance from all evil.

This petition is closely connected with the preceding one. In fact, many have taught that the two are but halves of the one whole. Such tell us that there are six, and not seven, petitions in this remarkable prayer. But, while admitting the close relationship of the two phrases, we still think that they are two distinct petitions. The first is *negative*, the second is *positive*; the one is the natural shrinking of the soul from temptation, the other is the longing for complete deliverance from all evil. The last petition doubtless flows from the preceding, and is its full complement. Yet, standing alone, it conveys a full sense.

Many of my readers will have noticed that the Revisers have made an important change here. They would read it—"But deliver us from the evil one." Now, as far as the original is concerned, it may read either "the evil" or "the evil one." Which it should be the context must decide. So it is a question the settling of which depends on spiritual insight rather than on profound learning. Mayhap it is one of these matters that the servants of the Lord will only all see "eye to eye" upon when we are all together in His glorious presence.

As bearing on the subject, I give a quotation from one who himself was well able to give an opinion upon it: "That this change of 'evil' into 'evil one' was not necessary is proved by the fact that, now it has been made, *it is challenged and condemned by scholars as able and learned as those who made it.*" The few, brief petitions of the prayer are marvellously full of meaning, and to refer this last petition to deliverance from Satan only, is to unnecessarily limit its scope and, in some measure, to mar the evident climax. So, all things considered, we understand the petition as a cry to the Father for deliverance from *all evil*—from Satan and his power, and from sin and all its

consequences. We will now briefly dwell on (1) the enemy, (2) the deliverer and mode of deliverance, (3) the certainty and completeness of the same.

I.—THE ENEMY.

For eighteen hundred years the saints of God have cried: "But deliver us from evil." The enemy is a terribly real one. Sin is everywhere. It meets us at every turn. And sin is the mother of all that God, that angels, that men consider to be evil. What an awful progeny it has! Sorrow and pain, hate and murder, war and earthquake, flood and famine, weakness and suffering, death and destruction—all are, directly or indirectly, the results of sin. Thus, sin is to be feared and hated, both because it aims to drag God from off His throne and involves men in such sorrow and retribution. Yet, under God, all the evils around may be made to *contribute to our growth in grace and holiness*. Our Father holds the reins in His hands; He can so manipulate the sins and sorrows of life that they shall work together for the good of those who love Him (Rom. viii. 27). A good gardener utilises the very weeds to enrich the soil from which they sprang; and God uses even our mistakes and failures to teach us to be more humble, watchful, and prayerful. The Church must meet the evil around in the spirit and power of her Lord. When on earth, Christ touched the leper and healed him; the paralytic, and made him whole; the blind were made to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and some already dead were called again to life. He pitied the sinful and ignorant, and sought to save them. He had compassion on hungry multitudes and fed them. In the Gospels we have the record of a few of the things that "Jesus BEGAN both to do and teach" (Acts i. 1). He began them in His personal ministry, and all through the ages He has carried on the doing and teaching, through the Church of which He is the living Head. Shall we not seek to follow in His footsteps and "do all the good we can, in all the ways we can, to as many people as we can, for all the days we can?" And, above all, let us seek to realise the awful condition of the millions who know not God's message of mercy in the Gospel. That Christ should be preached to every sinner, is God's clearly revealed desire.

What am I doing in order that this desire may become an actual fact? Can our Lord say of us, as He said of one of old, "They have done what they could?" More He asks not for; less we should not give.

The Lord and His apostles clearly perceived that the great system of evil had a head. Satan is a conspicuous subject of Christ's teaching. He traces evil through all its ramifications, and finds its source in that malevolent Spirit. If men are proved boastful liars, it is because they are of their father the devil, and do his works (John viii. 44). His clear gaze pierced to the root of things, and in a poor, deformed woman, he saw one who for eighteen years Satan had bound (Luke xiii. 16). In the teaching of Christ there is no support for the modern delusion that "the Devil is only Evil writ large." Whatever may be said of the faults of the revised New Testament, it much more clearly brings out the truth of Satan's personality than the old version does. In at least six places, where he did not before appear, he is now seen, viz.: Matt. v. 37; vi. 13; Jno. xvii. 15; Eph. vi. 16; 2 Thess. iii. 3; 1 John v. 19. All history, and the experience of each individual, confirm the emphatic testimony of the Scriptures—that there is a powerful, highly intelligent, malignant Spirit the head and fount of all evil. But the Christ has met and conquered the devil. "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 James iii. 8). In the purpose of God, through the death of Christ, Satan and all his doings have been rendered powerless—brought to nought (Heb. ii. 14). So that the arch-deceiver is a conquered foe; he is the creature and slave of our Lord Christ. He is only *permitted*, for wise purposes, to harass and tempt the people of God. So, unwillingly, he is made to contribute to our good and to God's glory.

And the world is evil. One purpose of the death of Christ was to deliver us from this present evil age (Gal. i. 4). The world is so permeated with evil maxims, principles, and practices that a love for—delight in—the same is wholly incompatible with love for the Father (1 John ii. 15). The choice must definitely be made either to serve Christ or Satan; to be filled with the love of the Father, or the love of the world. We cannot have both. One,

by its very nature, excludes the other. The world is the deceived yet petted slave of the devil. The verdict has gone forth: "*The whole world lieth in the evil one.*" It is held under his authority and influence. He it is who energises and controls every unregenerate man. He is "the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2). Not long since we, too, were under his power; but now God, of His own good pleasure, worketh in us both to will and to do (Phil. ii. 13).

But there is evil within as well as evil without, and this causes the believer even more sorrow than that without. It is a part and parcel of ourselves. We cannot lay it aside as we would a garment which, if we chose, we need never have anything more to do with. It has penetrated to every part of our being. Mind, heart, conscience, will, are all affected by the poison. It reminds one of some old castle that once proudly reared its head to the sky, and was dwelt in by the noble and great; but now it is in ruins, the dwelling-place of the bat and owl, and overrun with ivy. The ivy is so rooted between its stones that it can only be wholly eradicated by taking it stone from stone. So with indwelling sin, it will continue with us till either at death or at the return of Christ we put off this mortal body.

II.—THE DELIVERER, AND MODE OF DELIVERANCE.

The prayer is addressed to God. He alone can deliver from evil. The enemies are so powerful that only omnipotence could cope with them. The work Christ came to do proves His true Deity; for only God would have undertaken to atone for sin, to destroy the devil and his works, and to overcome all evil; and only as "the Word made flesh" could He accomplish it. Sin, Satan, death, the world, and the curse of the law, all were our foes. Any one of them we could not have mastered; but leagued together, our case was truly hopeless. As far as the greatest or best of men were concerned, the conclusion had been reached: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him." The redemption of the soul was such a costly undertaking that, as far as man was concerned, it "*must be let alone for ever*" (Ps. cxlix. 6; 8, R.V.). But in the fulness

of time, when all help from creature sources had failed, Jehovah stepped upon the scene; and now the sweet message of the Gospel falls on the ear of the guilty, trembling culprit: "*Deliver him from going down to the pit I have found a ransom*" (Job xxxiii. 34).

In the work of the Cross, a process has been set in action which will work and work till all evil is subjugated, till sin is confined to the narrow province of God's universal kingdom—hell. Yes; Christ and the Cross are God's answer to evil in every shape and form, and it is the vainest of all delusions to dream of deliverance from evil apart from a personal interest in Him. Through faith in Him we are "delivered from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 10). And when all the saints are gathered home, it shall be said of them: "And they overcame him (Satan) BECAUSE OF THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB, and because of the word of their testimony" (Rev. xii. 11). By union to Him, as the branch to the vine, as the member to the head, we can be delivered from the power of that evil of evils—indwelling sin. With Saul of Tarsus we have groaned: "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of this body of death?" And to us, also, by the Spirit, the revelation of Christ crucified, risen, and glorified, has come; the question is solved. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord . . . for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and of death" (Rom. vii. 24; viii. 4).

As we saw in our last paper, Satan boldly demanded the apostles to be given into his power that he might test them to the utmost. But already the Lord had prayed for Peter (Luke xxii. 32). Probably the scene is often repeated in the history of God's people; but at the end of every such conflict it will be seen that God's Lamb, the lion of the tribe of Judah, hath prevailed. Let us thank God and take courage. We are on the winning side—the side of Christ. Satan especially attacks the citadel of faith; if that is overthrown all else quickly follows—love, patience, hope, zeal, and purity, all speedily wither once faith is dethroned. So our wise and watchful Shepherd said to Simon, and, through him, to every tempted disciple: "But I made supplication for thee *that thy faith fail not.*" For a brief hour Peter's faith was clouded, but it was not truly eclipsed, much less destroyed; and in the years to come

it shone out more brightly than ever, and who can say how much of his after-usefulness may be directly traced to the sifting of Satan? So shall it be with every genuine disciple of Christ. Faith triumphantly says: "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness the Lord shall be a light unto me" (Micah vii. 8). As surely as the blood of Christ cleanseth from the stain of every sin, so there is not a sin or temptation that, through His Advocacy and the Spirit's indwelling, the believer cannot overcome. To aim at less than this is to be satisfied with less than our Father would have us enjoy.

The world, as the enemy of God and the saints, is unchanged. Its pursuits, its maxims, its ambitions, its methods are largely Satan-inspired. Its course is downward and not upward; but the Lord overcame the world, and He says to His faint and battered soldiers: "Be of good cheer, I HAVE OVERCOME THE WORLD." His victory is ours; and the glorified Christ can overcome in us what he has already overcome in His humiliation.

III.—THE CERTAINTY AND COMPLETENESS OF THE DELIVERANCE.

That we are taught to present the petition is proof that one day it shall be fully answered.

We, too, may pass along the ranks the Christian watch-word: "Maranatha! Our Lord cometh!" Yes; He is quickly coming. It is a hope that shall not put to shame those who cherish it. It is certain. When on earth our Lord gave the promise, from heaven He has deigned to re-affirm it, and when that blessed moment arrives (and it may arrive to-day), all the children of God shall receive *instant, complete, and final* deliverance from all evil. Then His hand shall wipe away all tears from our eyes; suffering, sickness, and temptation shall leave no marks on the faces of the redeemed; they shall only have beautified the character and made it like Him whom we love and long for. And even our sins and stumblings shall be seen to be the dark background on which shines out the grace of God and the love of Christ; they shall but deepen our humility, gratitude, and love for Him who forgave, who bore with, and finally delivered us from all evil. And for all the coming ages God will be able to point to you and me as incontrovertible proofs of His wisdom, grace, and power.

JOTTINGS FROM ADDRESSES ON THE KINGDOM.

PART IV.—*Continued.*

BY ALEXANDER STEWART.

THE kingdom of heaven, then, is that great mixed thing, wheat and tares growing together until the time of judgment at the end, having in it "the children of the kingdom" and "the children of the Wicked One." That evidently is the present aspect of the kingdom here in Scotland. But some of our brethren go into the heart of Africa and break the silence of the ages in the ears of the people. They have their difficulties there, but they do not find "tares." They are purely heathens. The tares are that which imitates the wheat; they are sown by Satan among the wheat; they are those who falsely profess to be Christians among those who are the true children of God.

But it must be obvious to all who read the New Testament that there is another kingdom—a true spiritual kingdom of God—the subjects of which are men who have been "born again," and who stand related to God.

We find this in that familiar passage in John iii.: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and again, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It is perfectly clear that what is presented here is a spiritual kingdom in which there is nothing spurious, and into which no man can enter but he who is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. This spiritual kingdom is spoken of in many passages, and if anyone should ask, "How, then, would you describe it?" I would answer by two negatives. One is in Romans xiv. 17: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink;" it is not anything you can touch or handle. The kingdom of God is not "breaking of bread;" it is not baptism. When I say this, am I throwing any discredit upon the Supper of the Lord or the ordinance of baptism? By no means. God forbid that I should! But I am reminding you that the kingdom of God does not consist of any material thing that can be touched by man. The kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," and unless you have inside of yourselves something of that righteousness,

and peace, and joy, then you are not in the kingdom, because the kingdom has never come into you; for when the Lord Jesus Christ comes into the heart He brings these things with Him.

The other negative is in 1 Corinthians iv., where evil is about to be dealt with. Verse 20: "The kingdom of God is not in word but in power." The first question when evil arises and souls have to be dealt with is this: "Have I the power of the Holy Spirit to deal with this question, and to deliver this soul?" Not merely "Is the thing wrong?" or "Does the man require to be disciplined?" but "Am I spiritual enough to handle this case?" for "the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." The question is not "Can I touch it?" but "Can I put it right?"

Evidently now we have got to a spiritual kingdom into which tares do not come; only the wheat is in that blessed circle.

Now, as to the subjects of this kingdom, and the mode of entrance into it, read in Luke xviii.: "And they brought unto Him also infants . . . for of such is the kingdom of God . . . whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Possibly in this room to-night there may be someone who is outside this kingdom. If you want to know how to get it, the way is *to receive it as a little child*. A little child is not able to earn a £5 note, but I never saw one so small that it could not close its hand over it. To receive the kingdom is the way to get it, and whosoever will not receive it as a little child, shall never enter it.

In Matthew xviii., again, it is a question of a little child: "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

In Luke it was a question of the way in, and it was by becoming as a little child. Here it is not the way *in*, but the way *up* after you have got in. Of all points about the kingdom that is the one that I would like to press.

People talk about taking "the lowest place." Someone has said you cannot get it, it is filled already, it has been filled by the Son of God. You might be number two, but you can never be number one. He has the pre-eminence.

What is keeping people in Scotland out of the kingdom? Strong drink may be keeping

hundreds. I am not an apologist for whisky. God forbid that I should say one word in that direction; but I know this; that PRIDE is keeping more by the thousand and the million out of the kingdom than strong drink. The blight and curse is pride, and that is what keeps men from being saved.

If I speak of the church circle, "Only by pride cometh contention." Wherever it be I can just put my finger on the spot—it is pride. It is very easy to get along with a man that is humble.

"He that is down need fear no fall ;

He that is low no pride ;

He that is humble ever shall

Have God to be his guide."

Humility is the way in, and humility is the way up after you are in.

Still, sticking to the object lesson of a little child—"Whoso shall receive one such little child in My name, receiveth Me"—it is a great sin to take unsaved men into the Church of God. It may be done because of their amiability of character, or because of their money, but to take a man in and make him believe he is a Christian when he is not is a great sin.

But what about the other side? "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me." It is a great sin to keep a man out that is born again and has his title to be in. Believing in the same Saviour, praying to the same God, and his life in the main godly, it is a great sin to put such an one among the lepers. What shall I say of those who put the clean among the unclean? I know it is a delicate question, but let us see that we are right on *both sides* of it.

THE ELECT OF GOD,

AND THE EIGHT VIRTUES THEY ARE EXHORTED
TO "PUT ON."

CONFERENCE ADDRESS IN CITY HALL, GLASGOW, BY DR.
THOMAS NEATBY, AUTHOR OF "OUR LORD'S COMING
AGAIN."

Portion read, Colossians iii. 12-17.

THE Apostle has made the position the Christian is in before God very clear. They have put off the old man—they *have* done it ; they have put on the new man—they *have* done it.

Let us accept the Word of God just as it stands. We are never told to put off the old

man—never told to put on the new. The corresponding verses in Ephesians ought to be pretty much what these are in our version. It is quite clear in the original that the thing *is done*—it is a matter of faith ;

The old man is put off,

The new man is put on.

In the Epistle to the Galatians it says "they that are Christ's (that includes all—the fathers, the young men, the babes) *have* crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. v. 24). It is done ; faith countersigns our own death warrant. God has crucified our old man with Christ. The sentence, the righteous sentence, against sin has been executed in my person and yours. It is done ; the old man is gone by the judgment of God. The new man stands before God, all that He could wish in Christ Jesus the Lord. There we stand, my brethren. O let us know it ; let us have the joy of the consciousness of it as an accomplished fact every day. The life should tell it, the conduct should reveal it in everything. I am not in the flesh ; God says so. I believe God. I am not in the flesh ; so much so, that the Spirit of God says : "When *we were* in the flesh"—"When I was in London I did so and so," and this shows that I am not in London now. I once was in the flesh—I am not there now ; that is not my standing before God at all. The old man is crucified—the new man is put on.

Now, here begins the practical exhortation that is based upon the truth that I have spoken of : "Put on, therefore ;" there is something to put on, although it is a fact that I have put on the new man. And in what language does the Spirit of God address the saint of God here? Just in

THE TERMS

that are applicable to Christ Jesus our Lord. Three terms are used :

I. "ELECT OF GOD." "Behold My servant, whom I uphold ; Mine ELECT, in whom My soul delighteth" (Isaiah xl. 1). Is it so? O yes, it is even so. I am spoken to, and thou art spoken to, my brother, my sister, as "the elect of God" in all the comeliness of Christ, in all the delight with which God views the Son of His love ! How can it be? It is, because Christ has stood for me in the judg-

ment. Christ has gotten the victory. Christ has gone upon high. The Holy Spirit has come down, and baptised me into the body of Christ, and I stand before the Living God in Christ Jesus. It is a fact. O it is a fact for me and it is a fact for you. Elect of God!

II. "HOLY"—and is that true too? God tells me to be holy; but am I holy? Yes, God calls me holy. I accept it humbly. I thank Him that He can call me holy. It would not be humility at all for me to demur to God calling me "holy;" it is true humility to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

We are holy by the call of our God: we are holy through the blood of Christ: we are holy by faith: sanctified by faith that is in Christ. O what a change, beloved, what a place to be in before our God.

III. "BELOVED." The Father has loved us even as He loves His Son (John xvii. 23), and has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Therefore, put on—not in order to become the elect of God—not in order to become holy and beloved—but because you are elect of God, holy and beloved,

PUT ON, PUT ON.

And then He gives us qualities upon which I would fain dwell with you if there were time; qualities which are found in Christ, which are found perfectly in Him. Not masculine virtues; there isn't one recognised by the world as a masculine virtue amongst them. They are all of little account in the world. Put on, therefore,

*"Bowels of mercies,
Kindness,
Humbleness of mind.
Meekness,
Long-suffering."*

I have heard Christians ask if it was meant that they should be a door-mat for people to walk over, and this made me think that Christ was very lowly in heart, and that such a question never came from His blessed lips. If He could bless a soul by taking the lowest place possible, then He was in the lowest place possible; and as another has said very beautifully, He would teach me to take the lowest

place if it were not that He already occupies it Himself.

"*Bowels of mercies*"—blessed Lord Jesus—He "went about doing good." He was moved with compassion when He saw the multitude around Him. The disciples would send them away to buy food—poor, hungry things—sent away from the Source of blessing to find blessing for themselves! "Give ye them to eat," is His gracious command. "Bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind." O how the living Lord Jesus passes before the mind when you read these qualities; how you see them all through, the perfect expression of Divine love in the circumstances of human need.

"*Kindness.*" O the "kindness," the gentleness of the Lord Jesus! That poor widow who was carrying out her only son to bury him; poor, poor widow, accustomed to carry out the dead to bury them, taking forth

THE LAST LINK BROKEN

to its long resting-place. "He was moved with compassion:" it shows the kindness of the Lord Jesus; and that kindness is shown in every instance of raising the dead. There is some dispensational teaching in the others, but I doubt if there is any in this. The heart of the blessed Son of Man was moved with pity for the widow, and this is the teaching to gather from it. So with all the rest.

"*Humbleness of mind.*" How He washed their feet. It is not a very dignified thing to do; not a thing you can do in a very graceful way, and show off in doing it. You must get down where the feet are; you cannot wash them on a high stool. Christ was "lowly in heart," and He showed His lowliness of heart in taking that basin and washing their feet. O that we knew the Master better, for we should be able to serve our brethren much better if we knew Him better. When we saw the least defilement about the feet we should not proclaim it, but rather hide it, and we should take a towel and gird ourselves, and seek to remove the defilement from our brother; letting no one see it, and without letting it be known that we have seen it.

We call Him "Master and Lord," and we say well, "for so He is;" but O that we might be humble in our minds, lowly in our spirit, following Christ.

"*Forgiving one another*," not counting how often, but "until seventy times seven"—always in the spirit of forgiveness, always ready to make nothing of ourselves. O my friends, it is not easy to the proud heart that stands before you—it is not easy for some of your proud hearts—but it is the lowly, gentle, gracious Spirit of the Master. I covet it; He knows I covet it for you, my brethren—"forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave you." Let that ever be the measure—"even as Christ forgave you." Have I the sense of His grace in my soul? then it won't be hard for me to forgive my brother. O how many times has Christ forgiven me? What an awful score He blotted out fifty-one years ago! What sins He has forgiven since then! Alas, that I should have to say it. But He has forgiven them, and I have never found any difficulty when I have gone in confession to His feet. I have never found it necessary to persuade Him to forgive me.

(*To be concluded in next number.*)

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.—XIII.

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

MATTHEW XXI. 28-32.

"But what think ye? A certain man had two sons [children]; and he came to the first, and said, 'Son [child], go, work to-day in my vineyard.' He answered and said, 'I will not;,' but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir;' and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his [*literally* the] father? They say unto Him, 'The first.' Jesus saith unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, That the publicans [tax-gatherers] and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans [tax-gatherers] and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."

IN the case of the first-mentioned son there is profession without obedience. John the Baptist came in the way of righteousness, exhorting to repentance, and to fruit-bearing worthy of that repentance.

In some of his hearers, the natural enmity and rebellion of the heart having been manifested in actual practice, John's testimony was believed, and repentance followed.

In others, a vain profession and a religious garb keeping out of view the real condition of

the heart, his testimony was rejected, and there was no repentance.

John also testified of Christ as the Lamb of God, the taker away of the sin of the world.

The convicted sinner having set to his seal that God is true in His condemnation of sin, goes on to confide in Him for His grace on the ground of redemption. There is repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; and this faith, working by love and gratitude for sins forgiven, leads to obedience and fruit-bearing.

On the other hand, where there is self-righteousness and an outward religious profession, without a deep inward work of the Spirit of God, convicting of sin and of the natural enmity and rebellion of the heart to God, the need of repentance is not felt, and necessity for the atoning sacrifice of Christ is either overlooked or denied, and the obedience rendered is mere will-worship, and not loving subjection to the will of a heavenly Father. It is as Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai, professing, "All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient;" but ere Moses was come down from the mount the law was broken in its essential requirements, and Moses shattered to fragments the tables of the covenant, thereby signifying that all hope of salvation on the ground of human obedience was at an end.

Sinners of the Gentiles, convicted by the Spirit of God of their sinfulness and rebellion, have been led to repentance, faith, and obedience. Whereas the nation of Israel, together with the moral, the self-righteous, trusting in a religious form and outward profession, have been stumbled by the humbling doctrines of the cross, and have rejected the grace of God through a crucified Redeemer, as testified by the Apostle Paul: "The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at the stumbling-stone" (Rom. ix. 30-32).

THE serpent of brass "put it upon a pole": probably the banner pole—that banner which they had refused to follow.

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.—XII.

"THE RED HEIFER."

(Numbers xix.)

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,

Author of "Christ in the Levitical Offerings,"* &c.

IN this ordinance, the heifer having been slain was afterwards burnt. The Hebrew word here rendered "burn" is not that which is generally used of the sweet savour offerings, but one which signifies to utterly consume, and fitly expresses the fire of Divine judgment.

This twofold action of slaying and consuming tells of a twofold suffering on the part of the Holy One of God. There was not only that which He bore at the hands of man, and much else which must have been anguish to His holy and sensitive soul, but there was that judgment of God upon sin, the wrath and the curse due to those in whose stead He suffered. He stood in the sinner's place and was forsaken of God while He "once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."

What He endured we know not, but it was that which nothing else could typify but the burning to ashes of the heifer.

The animal's whole body was burnt. "Her skin and her flesh and her blood with her dung shall he burn," thus showing that in the ashes which remained, all the value of the offering, all its perfections and excellencies were represented.

Blessed it is to stand in spirit there and witness the dying out of the last spark of Divine judgment. Nothing left of that which was "made sin" but the cold ashes, upon which all the fierceness of the judgment fire had passed.

And such for us is the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is there that we see the spotless and unblemished offering passing through the wrath due to our sins; bearing the fire of judgment; drinking to the dregs of cup of the curse; enduring the last stripe that we might be healed and blessed.

Together with the body of the animal, "cedar wood, and scarlet and hyssop" were to be "cast into the midst of the burning of the heifer." We gather some light on this part of the ordinance from an allusion to the cedar

and the hyssop in 1 Kings iv. 33. In this passage we have the entire range of Solomon's knowledge of things natural. "From the cedar tree that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall" embraces Nature in its entirety, from the greatest to the least.

From many passages where "scarlet" is mentioned (e.g., 2 Sam. i. 24; Lam. iv. 5; Dan. v. 7; Rev. xviii. 3, 4), it is evident that this colour represents the "glory of man," or of the world.

All these were to be taken and cast into the burning which consumed the heifer.

In exact accordance with this was the ordinance of the cleansing of the leper, in Luke xiv. The same three things were to be dipped in the blood of the slain bird.

They were thus reckoned as though death had passed upon them, just as in the fire that consumed the heifer.

In Christ crucified, not only is sin atoned for and put away, "our old man is [or was] crucified with Christ." That nature to which sin attached, and which is the root whence sin proceeds, is reckoned by God to have been executed on the Cross of Christ; so that neither our sins nor our corrupt Adam nature, "the old man," or "the flesh," come up before God. Being crucified with Christ, we died and were buried with Him out of God's sight. Such is His reckoning; such, also, ought ours ever to be.

But Paul sees more than even all this in the Cross. "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

From the vantage-ground of new creation he looks down upon this world, upon nature with all its grandeur and perfections, and upon the world with all its glory, as under the curse of sin and reserved for the judgment fire of the wrath of God. The dark shadow of the Cross lies athwart its glories, and the black stain of the murder of the Son of God still rests upon it unjudged. Thus to see the world at the Cross of Christ is the way to rightly estimate it, and to be effectually separated from it. To him whose eyes are accustomed to view it thus the world will have no attraction, nor will he condescend to the folly of building his hopes upon a scene that is quickly ripening for the final burning up. He will

* "Christ in the Levitical Offerings," showing how the five offerings under law represent distinct aspects of the one offering of Christ, 1/6 post free.

"set his affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

The ashes of the heifer were to be gathered up and kept in a clean place without the camp. Possibly there may be allusion here to the precious, incorruptible body of the Lord Jesus, laid up in a new sepulchre wherein never man had been laid.

Death had passed upon it, but not a taint attached to it. Like no other sepulchre on earth, not the foul taint of corruption, but the fragrance of the spices alone could be perceived. Still, as that cold and silent body lay stretched upon the rocky bed prepared for it, how surely was the truth declared that the judgment of sin had been borne, the last spark had died out.

It is said that the ashes were to be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation; and then it is added, "it is a purification for sin."

It is almost startling to find such an expression here! Not "a purification for defilement"—but "*for sin*." It is just in this connection that in the New Testament we are told that "it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sins" (Heb. x. 4).

The ashes of the heifer could only sanctify "to the purifying of the flesh" (Heb. ix. 13).

It seems as if the Holy Spirit here had the great Offering so distinctly in view as He dictated the details of the type, that for a moment He uses language that goes beyond the shadow and applies fully only to the Substance.

Such is often the way of the Spirit in prophetic Scriptures. He speaks, *e. g.*, of David, or of David's son, in language that would be extravagant and hyperbolic in the extreme if only David and Solomon were contemplated, but which applied to these as types of the greater than Solomon are perfectly adapted.

It is noticeable that each person who had anything to do with this offering became thereby temporarily defiled.

It is no light matter to deal in any capacity with sin. Even the spiritual one who would seek to restore another must consider himself, "lest he also be tempted" (Gal. vi. 1).

(To be continued.)

THERE is only one stream that can satisfy; and that stream is the Fountain of Living Waters.

THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.

Reports of Addresses by Messrs. J. J. Sims, A. O. Molesworth, G. F. Bergin, J. H. Burridge, George Müller, W. Collingwood, and James Wright.

ADDRESS I.—THE AUTHORITY AND SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

By J. J. SIMS.

I HAVE been asked to open this subject, than which there is no more important one in the present day. The order of the subject speaks for itself. The Scriptures being *inspired*, there will necessarily be *internal evidences*, which are the most convincing to the children of God. We have no need to prove to men that the sun is a reality; let them come into the sunshine and they will know it! But as the inspired Word of God, it has *authority*. If God speaks the creature must listen, and the more we acknowledge its authority the more will we prove its *sufficiency* in all circumstances of life.

Let us look at 2 Timothy iii. 15, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." It is instructive to note that this is in one of the *second* epistles, in which we find instruction for our walk in "the last days." One of the perfections of Scripture is that it anticipates and answers all errors that would arise, and especially appropriate is it that, in this epistle, which gives the path of the servant in these last days, we should have this clear statement, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." This, literally, is, "God-breathed." God breathed into men, and their words were the result. Connect this with 1 Corinthians ii. 9-13, "Which things we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." This clearly shows that it was not the thoughts alone that God breathed into men (as the higher critics would have us believe), leaving the writers to express themselves in their own language. Not only did God breathe into men the thoughts, but the Holy Spirit controlled them in such manner that the very words in the original Scriptures were words, "not which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Peter gives corroborative testimony in his second epistle (chap. i. 20, 21), "No prophecy of the Scripture is of private interpretation, for the prophecy came not in old time

by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." No prophecy is of "one's own unfolding," is given as the literal meaning of these words. It was not man from which these prophecies came, "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit moved; they spake. This, then, is the plain teaching of Scripture as to inspiration. It is not God's thoughts contained in the imperfect language of the writers, so that we have to discern what is of God, and what is not, but the very words in the original are as God gave them.

The Bible *is* the Word of God. Upon its promises we can safely rest our souls for eternity; and woe to those who disregard its warnings!

The inspiration of the Scripture is proved:

First, by its VITALITY. It is the indestructible Word. Men have denounced it, and, as they supposed, demolished it times without number, and yet it stands like the mighty rocks against which the waves of ocean have for ages lashed in vain. Like its Author, it sits in the heavens, and laughs at all the puny efforts of men to dethrone it.

Second, its internal power. It is the LIVING Word. An infidel, in converse with a minister of the Gospel, grew angry because the minister would quote Scripture. "I don't believe it. Why do you quote it?" he asked. "Because," was the answer, "it is the sword of the Spirit." One little word entered into the heart of the infidel, and he was converted! The Lord give us simple faith in the living power of the Word of God.

Third, the FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY. So clear and distinct is this proof that the higher critics have had to put Deuteronomy as a post-captivity book! "The blindest man in the world is the man who won't see."

Fourth, the DESIGN AND SCOPE of the Bible. I remember travelling in Canada with a Roman Catholic priest, and when he asked me, "How do you know the Bible is the Word of God?" I answered him, "The Bible is a Book written in many parts, in many places, by men in different circumstances of life, covering many centuries in its completion, and yet, when looked at as a whole, it is seen to be all of one piece, of one perfect design, so that the very

pattern commenced in Genesis is completed in Revelation." His only answer was, "Why are there so many divisions amongst you Protestants?" to which my reply was, "If three men go out to see the sun, having red, yellow, and blue spectacles, each will say the sun is red, or blue, or yellow, according to the spectacles he has on; whereas the light of the sun is the combination of all three. So Protestants take one or other truths of God's Word to the exclusion of the rest, but you Catholics have so smoked up your glasses with superstition, that you can scarcely see any light at all!"

The one great theme of the Bible is Christ! As all the rays of light lead to the sun, so all the pages of God's Word point to Christ, the manifester of God, the blessing of mankind. The scarlet thread of God's salvation, manifesting the love of God, and the white thread of God's judgment, manifesting the holiness of God, run side by side. Christ the Saviour, or Christ the Judge!

May the Word of God become more and more precious to us!

ADDRESS II.—INTERNAL EVIDENCES.

By Col. MOLESWORTH.

I WANT to bring before you what our Lord Jesus Christ, whom God hath sent to reveal Himself, hath told us concerning this Word; for as we have heard, to have the books of Moses impugned, or the Old Testament, in any part, impugned, then the testimony of the One whom God calleth the True Witness is impugned also, and His Word falsified, for He hath put His own seal upon the books of Moses, and on the whole of the Old Testament; and He who thus spake, telling us that these Scriptures were of God, is the only one we can hearken unto safely. If He fail us, and His witness fail us, we have nothing to rely upon.

I. I want to show you from Proverbs xxx. 5, that "Every word of God is *pure*." Then Psalm xii. 6, "The words of the Lord are *pure* words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." Every word that has come from God is *God-chosen*; the men were but pens that wrote down what He, the Dictator, told them to write.

II. Now, I want to show you that this Word of God is *for ever*. 1 Peter i. 23, "The Word

of God, which liveth and abideth *for ever*." We shall never have any fresh revelation from God. How precious this is! We have the certitude that in all dispensations it "abideth for ever." We want this, for we are liable to be tossed about, liable to be misled by man's opinions, which are changed day by day. But as the Psalmist says, "I hate *opinions*, but Thy law do I love," so say we.

III. I want now to refer to the Word of God as *personified*, showing the intimate connection between Him who is called the Word of God and the written Word. Hebrews iv. 12, 13, "The Word of God is quick and powerful . . . neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight." It changes from the impersonal to the personal. The speech of God's own Word is through the channel of the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the living Word, He uttereth the mind of God. And this point I would specially note, not only is the Word of God living and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing between that which is purely natural and that which is spiritual, discerning the motives of the heart, but absolutely nothing is hidden from *His* sight, who spake it. Now, herein lies the difference between the writings or the words of God and the writings of men. The writings of men can never get to the bottom of man and tell man what he is, but God's words do show man what he is, and hold men in their grasp. Man holds the writings of his fellow-men in his grasp and criticises them, but the higher criticism of the Word of God grasps me. If I want to be criticised myself, I must read the Word of God. It cuts me to pieces; it shows me I am nothing. Is there capability in man to understand fully the things of God? Is it for man impudently to dare to criticise what God has given? If they say, "It is only a collation of manuscripts, and certain parts are as a gloss upon the book," then we say, "The man who begins to pick to pieces the Word of God, impugns the words of the Lord Jesus, makes a Bible of his own, and practically becomes an idolater."

IV. Turn to Hebrews i., and see that God has spoken His *ultimate word of revelation*, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken

unto us by His Son." If men should say, "Where shall I go to see what God is, and what God thinks?" God points out His Son as the depository of all wisdom.

Now, let us hear what the Son saith. John i. 1, "In the beginning was *the Word*." He is called "the Word," because as words express what is in the mind, so He reveals what the heart and mind of the unseen God are. No stinted or circumscribed knowledge was His, "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him" (John iii. 34). There is much that is difficult in what is revealed, but not one thing that God at present wants man to know is left out.

Now, turn to John viii. 26, "He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him." Isaiah l. 4, "He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned." Never did the Lord Jesus speak a word but what the Father bade Him speak. He was silent, save to utter what God spoke, and never did He speak in other words than the Father bade Him.

John xii. 47, 50, "I have not spoken of Myself"—again a change, and an all-important addition—"but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak"—*I am speaking what He told Me in the words He gave Me*—"And I know that His commandment is life everlasting"—a grand conclusion—"whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak." O! that Faithful Messenger refreshed the soul of the One who sent Him! This is of the utmost importance, for from the lips of the Lord Jesus we have the words of God, we can trust our souls on them, and never was one word omitted or altered.

As we have heard, the Bible has one great theme; it is one perfect harmony, causing melody in the hearts of God's people. There is a harmony between the Old and New Testaments—the one dealing with man under the old covenant, law; and the other with man under the new covenant, grace; but there is no difference in the Author. The Author, God, is the same from the beginning. When God wants to convey in New Testament language that which He has already conveyed in Old Testament, when He wants to give a word in the Greek which He has given in the

Hebrew, He uses a word in the Greek that conveys the word in the Hebrew, *e.g.*, "These shall go away into *everlasting* punishment," *for ever and for ever is what that means*. "Thy throne, O God, is *for ever and ever*." Men say you can pick and choose words to suit your purpose. Nay! in the New Testament, by the use of a word, God conveys the thought of eternal duration, and woe be to those who say that God never meant to attach the thought of eternal to the punishment assigned to those who reject His Word. The same word is attached to punishment, and to His own name as the eternal God. This is to verify the verbal truth of the Word of God. How remarkable the expressions in the Gospel of John, and how the Lord Jesus again and again refers to the Old Testament Scriptures in connection with events that happened to Him. (See John x. 34-36; Psalm lxxxii. 6.) How strongly the Lord, foreseeing the attacks that would be made upon the Word of God during the coming ages, impressed upon us the absolute and eternal verity of the Scriptures.

V. Now, take the closing point, Luke xxiv. 44. The Lord Jesus there, in resurrection, is talking to His beloved ones as to *the fulfilment of Scripture*, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me." Remember, the Lord here uses the current language expressive of the divisions of the Word of God as it then stood. The very Old Testament Scriptures are so attested, and are by the Lord stamped with the signet of heaven. You only have to ask any Hebrew what is the thought of the Hebrew mind as to the Scriptures existing two thousand years ago, and He will tell you not only that they were thus divided, but that this comprised every bit of that which we call the Old Testament, and the Lord Jesus thus puts His own seal upon it, and unfolds its meaning. Shall I impugn what *He* has said? "Let God be true, and every man a liar." He could not say this, intending to say that the mind of God was somewhere *in* them, but he averred that they were, *in toto*, the Word of God. The testimony of Jesus is the essence of prophecy.

I am glad to have all external evidence, but it is nothing to me compared with the internal evidence. I know the voice of the one speaking in them, in the darkness as in the light.

The redeemed sinner knows the voice of the Saviour wherever He hears it, and God gives capability to the redeemed ever to recognise that the Word of God is the voice of their God, of their Saviour, of the Holy Spirit, conveying unto them what God wants them to know. "My sheep hear My voice." I find that this Book, containing the mind of God, simply brings me to bow down before the One who wrote it, saying: "I am a poor sinner," and praying Him, the blessed One, to make it speak, who is Himself the Giver of my salvation.

Thank God for the true light now shining, which all the powers of darkness cannot veil or cloud!"

THE SACRIFICE AND PRIEST.

Ex. xxviii.; Heb. ix.

SACRIFICE for sin was Jesus,
Lamb of God, slain on the tree;
Now, as Priest in heaven appearing,
Lives and saves eternally.
As of old, on Aaron's breastplate,
Israel's names in beauty shone,
So, upon His priestly bosom,
Jesus ever bears His own.
Names unworthy, yet—in mercy—
All are graven on His heart,
Bound by heavenly ties unto Him,
Never, never more to part.
Precious and elect each jewel,
Special treasure in His sight,
Every name, a gem that sparkles
'Neath the soft and golden light.
Borne upon His mighty shoulders,
(Strong to save and keep is He),
Set within the golden ouches
Of His bright Divinity.
Wreathen chains of gold, so perfect—
Bands of strong, eternal love—
Clasp us now to Him for ever,
Joined by God to Him above.
Blest memorials of the ransomed,
Ever borne before our God;
Tokens of complete atonement
By the Saviour's precious blood.
Sacrifice and Priest, Lord Jesus!
Worthy Thou, the Lamb once slain,
Thine the crown, and Thine the sceptre;
Thine the kingdom, Thou shalt reign.

SOULS IN PERIL.

LEAVES FROM AN EVANGELIST'S NOTE-BOOK.—NO. I.

MANY years ago, a few young men, members of the University of Cambridge, having been brought to the knowledge of Christ, were in the habit of meeting together in their College rooms for mutual converse on spiritual subjects. As yet they had not engaged in any effort for the salvation of souls, but were intently occupied with the work of their own advancement and edification in the divine life. One evening, when thus assembled and engaged, the door of the room was suddenly burst open, and a young man entered, of high birth, fortune, and talent, but an avowed infidel. Walking up to them, he addressed them in the following terms: "I have a few questions to ask you; will you answer them?" "We will," was the reply. "Do you believe the Bible to be true?" "We do." "Do you believe in an eternal heaven, and an eternal hell?" "We certainly do." Their questioner paused; and then regarding them with a scowling look, he added sternly: "And do you sit there—do you really sit there? I am an infidel as you know. I don't believe in the Bible; but if I did—if I did—if I believed what you say you do, I would rush out to the street, lay hold of the first man I met, and earnestly beseech him to tell me if he were, or were not, a believer in Christ?—if he were going to hell or heaven? And I would not let go my hold till he would promise me to become a Christian immediately. But you—you hypocrites! You talk of people all around you going down to hell, and you sit there at your ease—hypocrites!"

With these dread words he rushed from the room, leaving the young Christians amazed, and as though panic-struck.

What a rebuke; but who shall say it was unmerited? This infidel took these young men on their own ground, as believers in the clear statements of the inspired Word of God. Upon what they themselves acknowledged frankly, he founded his terrible denunciation of their conduct. They could not gainsay his words. They were speechless, self-condemned. The charge was a true one, and they were guilty!

And, are not multitudes of Christians equally guilty at this very day? They believe fully—what? Why that there is an eternal heaven and an eternal hell; that there is only one way

of escaping the latter and reaching the former; and that thousands around them are pursuing the broad road that leadeth to destruction—to hell. And what are they doing to arrest the unsaved ones, to snatch sinners "as brands from the burning?" Now, what are they doing? What are you doing, reader?

"LAYING HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE:" WHAT IS IT?

By EPHRAIM VENN.

1 Tim. 4.

AMONGST the many seasonable exhortations given by Paul the aged to his youthful son Timothy, we get the twice repeated words, "Lay hold on eternal life."

The double use of this expression in chapter vi. might intimate that such teaching would be specially needed by the saints, amidst the abounding perils of the last days, when love of self, and love of silver, and love of pleasures become the great features of the times, and the "love of His appearing" is, alas! too often supplanted by the "love of this present evil age" (see 2 Tim. iii. 1-4; iv., 8-10).

It also shows the importance of "affirming constantly" the "word in season," not because it is palatable, but "good and profitable to men." A further lesson, however, seems to be, that truth, which is specially called for at any period, is of the widest application, being needed by every class alike.

Eternal life here I judge to mean that "which pertains to life and godliness," that which is life indeed: the danger is to let this go in favour of "the life that now is," and therefore those who *desire* to be rich, and "those who *are* rich in this present age," are equally exhorted to lay hold on eternal life. But while the end to be attained is the same, the word must be rightly divided, and fitly spoken in each case.

1. In the early part of the chapter, the apostle exhorts *servants* to do service to their "believing masters" with due respect, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed. These are "wholesome words," and well fitted to check the swelling restlessness of the heart's pride and vanity, which is ever ready to suppose "that gain is godliness," or even to make a gain out of godliness.

How many amongst us whom the Lord has called in that honourable position, and have served the Lord Christ, abiding therein with God, have nevertheless made shipwreck upon this sunken rock! When once the soul gets away from the Lord, it is no longer possible, "having food and raiment, to be therewith content." The heart wanders, and the eye begins to "look out" for a "better situation" with "more money," which is oftentimes obtained, regardless of spiritual considerations, at the expense of Christian privileges, and pursued with present damage and eternal loss to the soul.

Well might Paul, who had joyfully suffered the loss of all things, counting them dung, that he might *gain* Christ, remind all who are anxiously seeking to "better" themselves at such a cost, that "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." May the Lord help us, beloved, to beware of that which can only "cast us down from our excellency," knowing that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Therefore "godliness with contentment is *great gain*."

But this applies more widely, since "they that *will be rich*" are not confined to any one class, nor are they chiefly found amongst those already spoken of. "The love of money" is, we fear, a wide-spread malady, and even amongst saints, alas! "Some have coveted after" the mammon of unrighteousness, to their sorrow and loss. Lot, Achan, Gehazi, and such like examples solemnly show that "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house" (Prov. xv. 27). And in our own day, how often have our hearts mourned for those who have "erred from the faith" through greed of gold, plunging themselves headlong into the all-engrossing race for riches, so common around us "falling into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts," they have "pierced themselves through with many sorrows." O beloved saints! there is a crying need just now of a faithful reminder of our subtle danger. May the Lord deliver His own people from the deadly curse of covetousness, that, like Abraham, we may be content to let the earthly-minded choose their portion in the well-watered plains of this Sodom-world, whilst

we find in God our shield and our exceeding great reward.

There is yet a special use for the words "*Lay hold on eternal life*." Even the "*man of God*," whose business it is to stand for God here below, and witness a good confession, where "all men seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ," he feels the conflict of "things on the earth" with "things above," and needs the exhortation, "*Flee* these things, and *follow* after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. *Fight* the good fight of faith, *lay hold* on eternal life." Yes, beloved brethren, we must *flee*, *follow*, and *fight*, if we would *lay hold*; we must *let go* the earthly to *lay hold* of the heavenly. But we must be often in the sanctuary of God, or, like Asaph, we shall be envious at the prosperity of the wicked, rather than laying hold of God as the "Strength of our heart, and our portion for ever" (Psalm lxxiii.). O for a closer acquaintance with the heart of Christ, that we may be satisfied in Him, so shall we be "content with such things as we have;" our minds and hearts will be at leisure from "earthly things" and set on things above. "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance, and of my cup; Thou maintainest my lot." Here is blessing beyond conception—blessing without end.

In verse 19 the same expression occurs in connection with those "that *are* rich in this age." From the charge here given to such, we conclude that, though riches are called "that which is not" (Prov. xxiii. 5)—*i.e.*, uncertain in their possession—they are not in themselves necessarily a "root of all evil." The evil lies in the immoderate lust *for possession*, the anxiety to rise in the world; the sin is in the *will* to be rich, the *love* of the money, the *coveting after* it. "He that *hasteth to be rich* hath an evil eye" (Prov. xxviii. 22). The eye fixed on earth can never look above the well-watered plains of Sodom (Gen. xiii. 10), and "where the treasure is, there will the heart be also." Then, *in its possession* the curse is either in *trusting* in it or the wrong use of it.

In Proverbs xxiii. 4, 5, we are warned against both these evils. "Labour not to be rich; cease from thine own wisdom;" this surely applies to the former evil. "Wilt thou set thine eyes (cause thine eyes to fly, *margin*) upon that which is not? for riches certainly

make to themselves wings; *they fly away* as an eagle towards heaven." It would seem that the apostle referred to this when charging the rich that "they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches. On the one hand, he saw a selfish willingness to possess them, and on the other, he discerned a sad *unwillingness* to part with them. Yet how does he combat this double vice of covetousness and idolatry? Not by asserting that gold is only yellow earth, a mere nonentity, and therefore not worth possessing, but by telling them that "the love of money is the root of all evil;" that it has caused some to "err from the faith, and that at best it is a mere uncertainty alongside of the "living God," who gives us richly all things—not to hoard—but to enjoy." He puts the stamp of vanity on the treasured idol, that they may learn to fix the heart on a better and an enduring substance.

He informs us that we can *carry nothing* out of the world, not that he would have us like "the fool and brutish person, who leave their wealth to others" (Ps. xlix. 10), but suggests that as the traveller to distant lands packs up and sends on his luggage before him for future requirements, so should those who are rich in this life "lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come."

That which to love is sin, to covet is idolatry, to trust in is folly, and to misuse is a curse, when rightly applied becomes an unspeakable blessing. Thus, when those among us, having this world's goods, are delivered from the engrossing fetters of their possessions, and are ready to distribute to those that have need, they become rich in good works also. When by grace they "are willing to communicate," whether to the poor saints, or to the spread of Christ's Gospel, or otherwise, as the Lord directs, they not only "do good," but make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, for everlasting habitations (Luke xvi. 9). The same is true, of course, of *every one* who gives as the Lord has prospered him, for "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," and "the liberal soul shall be made fat."

Lastly, these exhortations remind us of the sad degeneracy of these last days from the unselfish love seen for a little while at the beginning of the Church's history; yet do

they kindle the hope that our hearts might again be freed from the entangling affairs of this life, fired with the constraining love of Christ, and filled with the blessed hope of His appearing; that whether our lot here be poverty or riches, we may fight the good fight of faith, and "lay hold on eternal life."

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

THE EDITOR.

*** *We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but we must call attention to the extreme length of most of the Replies.*

The result is that only one or two questions can be dealt with in our limited space for each month.

In future the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21, 23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

DAVID'S HATRED TO THE INFIRM (2 Sam. v. 6-9).—Why were "the blind and lame" smitten and hated of David's soul?

ABUSES IN MINISTRY.—What are the Scriptural means of preventing abuses in ministry, without curtailing the liberty of the Holy Spirit to speak through whom He will?

SUFFERING: ATONING OR MARTYRS?—What suffering is it that is spoken of in 1 Peter iv. 1? "Suffering for righteousness sake," or "suffering on the Cross and our having died in Him"?

"MY FOOLISHNESS."—Can the words in Psalm lxxix. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

LEAVING FRIENDS AND LANDS FOR THE GOSPEL (Mark x. 29, 30).

QUESTION 516.—Is this Scripture applicable to this dispensation and to the times in which we live, and if so in what sense is it to be understood?

Answer A.—Certainly applicable to the present dispensation, and in the same sense as to the past.

The Lord, in reply to Peter's rather vain-glorious profession of devotion, declares that every sacrifice made for His sake and the Gospel's will be amply and superabundantly rewarded, so that Peter's self-admiration is misplaced, for he has only served his own interests, as do all who, at present loss, labour and sow for the eternal crop.

The rewards are manifestly figurative of *spiritual* gain. He is not promising a hundred houses, a hundred mothers, farms, children, &c., but joys, comforts, wealth of peace, communion with God, protection, fellowship of saints, love—a hundred times better worth having than the family treasures or material possessions surrendered. And what if "persecutions" come too? They will but intensify our appreciation of the "true riches," and of the vanity of this world. G. F. T.

Answer B.—This passage may have (as many others) a primary application to the dispensation of the Kingdom. But that is no reason why the moral teaching should not apply to the present age. If the Lord's commission, as given in Matt. xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 15, Acts i. 8, is to be carried out, those who go to distant lands *must* in most cases leave all for Christ's sake and the Gospel's. In order to this, there must, in the first place, be a distinct "call" from the Lord. This cannot be explained—it must be experienced. Then, it requires to be seen that no *home* responsibility is being neglected. Children are enjoined to "requite their parents" (1 Tim. v. 4), husbands to "nourish and cherish" their wives (Eph. v. 28), fathers to provide for and train up their children (Eph. vi. 4; 1 Tim. v. 8). I cannot see how any call to public service can justify the setting aside of these obligations. Unmarried brethren, or sisters having no such responsibilities, are free to go, as far as this matter is concerned. Then the motive must be right. "For My sake and the Gospel's." Oh, what grace is needed, not only to begin well, but to keep a "single eye" all along the path.

The "hundredfold" of brethren and sisters promised must be *spiritual*—it cannot be *literal*. It appears to me to be in harmony with Matt. xii. 49, 50 and 2 Cor. v. 16. Also, the hundredfold in riches must be spiritual. And, verily, there is a hundredfold of brethren and riches, even now, to those who have been taught to love

all the children of God for Christ's sake, and who have also learned to draw on the faithfulness of God for supply of their daily need.

The promise of eternal life in the age to come must be understood in harmony with other Scriptures, which speak of eternal life as the present possession of all believers, such as John v. 24 and vi. 47. In the light of such clear statements, it can only be understood by the Christian as a forcible way of saying, that for all that is "given up" or suffered for Christ's sake and the Gospel's now, there will be an ample recompense in the age to come. G. A.

THE TIME OF PENTECOST.

QUESTION 517.—Why is the Day of Pentecost mentioned in Acts ii. usually reckoned as being fifty days after the Passover, also ten days after our Lord's ascension? According to Leviticus xxiii. 15, is not Pentecost reckoned from the first day of the feast of first-fruits, and not from the Passover?

Answer A.—Leviticus xxiii. 11 shows us that the first ripe sheaf of the harvest was waved on the morrow following the *Passover Sabbath*. The Passover and the early harvest being always simultaneous (Ex. xxiii. 16; Num. xxviii. 26), hence fifty days from the morrow after the Passover Sabbath, brings us (verse 16) to the morrow after the seventh Sabbath, *i.e.*, the first day of the week. The Lord Jesus was seen (Acts i. 3) for forty days after His passion and resurrection. The Holy Spirit fell on the fiftieth day subsequent to the Passover Sabbath, *i.e.*, the Lord's resurrection day, or the first day of the week. A. O. M.

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

QUESTION 518.—Does 1 Timothy iv. 10 assert universal salvation? "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of them that believe."

Answer A.—In 1 Timothy iv. 10 the matter under consideration is not the salvation of men universally through the work of Christ, but the Living God as such presented in the character of Preserver (or Saviour) of all men, corresponding to what we read in Job vii. 20, "O Thou Preserver of men," and Psalm xxxvi. 6, "O Jehovah, Thou preservest man and beast."

God as Creator and Preserver, in the exercise of His providential care, opens His hand and "satisfies the desire of every living thing" (Ps. clxv. 16). "He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Moreover, believing ones are in a peculiar way the objects of His care, the very hairs of their head being all numbered. J. D.

SHADOWS OF CHRIST.—XII.*

"THE RED HEIFER."

(Numbers xix.).

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,

Author of "Early Relationships of the Heavenly Family."

WE learn from Hebrews ix. 13, 14 that what answers spiritually to outward defilement under the law, is sin upon the conscience. This is the stain that effectually excludes from communion with God, and places the soul at a distance as far as its own consciousness is concerned.

Sin on the conscience means walking in darkness and not in the light, walking in the flesh and not in the spirit, walking in unbelief and not by faith. It may arise through receiving and allowing evil suggestions that are from Satan, or from yielding to fleshly lusts, or from the defiling and entangling influences of the world. It seems to be to the latter that the ordinance we are considering has special reference.

There may be a very rapid transition from the light to the darkness. It may be almost like tripping over a stumbling-block, the temptation and the fall may be so sudden; but usually there has been a previous course of unwatchfulness, coldness or formality in prayer, and lack of diligent dealing with God and His Word. The sin allowed which then stains the conscience is only the manifestation of the low condition that had gone before. And well it is if the stain is the means of awaking to a sense of the darkness and distance into which the soul had unconsciously lapsed.

Such is the infinite value of the work of Christ that the believer ought now to have "no conscience of sins" (Heb. x. 2). That does not mean that his conscience ceases to act, or that sin, if committed, does not trouble him, but that such is the fulness of the divine provision, the saint who is walking in the light, though conscious of sin in the flesh, and conscious that in many things he comes short, is nevertheless, through the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, and through continual confession of shortcoming, kept with a purged conscience in the presence of God and in the continual enjoyment of His forgiving love.

The passage before us (Num. xix.) gives an awful insight into the defiling influence of contact with the dead. To touch the dead body of a human being, to touch so much as a

bone, or a grave, or even to be present in a tent where a dead body was, involved defilement. The presence and touch of the Lord Jesus brought life to the dead, not defilement to Him. In Him there was nothing to respond to evil presented to Him. In the midst of darkness He was light; in the midst of defilement He was the undefiled; in the midst of death He was the living and life-giving One.

Not so with us. There is in our flesh a terrible power of response to evil around. The magnet finds no response to its attraction in a piece of crystal; but a piece of steel responds at once, and is brought under its power. This response, even though it result not in any conscious, open act of evil, is nevertheless in God's sight a defilement, and needs to be cleansed. How often has a believer, in all things himself temperate, so failed to realise the sin of a drunkard as to be found laughing rather than weeping at his imbecile behaviour. How often has a believer, contented and thankful in his own heart for such things as he has, been led so to join in the covetous conversation of money-loving worldlings that no mere observer could conclude that he was not an idolater (Col. iii. 5) like the rest. How often are the world's vanities admired and copied rather than avoided?

Thus in a thousand ways contact with the world is a daily test. A vessel in a tent where a dead body lay which had "no covering bound upon it" was unclean. The only safety for the vessel was a closely-bound covering. Alas! how often are children of God, like uncovered vessels, open at every inlet to evil around, Eyegate and Eargate, instead of being fast locked against evil, being avenues for the ingress of all the influences of a dead and defiling world. In the world we must be, and daily contact is unavoidable. The way of the Lord for His people's preservation is not the monastery or the nunnery; but he would have us so consciously in His presence all the day that our hearts would be covered and kept from the evil.

In Lev. xi. 36 we read that "a fountain," or "a pit wherein is plenty of water," could not be defiled. "The water that I shall give shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life;" "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John iv. 14, vii. 38).

Those who are thus filled with the Spirit are safe from surrounding defilement. Instead of being defiled themselves, so mighty is their influence that they become the channels of cleansing to others.

To one who became defiled by the dead, the most natural course would have been to ignore it and go on as if nothing had happened. In time, they might think, it will wear off and be forgotten! Is not this the way in which stains upon the conscience are too often treated? But the lapse of time does not alter the moral character of an act. The stain in God's judgment is indelible, unless removed in His own way. He who was defiled and failed to apply the "water of separation" was to be cut off from Israel. His presence as a worshipper in the congregation at the tabernacle brought defilement there. Ignorantly or unconsciously defiled persons might be there, hence the provision in Lev. xvi. 16, but presumptuously to approach as a worshipper without having been duly cleansed was to incur the judgment of Jehovah.

It is the same God with whom saints of this present time have to do. The claims of His holiness are not one whit abated, though in grace He suffers so long.

The fact of application being made for cleansing by the water and the ashes was, in the first instance, the acknowledgment that the defilement had taken place. Further, it was conforming to God's estimate of the seriousness of the defilement. It was also expressive of a desire for restored communion, and of willingness to accept God's way of cleansing—a way which must have been foolishness in the eyes of the rationalist, who would leave God out and prescribe washing with "nitre" and "soap" (Jer. ii. 22)—but a way which, in the eyes of faith, was honouring to God and effectual to the restoring of the defiled. That the "ashes" represented the same truth as the poured-out blood of Christ admits of no question in the light of Heb. ix. 13, 14. The water throughout Scripture represents the Spirit and the Word as the twofold agent in sanctifying. Here, as in the cleansing of the leper (Lev. xiv. 6), it is "running," or, literally, "living water," answering to John vii. 38.

The conscience of a believer once defiled

by allowed and known sin effectually bars his way into the presence of God. It will not "wear off." Time will not alter it. It must be purged away. The first step is confession to God. "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." For every erring child there is the "Advocate with the Father." Through His intercession the Holy Spirit the Comforter applies the word afresh to the conscience—the word which speaks of the precious blood that purged our sins and cleanseth from all sin.

It is the same truth which gave peace to the heart and conscience when first we came as guilty sinners that sprinkles the heart anew from an evil conscience and restores to communion with God. Happy is he who takes the appointed way, keeps short accounts with God, at once confesses the cause of the darkness, and seeks restoration by fresh application to the heart of the great fundamental truth of the Gospel.

He who applied the water and the ashes was to be a "clean person." Doubtless it is the Lord Jesus as the High Priest operating by His Spirit through the Word that is the effective mover in the transaction. But He condescends to use human instrumentality as well, and so it is the "spiritual" (Gal. vi. 1) who are to seek the restoration of the one "overtaken in a fault." The defiled cannot be used to cleanse another; he who is to sprinkle upon the unclean must himself be clean. The carnal are unfit for so delicate a ministry. Holiness and truth and love must be combined in order to effectual help being rendered.

A bunch of hyssop was to be used for applying the water. To this, no doubt, David referred when he said, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean" (Ps. li. 7). He who would be blessed to the restoration of another must do it in the spirit of meekness, considering himself, lest he also be tempted. The little plant that springeth out of the wall was a fit emblem of this spirit. The sprinkling was to be "on the third day and on the seventh day." There was to be no hurrying of it over, no making light of it. Thus the seventh day and its rest is connected with the third day of resurrection. Lastly, there was to be the

washing of the clothes, the bathing of himself in water, and becoming clean at the even.

There is thus a fresh start on the wilderness path to walk in "newness of life." The evening of the seventh day was the beginning of the eighth or new creation day. Old things have passed away, all things are become new. At regeneration it is necessarily so, and this position, in which grace has placed the believer, is never changed on God's part. God never sees him again as belonging to the old creation—always to the new. But walking in the flesh, walking in unbelief, is a going back in the believer's own consciousness to the old creation darkness. Blessed be God for the grace that can restore, as well as for the grace that justifies.

THE GLORIES OF THE CROSS.

By R. C. CHAPMAN, Author of "Choice Sayings."

Read Hebrews v.

IN this chapter it is very precious to see that the fountain-head of salvation is not in Christ. "Christ did not glorify Himself to be made a high priest." Christ is the life, but how came it about? Through the death of the Cross. He is the channel of God's love. Christ has need to persuade us to love Him, to love God, but He has not to persuade God to love us. It isn't possible for a sinner to be reconciled to God but by Christ. That Son of God, whose blood is as precious as He, the Son of God, is precious, all His glories are in that death on the Cross, whereas only a little of His glory is seen in creation. Now, He is the brightness of the glory of God; He is the one that satisfies God, "In whom He is well pleased." Christ is the only one that had His priesthood by oath, and therefore it must be everlasting.

We could only know the very heart of the Father in the Cross of the Great High Priest, and when the everlasting day comes in, and we have nothing within or without to tempt, we shall still need Him to uphold us; take Him away, and we go back to the innocent creature.

Verse 7 refers to *all* the days of His flesh, and not to Gethsemane only, hence, in Psalm xxii., He could say: "I was cast upon thee from the womb," and as He began life in His mother's womb, He ended it on the Cross; and in the same Psalm, verse 2, "I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not," but in verse

21, "For thou hast heard me"—"Thou hearest not" to spare me *from* death, but, "Thou hearest" to bring me *through* death.

Now, I am so one with Christ, that I, a child, am both king and priest. Do we, the children of God, believe this? Why is it we are found saying, when brought into some trial or difficulty: "Oh, what shall I do?" Hadn't I better say: "God is a liar," or, "Christ is asleep, and isn't caring for me?" We are all of us patients of the Great Physician, and it is our interest to go to Him in every matter, even the smallest. We may talk to God about our very worst things, and not only get a hearing, but get His embrace. And if I deal aright with Christ, the Priest, I shall never be doubtful, though often sorrowful. At no time has unbelief any excuse, and let me always remember if I don't make God's heart glad I make Him sorrowful.

Sympathy is the exercise of *suffering* love. Angels can love and serve, but they can have no sympathy. If we dealt aright with the sympathy of Christ we could never be wrapt up in ourselves, and if this be true of us we should always have abundance of bread for others.

Christ has need of us while going through this valley of tears. The valley of the shadow of death was only for Him, and in His death I have gone through it. But he has need of us in this valley of tears, and every tear we drop, and every sigh of our hearts, stirs a sigh and sympathy in the heart of Christ, and as He gives His whole sacrifice for every believer, so He gives His whole sympathy to every believer. All Christ is mine, and therefore we are complete in Him, and don't we need our wants to prove His fulness. As in Ps. lxxxiv., if we don't dig the wells we can't get them filled.

Verse 11. "Seeing ye are dull of hearing," not because they are not all plain. Does this not belong to us at the present time; are we all quick of hearing? If our hearts were duly exercised about these things we should be naturally flowing together, who have a title to fellowship with God that the highest angels have not. "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." Am I not robbing God if I be not observing this precept? Ought not my conscience to be so instructed by the Heavenly Priest that it may be the heavenly police sergeant?

THE MODEL PRAYER.—XI.

THE DOXOLOGY.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, Wei-hai-wei, China.

JUDGING from external evidence it is more than doubtful if the doxology formed a part of the prayer as first uttered by our Lord, and recorded by the inspired penmen. Alford, in his translation of the New Testament, gives a foot-note to this effect: "The words . . . are wanting in all the most ancient MSS., and are not noticed by most of the Greek and Latin fathers when they expounded the prayer." (See also "Westcott and Hart's Introduction to the Greek New Testament;" and practically every reliable critic of the original text.) Yet, from the similarity of the Greek of 2 Timothy iv. 18, which is followed by a doxology of undoubted authenticity, Alford reasons that some such ending of the prayer must have been in use in Paul's day. It is generally acknowledged that the words are derived from 1 Chronicles xxix. 10, 11, "And David said, 'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, the God of Israel, our Father, *for ever and ever*. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and *the power*, and *the glory*, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and the earth is Thine; Thine is *the kingdom*, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all.'" These grand and inspiring words of David form a much fuller doxology than the one we are considering, but it will easily be seen that the one is but the essence of the other, for the words and sentiments are the same. Is it probable that these glowing sentences of their great ancestor had become household words among the Jews? And, in the days of our Lord, may they not have been in use in connection with the synagogue worship? And, since they were familiar with such a beautiful ending to all prayers, our Lord may have considered that another was unnecessary. Anyway, it seems incomplete without some such ending. For the spiritual mind cannot rest, even in the deliverance from all evil; it instinctively reverts to God, and finishes, as it began, with worship. Accordingly the faithful of the past centuries have united in saying: "For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." The matter would seem to rest thus: While the intelligent student of the Word recognises the spirituality and scrip-

turalness of the sentiments, he could not, were it necessary, appeal to it to settle any disputed point of doctrine or practice. We have dwelt at greater length on this than some may think necessary; but to others it may prove helpful. It has not been written without much thought.

I.—THE DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF WORSHIP.

To worship and serve the Creator is the duty of all intelligent creatures. But among men, only such as know the power of redeeming love, and can truly say, Abba, Father, can worship Him; and among angels, those only who have never sinned. In preaching to the heathen we much more frequently hear the question, How can we rightly worship God? than the question, How can we obtain the forgiveness of sins? For even the natural conscience teaches us that the Creator ought to be honoured, served, and worshipped. But the first note of that song of the redeemed which will sound through all eternity is the cry, "God, be propitiated towards me, the sinner." The one who knows himself to have been sought and found of the Good Shepherd soon rejoices in his position as a child, and *therefore* a worshipper. "For such doth THE FATHER seek to be His worshippers." So, then, man in the flesh cannot worship God. Through sin he has lost the power and capacity for worship, but in Christ these are restored. And the characteristic of Christ's people of all ages has been that they "worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3). The word worship is often on our lips. We speak of worship hymns, of worship meetings, of ministry that leads to worship, and so forth. But what *is* worship? Our English word worship simply means *worth-ship*. The man who deserves to be addressed as "Your Worship" is a man of sterling *worth*. So worship is to ascribe to God our Father all goodness and worthiness. In Him every moral and spiritual excellency is to be found. David, when addressing Jehovah, sums it up in the brief sentence: "*Thou art good!*" For what He is in Himself, God ought to be worshipped. Had He never done a thing for us He would have still deserved praise and worship. For we, too, can look back and say: "Thou art good, and *doest good*." The Divine goodness is of

such a nature that it must show itself in action. A recognition of what God *is* calls forth praise; a remembrance of what He *does* leads to thanksgiving. We who know His pardoning grace, beyond all other things, have cause for praise and thanksgiving.

II.—THE DOXOLOGY IS THE LANGUAGE OF FAITH.

In spite of all appearances to the contrary, faith looks up and cries: "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." Satan is a usurper. Man is a rebel. Sin is an excrescence, not an essential part of God's universe. History is but one long record of the struggle between good and evil, between Christ and Satan. And to the natural mind evil appears to be triumphant all along the line. Too often evil has been enthroned in a palace, while virtue has been gibbeted by the road-side. The poet observes truly when he says—

"Right forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne."

But we believe that God *is*, and that He is infinitely righteous, and good, and powerful. So we are sure that it shall not always be so. Faith in God, not faith in human nature, emboldens us to sing further—

"Yet that scaffold sways the future,
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch above His own."

Right is right and must prevail, simply because God is God, and must triumph over all evil. Yes, in the end it shall be known that Divine righteousness and truth are indestructible and infinitely powerful. Even now God's pilgrim-warriors anticipate the future and exultingly cry: "For Thine is the kingdom; and the power, and the glory!" But when the complete company of the redeemed shall have reached their Father's home, louder and louder shall the anthem swell: "Thy kingdom *has* come. Thy will *is* done in heaven and on earth. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever. Amen."

III.—TO HIM ALSO BELONGETH THE POWER.

Power is what all men wish for. So, early and late they toil and labour: one for knowledge, another for wealth, and this one for position, because these give them power and influence over their fellows. And among the

servants of the Lord the universal and constant cry is for power, more power. God is the fountain of all spiritual power. And through the indwelling of the eternal Spirit God's power is ours. We are not straitened in God, but in ourselves. And God has determined to accomplish His purposes of grace toward sinners through His people. So, God's children, through unbelief and worldliness, may hinder God putting forth His power—may "limit the Holy One of Israel." But God is not man and does not act on human principle. He asks not for our strength, but for our conscious weakness. And this power can only be ours as we are momentarily receiving from the fountain. The unforgiven sinner who considers God's terrible power, cannot but quake and fear, for he has taken up a position of antagonism to God, and God's power is against him. *Now* this power is being manifested in grace. Christ is both able and willing to save all who come to God through Him. But ere long He shall be revealed in flaming fire, and those who have not obeyed the Gospel "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from THE GLORY OF HIS POWER."

IV.—AND TO HIM SHALL BE THE GLORY.

To God, our Father, shall eternally belong the pre-eminence. For the kingdom is His, and all the power manifested therein come from Himself. To Him belong the commendation and credit for all that grace has wrought. (For the use of the word glory see Luke xiv. 10; John ix. 24.) To Him also belongs the true kingly glory, of which all the royal splendour of earth is but a mere shadow. For He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords" (1 Tim. vi. 15). To Him shall be honour and power eternal. And it has been pre-ordained "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. ii. 9-11). For when Christ shall be manifested in power He shall be glorified in His saints, and be marvelled at in all them that believed" (2 Thess. i. 10). And for all the coming ages God shall be glorified in and by the Church, because in her shall be seen the exceeding

riches of His grace and wisdom in His kindness toward sinners in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 7). Then shall it be known that God's purposes terminated in Himself, because only in that way could be secured the most wide-spread and lasting good to the creature. And in that day all the children of the family will gladly confess that man's highest happiness, as well as chief end, was "to glorify God and enjoy Him forever."

V.—THE AMEN.

This is an Hebrew word which has found its way into the New Testament, and has, indeed, been naturalised in most, if not all, the languages in which the Gospel is proclaimed. It has even been introduced bodily into the Chinese translation of the Scriptures, and is thus in common use among Chinese Christians. It is a word which has been on the lips of the faithful for three or four thousand years past. And it will not quickly become obsolete, for the prophetic eye looks down the vista of the ages and beholds the time when, "He who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of Amen; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of Amen" (Isa. lxxv. 16, R.V., *mar.*). Now we know that Amen is a New Testament title of our Lord (Rev. iii. 14), and is it not possible that the prediction is to the effect that a time shall come when all earth shall know the God of the Amen, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? It was a word frequently in the lips of the Lord. At the commencement of a sentence ("verily") it solemnly affirms the truth and reliability of what follows (Mark iii. 28; Luke iv. 24, &c.). In John's Gospel alone it is twice repeated before certain great announcements to mark their certainty and importance (John iii. 3, v. 24, 25, &c.). But when, as in the passage before us, it occurs at the end of a sentence it is equivalent to *so may it be, let it come to pass*. It is both the language of *desire* and of *assurance*. Each child of God heartily wishes that every petition in the prayer may be quickly fulfilled, and he knows that in due time it shall be, for God has said it. So this "Amen" is a word of deep and solemn meaning, and not to be lightly used. When intelligently uttered, it is the seal of our hearty

consent to all that has been said, whether in praise, thanksgiving, intercession, or dedication. What hath grace wrought! For we who once were strangers and enemies have been made nigh to God, and to every petition in this prayer, rightly understood, we tremblingly yet sincerely say "Amen."

But we will not forget the filial character of the prayer. The kingdom, power, and glory are *our Father's*. And we are both sons and heirs of God. We, too, have a place and portion in that kingdom; and we, too, shall share in the peace and glory thereof. But even in the joy thereof God shall be first. We often forget God's capacity for happiness. He desires our happiness, but He can only make us happy by making us holy. And soon we shall be holy and like Christ.

"Then we shall be where we would be,
Then we shall be what we should be;
Things which are not now nor could be,
Then shall be our own."

But, best of all, *God shall have His portion*. For in a higher sense than in its original connection the word shall be fulfilled: "Jehovah, thy Triune God, is in the midst of thee . . . He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will be silent in His love; He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii. 17). The Shepherd has rejoiced over every wandering sheep found; the Spirit has rejoiced over every dead sinner brought to life; and the Father has rejoiced over every prodigal son led back to the home. And for all eternity Father, Son, and Spirit shall be satisfied in the sinners of Adam's race whom grace chose, called, justified, and glorified. God shall be glad, unspeakably glad—*silent in His love*. And for ever and aye there shall be nothing in us to mar this joy. "Now unto Him . . . be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations, for ever and ever. AMEN."

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE.

WHAT comfort did Jesus ever find from this world, save only the great joy (Heb. xii. 2) of glorifying His Father, and bringing blessing to men.

We have need to take up our cross in many ways if we walk with Jesus.

THE ELECT OF GOD,

AND THE EIGHT VIRTUES THEY ARE EXHORTED
TO "PUT ON."

PART II.

CONFERENCE ADDRESS IN CITY HALL, GLASGOW, BY DR.
NEATBY, AUTHOR OF "OUR LORD'S COMING AGAIN."

Portion read, Colossians iii. 12-17.

DO I bear an unforgiving spirit in my heart towards my brother that offends me perhaps in some trifling thing—some misunderstanding—a word, not exactly the kind word; it galls my spirit, and I am not ready to forgive. I have had 500 pence forgiven me, and I shrink at having to forgive half a farthing to my brother! O to know more of the spirit of Christ, the mind of Christ.

"*And above all things put on love.*"—There is something yet higher than even these qualities. There is something to put over them all—all kindness, all humbleness of mind, all meekness must be covered with this divine love which keeps everything in its place. Remember this, love is the positive side of Christianity. The judgment of sin—the putting away of every form of sin—that is the negative side. It is very necessary, infinitely necessary; but "love is of God;" it is the very nature of God. There is none in the human heart.

Love is the whole positive side of Christianity. But how terribly this is forgotten. Some miserable quibble about church government will sometimes upset the whole positive side of Christianity, and make two brethren in Christ not speak to each other.

"*The bond of perfectness.*"—"Over all these put on love." It is like putting on the very nature of God in our measure. Put on love—"the bond of perfectness." Oh, it is a bond of perfectness! "No one hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son declared Him." If we dwell in love, we dwell in God, and God in us, and the world will judge of what your Father is and my Father is by the children. May they see love!

"*Let the peace of God,*" or rather "let the peace of Christ"—for in this epistle to the Colossians everything is referred to Christ in a special way—things elsewhere referred to God are here referred to Christ, because they were slipping away from the Head. "Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart." He is going to speak of one body, but he begins with the heart. Let that peace govern every-

thing; let it keep everything in order in your heart. "Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, to which also ye are called in one body, and be ye thankful." Christ made peace. He broke down the middle wall of partition. He made Jew and Gentile to be "one new man" in Christ.

THE ONE BODY IS AN EXISTING THING, thank God! Let us never seek to make a "one body." Let us recognise what God has made. The peace that we are here to keep is a peace which has reference to the one body. We are called to that peace in one body. The Head is in heaven, the members are here, and, alas! Satan has been permitted to scatter the members. There are some of these members in the Established Kirk, and there are some of these members in the Free or U.P. Churches, and there are some of these members "gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus," and there are some that are called "Exclusives," and you have not the whole body unless you take in the whole members wherever they are found.

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your heart, to which ye are called in one body." He would have the one body known as a perfectly recognised fact. If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it. Is that a fact? I had once a whitlow upon my finger's last joint. I could not sleep for this. It was only one little joint on one finger on one hand; but it kept me awake at night, and suffering by day—every member suffered with the one. My head felt it—it was that which did feel it—it was not the finger; the head felt it. The head is connected by nerves with every part, and the head got the worst of it. Well, we know who the Head is, and every member is essential to that one body. You cannot say to the weakest, "I have no need of thee." But that brother is amongst the Wesleys! "I cannot say I have no need of thee." But this other is among the Exclusives! "I cannot say I have no need of thee." Is your next-door neighbour a Wesleyan, and on the other side one gathered to the name of the Lord only, and one opposite an Exclusive? Is the peace of God ruling in your heart? You hear that the wife of your next-door neighbour—the Wesleyan—is lying ill. Does the bunch of grapes go next door—to the Wesleyan on the right hand as freely

as to the other Christian on the left hand? Do your enquiries every morning go forth as lovingly for the Wesleyan as for the one on the other side of the house. You are called to own *one body*. The distinctions God does not know; the oneness God has made. The distinctions rise no farther than the roof; the unity was made in heaven. It was God from all eternity who planned and formed this unity; gave His Son to die for it; sent His Spirit to effect it, and recognises it always Himself.

O that the thoughts of God may govern us to the least detail in everything!

THREE RELATIONSHIPS.

MY SHEEP.

"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep" (John x. 14).

MY sheep—the blest relationship of power
Befriending weakness in the threat'ning
hour,

Of tenderness, and pity, and control.

"My sheep"—the costly purchase of His blood,
The lost one found, the rescued from the flood,
The sickly, failing, falling ones made whole.

"My sheep"—implying leadership and care—
The Shepherd's crook, the pastures green and
fair.

MY FRIENDS.

"Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you"
(John xv. 14).

"My friends"—the sweet relationship of love,
Of kindred hearts that with one impulse move,
Of sympathy and thought that ever speaks
In hushed communion of all secret things—
Nothing concealed: an intercourse that brings
Soul unto soul—that ever union seeks.

"My friends"—sheep are not friends; no words
can tell

The flock a love that friendship knows so well.

MY BRETHREN.

"I will declare Thy name unto my brethren" (Ps. xxii. 22).

"My brethren"—this is nearer, higher still:
Relationship of birth, of ties that thrill

In closest, deepest union of life;
One Father, fortune, home, blood, object, aim,
Inheritance and prospect, hope and name—

A brother born for trouble and for strife.

Here I can rest; relationship is here

Of love, care—all things: wherefore should I
fear?

W. L.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XIV.

THE PARABLE OF THE HUSBAND- MEN AND VINEYARD.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

Author of
"Solar Light as illustrating Eternity in Unity."

MATTHEW XXI. 33-46. Parallel—MARK XII.
1-12; LUKE XX. 9-19.

Verse 33—"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country."

WITH this parable we may compare Ps.
lxxx. 8-16 and Isa. v. 1-7.

In Isa. v. 7 we have the interpretation, "The vineyard of Jehovah of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant."

In Ps. lxxx. the VINE is contemplated, in Isa. v. the FRUIT, but in the parable the responsibility of the HUSBANDMEN.

The primary interpretation of the parable is to Israel, but the general principles may be applied to God's providential dealings with man. Retiring from manifest interference with human affairs, God gives man an opportunity to exhibit his real character as responsible to Himself, while laying him under deep obligations for gratitude and praise; and due acknowledgment of his many favours.

Verses 34-36—"And when the time [season] of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

"And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

"Again, he sent other servants more than the first; and they did unto them likewise."

Man under responsibility to the goodness of God, who is good to all, giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, has not rendered again according to the benefit received; and Israel under the first covenant, and the law given on Sinai, utterly failed in responding to their high privileges, and those who have witnessed for God have been treated as represented in the parable.

Verses 37-39—"But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, 'They will reverence my son.' But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize upon his inheritance.' And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him."

Man in general, and Israel in particular, have been subjected to a threefold test.

First. Respecting God, and especially God the Father as Creator, providential Ruler, and Benefactor of mankind. Forgetfulness of God and idolatry have been man's response to this test, as it was also that of Israel up to the time of the Babylonish captivity.

Second. The second test was the coming of the Son of God into the world as God manifest in the flesh. This made manifest to the full the natural enmity of the human heart against God, when both Jew and Gentile united in rejecting and crucifying the only begotten Son of God who came in the fulness of grace and love.

Third. To the third test both Jew and Gentile are being subjected at the present time. The Holy Ghost, the Comforter, sent by the Father and the Son, is come to abide with and in the Church, and to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come. What reception does He meet with, whether from the Church or from the world?

Fourth. There remains yet a fourth test, to which the world will be subjected in due time: the manifestation of the Son of Man in glory, and the establishment of His millennial reign.

The final rebellion, when Satan is loosed at the expiration of the thousand years, will be the concluding and conclusive proof that "the flesh profiteth nothing," and that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Verses 40, 41—"When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" They say unto Him, 'He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.'

The miseries of the Jews in the siege, and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus, A.D. 70, seventy-four years after the birth of Christ, were the manifestation of the righteous judgment of God upon Israel for the rejection of His Son.

Verse 42—"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing [this is from Jehovah], and it is marvellous in our eyes?'" (Ps. cxviii. 22, 23).

Israel having refused their own Messiah when He came in lowliness and grace, God is now manifesting and accomplishing His secret purpose of uniting Jew and Gentile in one, by

one Spirit baptising them into one body, in union with the risen Christ in heavenly glory, thus constituting Him the head of the corner, at once the foundation and the top-stone. The foundation is Christ in His humiliation and death. The top-stone is Christ Jesus in His resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father.

Verses 43, 44—"Therefore I say unto you, The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder [scatter him as chaff]."

The nation that bringeth forth the fruits of the kingdom, may be explained as the Church responding to the grace of God in the Gospel; or more probably it may refer to the nation of Israel under the covenant, when they shall be all righteous, and God shall be glorified in them.

Meanwhile, "What think ye of Christ?" is the test. Those who reject Him, taking offence at His lowliness, and thus "stumbling at the stumbling-stone," will perish; but the day is coming when the stone cut out without hands will scatter the kingdoms of the earth as chaff, and the kingdom of the Messiah will be established, which shall comprise the whole world (Dan. ii. 34, 35).

This will be "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. i. 7, 8). Then the Father shall give unto the Son the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession (Ps. ii. 8).

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

"THE Lord is good—good when He gives, and equally good when He takes away. . . . I desire to praise equally, and with my whole heart, His taking as well as His giving hand; He never takes from us but with the loving design of making us susceptible of receiving something better."

"All His present innumerable and priceless mercies are only the small first fruits of an eternal harvest." For God is love, and He "delighteth in mercy."

THE DAY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THE THIRD PROPHETIC DAY.

By J. HIXON IRVING, Author of "Life Booklets."

NO single one of the prophetic days bears so many names as does this one. It may not be out of place to give most of those designations, and where they occur.

It is called "The time" (1 Cor. iv. 5); "The day-dawn" (2 Pet. i. 19); "*The day*" (1 Cor. iii. 13, 15); "That day" (2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 6-9); "The day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30); the "approaching" day (Heb. x. 25); "The day of Christ" (Phil. i. 10; ii. 16); "The day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. i. 14); "The day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6); and "The day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. i. 8). This last is its full title. An examination of the passages referred to, and their various contexts, will show that they refer to one and the same period of time; and have an exclusive bearing upon the saved. It is essential to an understanding of the day that these things be seen. Examine well, therefore, the context of each Scripture noted. This is the first prophetic period in the future—the near future, no doubt. The first event of that nearing day will be, CHRIST WILL LEAVE HIS FATHER'S THRONE, but not until He has received permission to take His "kingdom, and power, and honour" (Dan. vii. 13, 14). He will "receive for Himself a kingdom and return" (Luke xix. 12). He will return to the scene of His rejection and death and set up His kingdom thereon. When He will do so is a secret hid in God, therefore it is not only foolish but wicked to attempt to "fix" a date for it. Such as have done so have not only done discredit to themselves (a small matter), but have brought discredit upon the study of prophetic time and truth.

CHRIST IN THE AIR.

(1 Thess. iv. 13-18.)

There will be no sign in the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, heralding His coming into the air. The "sign of the Son of Man will appear in the heavens" later on, ere He comes to the earth. His entrance into the aerial region will be silent and secret, though the effect of His coming will soon be felt on sea and land. It is there the saints will spend

the whole of this glorious day. For *to* the a they will be caught; *in* the air they will be with Him; and from the air they will come with Him. It will therefore be an aerial day.

RESURRECTION AND TRANSFORMATION.

(1 Cor. xv. 42-58; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18; Phil. iii. 21.)

"The *spirits* of just men made perfect," who as to the body fell asleep anterior to His resurrection, together with those who have passed into His presence since then, will He bring with Him. In spirit-form they went to Him and in the same form will they return with Him. Then will a resurrection of the bodies of such take place. A wave of power from Him will penetrate earth and sea, and gather together the scattered dust of His redeemed. The deepest graves of earth will open by one touch of His power and the resurrection to life will take place, and each spirit will be "clothed upon" with its house from heaven.

CHANGE.

The dead shall be raised incorruptible and and we shall be *changed*." "We shall all be *changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." "Who shall *change* our vile body." Those living, who believe on Him, will suddenly pass from a state of mortality into one of immortality without dying. Painless and perfect will be the change; and in the least possible space of time. Transformed! Fashioned like the body of His glory! No decay will ever mark it, disease will never touch it, its beauty will never fade, its strength will never give way, nor will it ever weary with ceaseless activity. It will be a "spiritual body." Such will be the outcome of the power of Christ in resurrection and change; for "mortality will be swallowed up of life."

RAPTURE.

"Caught up to meet the Lord in the air."

"We shall not all sleep—what ineffable bliss!
Some living to-day who may taste even this;
The rapture, the glory, the sudden surprise,
One moment a mortal, the next in the skies!"

"Caught up!" into yon trysting-place to meet with Himself. It is not as the "blessed and only potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords" (1 Tim. vi. 15, 16) we shall see Him, but as "Christ Jesus, *our* Lord." He who became flesh bore our sins, suffered for us, gave Himself for us, who rose again that we might have a living hope and see His glory which He had

with His Father before the world was. The feeblest believer to-day will then be able, without hesitancy or fear, to call Him "Christ Jesus, my Lord."

JUDGMENT.

(Rom. ii. 16, xiv. 10-13; 1 Cor. iii. 12-15; iv. 4, 5; 2 Cor. v. 8-11; 2 Tim. iv. 8.)

This judgment will take place in the air, after the translation of the redeemed. It will therefore be the judgment of the redeemed and glorified. It will be an examination by the law of *motives* which have actuated in testimony and service. At that time all service done here will be scrutinized, its character will be revealed, and its value rightly estimated. The Judge will be loving, but not impartial; careful to give to every man according as his work hath been. Some of God's servants have, under misjudgment from their fellow-servants, rejoiced that all "must appear before the judgment seat of Christ," so that the motives which prompted words misrepresented and misjudged acts might be seen in the light of His presence. Doubtless there will be, in very many cases, a complete reversal of human judgment on that day.

REWARDS.

(1 Cor. ix. 24-27; 2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 Peter v. 4; Rev. ii. 8-10.)

The crowning day is coming when all those who have kept the "body in subjection," in order that they might be victors in the conflict and race, will receive an "incorruptible crown." Not like the perishing wreath which men bestow upon their fellows, fading, but an unfading one.

These will also be for those who have looked for, and longed for, because they "*loved* His appearing." He will be crowned with a "crown of righteousness"—a reward not only given in righteousness, but the acknowledgment of a righteous life lived in the midst of unrighteousness.

Those who have to the best of their ability fed "the flock of God" with unwearied care, following the example and doing the will of the Chief Shepherd, will at His appearing receive not only His "Well done," but a "crown of glory." Fadeless as the glory of the Giver will that reward be.

For those who have been "faithful unto death" there awaits a "crown of life." Fitting acknowledgment of a life laid down for the sake of the Name.

These rewards are made known to encourage and comfort the faithful in self-denial, suffering and service.

THE BRIDAL DRESS.

(Rev. xix. 8, R.V.)

"The fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints." "Righteous acts." Whose? The saints! Holy ones: partakers of His holiness. "Acts" done where? Not in heaven, but on earth—not in eternity, but in time. Deeds done in the body: but good and righteous in their character. Here the rewards "fine linen" are traced to their origin. Rewards are given for righteous deeds, and those will form the bridal dress of the Lamb's wife. It is a salutary truth that each one is making His bridal dress. Day by day, "warp" and "woof" joined together, the dress is being woven. Motives the "warp," and deeds the "weft." "As one star differeth from another star in glory," so one dress will most likely differ from another. Some will be ample, and some will be scant.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

(Rev. xix.)

The love of the Lord will be known then in all its divine fulness, and the love of the saved perfected. His joy at that time will be full, a joy which, whilst He was here, beckoned Him onward to the Cross; and so will His people's too.

The union now existing will then be seen and perfectly understood; as He presents the Church to "Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." It will be "presented faultless before the presence of His glory in exceeding joy" (Jude 24). Then will the marriage feast take place.

THE RETURN.

(Rev. xix. 11-15.)

The bearer of many names, such as "The Faithful," "The True Witness," the "Prince of the Kings of the Earth," and "The Word of God," will leave the air and come forth to earth with all His saints with Him. He will "come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe . . . in that day" (2 Thess. i. 10). His coming will bring to a close this day, but will open up another of a totally different character, a day not heavenly, but earthly. How long the day of Christ will last is a question which none can answer, because its length is not revealed.

THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.

Reports of Addresses by Messrs. J. J. Sims, A. O. Molesworth, G. F. Bergin, J. H. Burridge, George Müller, W. Collingwood, and James Wright.

ADDRESS III.—THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE.

By G. F. BERGIN, Bethesda, Bristol.

2 Peter i. 16-21.

IN a former address attention was called to the fact that these words are in a second epistle, the second epistles supplying matter specially suited for the latter times: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed (as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise) in your hearts." This I judge to be the true sense of this word, "take heed in your hearts"—not "the day star arising in your hearts." The darkness does not end when we are saved, but when the Lord comes; and all through the darkness we need the light of the Word of God, "knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." This is not a question of the interpretation of Scripture, but of how the Scriptures came into existence. "Men spake from God." Such is the reading of ancient authorities, and is, I think, wisely adopted by the Revisers instead of "Holy men of God spake." It is not the character of the men: see, for example, the case of Baalam, whose words were inspired, though he "loved the wages of unrighteousness; "but the source, "from God," which is the question here.

As an illustration of this moving of the Holy Ghost, apart from their own thoughts or cogitations, see 1 Peter i. 10, 11: "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify." Picture Isaiah dropping his pen and saying: "Lord, what does this which I have written mean?" The power moving them is a force entirely apart from themselves. How this sets the Scriptures completely above and apart from anything coming from the mind of man!

Look now at 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Our subject is the sufficiency of Scripture, and it is this last thought on which I want to dwell. We have had the inspiration of Scripture brought before us, and proved from many parts. If

this were not a fact, the whole thing must be utterly set aside, for from beginning to end the Scriptures claim to be of God. If you want proofs outside themselves, look at the effect they produce on men around. A friend of Darwin was engaged in sending out missionaries to the Patagonians. "It is not the slightest use," he said; "they are too low to be affected by the Gospel." But the man of God knew better than Darwin, learned as he was in the things of this world, and the missionaries went to Patagonia, and found the same results as elsewhere—that the Patagonians *did* believe the Gospel, and on believing became new creatures in Christ Jesus. Darwin had the candour, when he heard this, to say: "I never would have believed it if it had not been proved, but I am glad to acknowledge it now." And that same result is going on day by day, wherever the gospel is preached in simplicity; this old-fashioned Book has produced similar results all through the ages.

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." God has so told out His mind in His Word, and in it given to all His children all they need to be thoroughly furnished unto *every* good work, that we don't require to go outside the Bible for instruction as to methods or for guidance for anything God would have us do. This is of the utmost importance now, when men are turning from the ways of God, and critics are leaving us little of the Bible. A minister recently come to a church began attacking the books of Moses, Isaiah, Daniel, &c. A godly deacon cut out of his Bible every part that the minister said was not inspired, and at the end of twelve months asked the minister to tea. After tea, he asked him to conduct family worship, laying before him the mutilated Bible. "Whatever is this?" said the minister. "That is your Bible; I took away all you said was not inspired, and that is all that is left." The object lesson was a telling one. But not only from higher critics are we suffering, but from many who think themselves wise above all that which is written, claiming for their own methods of carrying on work as much authority as the writings of Peter or Paul.

"That the man of God may be perfect,

thoroughly furnished," who has this precious Word of God. It is God's Word, dear friends. Didn't He write it with a knowledge of all we need in the 19th century? He knew the end and knew the beginning. All things are known by Him. These new "rays" recently discovered, all were known to Him, though man in his blind ignorance has been without that knowledge till a few months ago, so there is no evolving of things which God does not know, or against which He does not provide. He says: "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." What is the remedy? "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned." Now, do we take the Word of God in its full sense without any of the additions of men? God has provided His children with this Book containing His mind, so that they are independent of all men; not of God, but of all else beside. It is a wonderful thought that the man of God, supplied by God, is entirely independent of any human source for all difficulties down the stream of time, for all the circumstances of daily life, for all his dealings with God, his dealings with his fellow-saints in the church, his dealings with the world outside; whether as a witness to the truth of God or day by day in ordinary things, he is "thoroughly furnished." O beloved, it is not a *new* Bible we want. It is to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, to let it saturate our hearts and mind. Let us ponder it deeply—drink it in. It was a good reason for believing in its inspiration that was once given by an old lady. When asked, "Why do you believe the Bible to be inspired?" she replied, "Because I am personally acquainted with the Author." And if you and I increase our personal acquaintance with the Author of this Word, we shall not much fear those who tell us that it is not the Word of God, but shall say:

"Should all the forms that men devise
Assault my faith with treacherous art,
I'd call them vanity and lies,
And bind the Bible to my heart."

ADDRESS IV.—GOD'S THIRD BOOK.

By J. H. BURRIDGE, Author of "Science, Miracles, and Inspiration," &c.

1 Cor. iii. 1, 3.

SOMETIMES we have had addresses on God's two books—the book of Nature and the Book of the written Word, the revealed

will of God. There is, however, a third, which I want to say a few words about now, which is just as much a book of God, though inseparable from the written Word itself, and this is, *the Church of God*, or, rather, the children of God. They form the book that the world reads most, and which is often instrumental in God's hands in convincing the infidel.

We are here for the most part as children of God, with confidence in the written Word of God, but it may be profitable to us to consider *the living power of that Word in our lives*.

The internal evidence of inspiration is of much more value to the children of God than external evidence, and I don't want to weaken it one bit, but at the same time God has surrounded His Word with external proofs of its inspiration just as He surrounded the early disciples with signs and wonders. This is of great importance to the children of God. I am constantly meeting people who are shaky on the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures, and I believe it helps to confirm their faith to receive external proofs of its inspiration. In it we have the histories of nations told hundreds and thousands of years before. You can no more account for the existence of the Bible apart from the power of God than for creation. Let us never dissociate the Word of God and the power of God. We are prone to do this, and hold the blessed truths taught there as theories, but if once the freshness and power of that Word is gone in our souls, it is an easy thing to give up the Word itself. How important, then, to retain the *power* of the Word! We know certain truths, but what we want is that these truths should be indelibly stamped on our hearts, ministered by the power of the Spirit of God. There must be the real preparation of heart for the reception of the impression of the truths of God in such a way as to become part of ourselves, and to be lived out in our lives. It is the humble and contrite heart that receives the impress of God's truth. The Lord reproves His disciples again and again for their hardness of heart—they were not instamped by the power of the Holy Spirit—and how much of the power and impress of God's truth is shut out from God's people because of the hardness of our hearts!

This brings us to the *third* book. We

find the Lord looks for a living testimony in His people which will convince those who will not believe the written Book. They should be "epistles of Christ." The Thessalonian saints bore such a testimony that the people all around were talking about the wonderful change in the lives of the idolaters in Thessalonica, and saying: "What brought this about? They tell us they have believed the Gospel; there must be some reality, some power in that." So it is in the present day; it is the *lives* of God's people that convince the gainsayers and infidels who never read the Bible, or read it only with a critical spirit. The simplest child of God may become the greatest proof of the truth of God's Word.

A young man who worked in the midst of infidels was converted. His fellow-workmen did all they could to persecute him, and when he refused to fight, said it was because he was "afraid." He made no answer, and then the worst infidel among them said: "That is enough; I see there is a power in him that I have not."

That is what I mean by *the book of our lives*. We ought to be epistles, so that in our lives and conduct we shall convince the infidels. May we know the power and reality of the Word in our lives in such a way as to do this.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavored to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

ABUSES IN MINISTRY.—What are the Scriptural means of preventing abuses in ministry, without curtailing the liberty of the Holy Spirit to speak through whom He will?

"MY FOOLISHNESS."—Can the words in Psalm lxxix. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv. when He showed to His disciples the wounds in His hands and feet? Or did He only assume

His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

THE ROOT OF LAWLESSNESS.—In Judges xvii. 6; xxi. 25 we read: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This lawless state is frequently quoted as arising from Israel being in a wrong position, in having no kingly authority. Please compare with 1 Samuel viii. 6, 7, and explain.

WHAT IS A LIVING SACRIFICE?—Please explain Romans xii. 1: "Present the body a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service."

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST—WHAT IS IT?—Please explain the latter clause of Romans viii. 9. Is the Spirit of Christ in that verse the Holy Spirit by whom every believer is indwelt? Or does it refer to the spirit which Christ manifested towards those with whom He came in contact during His ministry on earth, and if the latter, how are we to understand the words, *He is none of His*, seeing that there are many of God's children (truly saved) who do not manifest a Christlike spirit in their daily walk and conversation?

CONTRARY EXPERIENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN.

QUESTION 519.—Can any one explain the contrary experiences, the extremes of pain and rejoicing, expressed in the present tense in the same Psalms? Compare in Psalm xxxi. verses 9-12 with verses 21, 23, 24; and compare Psalm xl. verse 3 (present joy) with verse 12 (present misery). Are these conditions of soul possible simultaneously, or even approximately? Or are they to be understood as successive stages of experience? And if the latter, which represents the speaker's present state?

Answer A.—That many earnest souls find their language in the Psalms is not disputed, but, nevertheless, I do not think that proper *Christian* experience is detailed there. Of course we could sit at the feet of the Psalmist and learn confidence in God, and this is the only proper state for a saint, whether earthly or heavenly, in any dispensation, Jewish or Christian. But when I speak of "proper Christian experience" I mean what flows from the knowledge of full justification, acceptance in the Beloved, union with Christ in glory, the indwelling of the Spirit of adoption, "whereby we cry "Abba, Father," all which has come to pass since redemption has been accomplished, the veil rent, and the Son of Man glorified in heaven. To the Psalmist, though born of the Spirit, the Gospel was still a *promise* of what God was going to do, rather than a *proclamation* of what has been done (Rom. i. 1-4). Having been subject to the Spirit's sovereign

operations, giving him a nature suited to say to God, and yet still under the law which expresses the claims of God upon man "in the flesh," two things met constantly in him, as the Psalms express. Delight in God, in His Word, in His ways, His sufficiency, proved even when away from the sanctuary in a dry and thirsty land, &c.; on the other hand, deep distress because of the unmet claims of the law and felt unfitness for the holy presence of Jehovah. How rapidly his spirit glided from the simplicity of trust into the depths of self-occupation and self-loathing, until he instinctively turns to God again, to God his "exceeding joy." His soul thirsted after God while his conscience was under the law, which brought forth fruit unto death. But there is another way of looking at the Psalms—Christ's side. The impressions made upon the heart of the Psalmist, by the circumstances he passed through, gave occasion for the Spirit of Christ which was in him to testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glories which should follow. Thus we can go back to the Psalms, if not to study ourselves, to study Christ in them, which the man thinking only of his experiences generally misses. Some Psalms are thus purely prophetic of the Messiah, as Psalm ii., xvi., xxii., cx., &c.; others speak of the sorrows of His earthly people in a yet future day, many of which the Messiah anticipated as the Man of Sorrows, adopting their language, except where they are confessing sin, for *He* went on in unclouded communion with the Father; but even the sin question He took up, when, "made sin" on the Cross, expiation for them (and us, too) was wrought. Thus will the godly remnant have His sympathy when the mass of the nation is in apostacy suffering under the government of God, as they feel their loneliness. They will make the discovery that Messiah knew all this in His earthly path, as the prophet also said: "In all their afflictions He was afflicted" (Isaiah lxiii. 9), and His first public act was to be baptised with the remnant in His day, fulfilling righteousness where they were confessing sins, for, as Psalm xvi. shows, "the excellent of the earth" were His delight. Before He undertook to suffer for His people in death, He would sympathetically suffer with them in His sinless life. This the Psalms abundantly show, putting in the present tense what was to find its solution in Messiah's day.

Both the Psalms referred to in the question (xxi. and xl.) refer to Christ (see Luke xxiii. 46, compared with Psalm xxxi. 5; Heb. x. 5, compared with Psalm xl. 6, 7). But we have the language of His people too, and language which never could have fitted *His* lips. Thus, if He said: "Father, unto Thy hands I commend my Spirit," quoting Psalm xxxi., He could not quote

the whole verse: "For Thou hast redeemed Me." He is the Redeemer Himself. M. I. R.

Answer B.—If we read the Psalms as if they were the mere literary productions of the writers, we are naturally puzzled by the apparent lack of harmony and continuity of style and subject. But, in fact, there is no mechanical or artificial harmony in Scripture. The Psalms of David, for instance, were not only written by David, they were *lived* by him. Sometimes in one verse we have the history of a whole tremendous conflict; and as the apparently disjointed expressions are wrung out of his inmost experience, they are, as it were, caught up by the Spirit of inspiration, and are crystalised for the instruction, or warning, or encouragement of the saints of God in all ages. *The harmony of Scripture is the harmony of the real spiritual life*, which is neither made up of one praise nor one prayer, but (like many of the Psalms) consists also of sighs, hymns of praise, of groans which cannot be uttered, and moans of despondency, intermingled with songs of triumph and shouts of victory, all, however, working out one beautiful pattern, the "cohesion" and perfection of which we shall see by-and-bye if not now. D. B.

Answer C.—To be "sorrowful yet always rejoicing" has been the "way" of the godly in all ages. Along with this one Paul gives a long list of contrary experiences existing at one and the same time (2 Cor. vi. 8-10). Habakkuk will easily occur to the memory as an Old Testament rejoicer in sorrow. Lot had the sorrow in Sodom (2 Pet. ii. 7), but certainly not the joy. Many of the Psalms are doubtless written in memoriam of happy times with God, times of light in the darkness, when the soul was lifted up in experience from the vale of weeping to the mountain top of joy.

The extremes of feeling so abundantly depicted in the Psalms are to be explained by the different *standpoints* assumed by the soul in describing its experiences. *Difference of outlook* largely explains the apparent contradictory states of feeling. Thus, looking *abroad* at his enemies, David could truthfully say: "My life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing" (Ps. xxxi. 10); but, looking *up*, he is able at once to bless the Lord for His "marvellous loving-kindness" (verse 21). In this lies our profit in the Psalms, that side by side with the abounding afflictions of the godly, we have the comfort of God supervening upon them to the eye of faith. The varying experiences are often very widely and minutely described, so that we may see the soul passing out of sadness into joy, and how the difference came about (see verses 22-24). Christ's sufferings should be read in all the Psalms. David's being typical of His, we therefore find

that he speaks principally of his own afflictions. New Testament saints, on the other hand, being sharers of Christ's sufferings, lose sight of themselves, glory in tribulation in and through Christ, and are heart-burdened for others in the mind of Christ. W. P.

Answer D.—Psalm xl. unquestionably speaks of the blessed Lord Jesus Himself, according to Divine commentary given in Heb. x. He was the Man of Sorrows, and yet He had meat to eat which even His disciples knew not of (Jn. iv. 32). He rejoiced in spirit even over a rejected ministry, because so it seemed good in the Father's sight (see Luke x. 21). For the joy that was set before Him He endured the Cross, despising the shame (Heb. xii. 2). The Christian also experiences this in a measure when he gives expression to such words as these, "Sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Cor. vi. 10), with quite a cluster of similar paradoxes in the same chapter. So also in 1 Peter i. There is great rejoicing amid heaviness through manifold temptations. There is severe trial, and yet there is rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Thus we see that all around there may be fierce tumult, wild commotion, and scorching trial, while at the same time within there may be the solid, calm peace which the Lord Jesus gives. There may be the faith which sees Him sitting above the waterfloods, and making all work together for good to them that love God; and there may be joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, all these experienced simultaneously with the sorrows, because of the presence of the blessed Holy Spirit and the fullness of divine grace. Psalm xxxi. alluded to by the questioner is possibly the song of the persecuted godly remnant of Israel at a time yet future. Be that as it may, we see that after passing through a very chequered experience verse 19 bursts forth in praise for great goodness laid up for them that fear Him, and wrought for them that trust Him. The Lord hides them in the secret of His own presence, and keeps them secretly as in a pavilion. Blessed be the Lord, for He hath showed His marvellous kindness. Verse 22 shows that there had been an eclipse of faith. "I said in my haste I am cut off," but now brought forth into the full blaze of light and joy. Then, as is commonly the case after blessed restoration, there is warm-hearted, urgent exhortation: "O love the Lord, all ye His saints . . . be of good courage . . . all ye that hope in the Lord" (verses 23 and 24). This certainly seems to point to successive stages of experience, with a magnificent and blessed final issue. J. s.

Editor's Note.—To this interesting question we have at length received many replies, and regret our inability to insert them all. We have

selected four which express pretty nearly all the views given. The fact of the present tense being used does not necessarily imply that the experiences were simultaneous, especially in Scriptures that are inspired and largely prophetic. Being inspired and prophetic as well as experimental, they are largely composed of selections from the personal experiences of the writer grouped together according to the design of the Spirit of God rather than in historic order. These considerations, together with the possibilities of a twofold experience as referred to in above replies, apparently inconsistent, but really reconcilable, according to the standpoint at the moment, will suffice to explain all such peculiarities as indicated by the question.

DAVID'S HATRED TO THE INFIRM.

(2 Sam. v. 6-9.)

QUESTION 520.—Why were "the blind and lame" smitten and hated of David's soul?

Answer A.—The Jebusites considered their stronghold so secure that they placed the lame and the blind on the walls, "And spake unto David, saying, Thou shalt not come in hither, but the blind and the lame shall turn thee away" (R.V. marg., v. 6), thus turning David's attempt to take the place into ridicule. Nothing could have been more cutting to a warrior. On the day of the assault David gave his force the instructions that they should cast the lame and the blind into the ravine. These were really the Jebusites. David, in thus designating them, was but returning their sarcasm with interest.

J. H. H.

Answer B.—Dr. Kennicott's amended translation is as follows: "Who spake unto David, saying, Thou shalt not come in hither, for the blind and the lame shall drive thee away by saying, David shall not come in hither." Verse 8, "And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites, and through the subterraneous passage reacheth the lame and blind, who hate the life of David (because the blind and the lame said, He shall not come into the house), shall be chief and captain. So Joab, the son of Zeruiah, went up first and was chief."

If the above be the correct rendering of this passage all difficulty vanishes. Seeing that David was a type of Christ, may not the blind and the lame, who thus hated David and opposed his entry into Jerusalem, foreshadow the Scribes and the Pharisees who, spiritually blind (Matt. xv. 14) and morally lame (John viii. 3-9), were the bitterest haters and most violent opposers of David's Son and David's Lord in the city of Jerusalem? They, above all others, felt the keen edge of His sharp two-edged sword.

A. W. P. S.

FUNDAMENTAL ERROR AND SCRIPTURAL DISCIPLINE.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Christ in the Levitical Offerings."*

THERE are many Christians who have no sympathy at all with the heresy known as "the non-eternity of punishment," who firmly believe it to be a serious error—whether it terminates the sufferings of the wicked by extinction or by restitution finally to the favour of God—but who are nevertheless in doubt as to how they should act towards those who hold these doctrines.

Some deny that there is any Scripture warrant for exclusion from an assembly on the ground of *doctrine*. Such hold that evil in *practice* alone can be so judged; erroneous beliefs, they say, are to be met by internal discipline, by instruction, conviction, reproof, and so on, but not by excommunication.

Others hold that he who *teaches* such errors ought to be "put away" or "cut off," but that one who holds the error but does not teach it is to be borne with.

The enormously rapid spread of these doctrines throughout all Christendom, and the indifference with which they are regarded by some who are themselves "sound in the faith," seem to call for a decided facing of the question as to how the holders of such errors are to be dealt with according to the Word of God.

In Galatians v. 9 the action of heaven is used to illustrate the contaminating effect of evil doctrine, exactly as in 1 Corinthians v. 6 it is used regarding moral evil. In both cases, therefore, the heaven must be dealt with in the same way, *i.e.*, purged out. This, we think it must be admitted, is a reasonable deduction.

In Galatians v. 12 it is written: "I would they were even cut off that trouble you." In the Revised Version it is given: "I would that they which unsettle you would even cut themselves off." A similar expression occurs in 1 Corinthians v. 2, *viz.*: "That he which hath done this deed might be taken away from among you."

But failing their cutting themselves off, or being taken away by the judgment of God, solemn responsibility is laid upon the Church to exclude them. In 1 Cor. v. 13: "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked

person." In Gal. v.: "I have confidence in you through the Lord that ye will be none other-wise minded, but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be."

It was on account of having made shipwreck of the faith that Hymenæus and Alexander were "delivered unto Satan" (1 Tim. i. 19, 20). The nature of their error, or at least that of Hymenæus, may be gathered from 2 Timothy ii. 17: "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." It was therefore on *doctrinal* and not on moral grounds that they were dealt with.

In Revelation ii. Ephesus is commended for hating the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. Pergamos is censured for having in their midst "those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes." It is not said, "those who practise their deeds," or "those that teach their doctrine," but "those who hold" it. To hold it was enough to warrant their being excluded, and in no other way could the approval of the Lord be secured. It is always necessary, however, to distinguish between persons who may have "doubtful thoughts," who having come in contact with error are affected or shaken, and others who "*hold*" the error or are held by it, in spite of patient effort to deliver them from it. Amputation is never resorted to until every known remedy has been tried and failed.

There are truths in Scripture, many, upon which Christians of the most godly character have, in all ages, held diverse views. To judge every diversity of mind or judgment as to doctrine to be equally serious would lead to the overturning of all Christian fellowship. Probably no two persons could be found who were exactly of one mind upon all points, all doctrines, or the meaning of all Scriptures.

A certain house had a defect in one of the chimneys. In order to rectify it, it was necessary to take a stone out of the solid wall. This was done, the defect rectified, the stone replaced, and no harm done. But suppose it had been thought desirable to take out a foundation stone, how very much more serious would the case have been. The integrity of the whole structure would thus have been endangered. In like manner there are truths in Scripture which are fundamental. To go astray on these involves over-

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throwing the faith, or, as elsewhere expressed, making shipwreck of the faith. Such are "the doctrine of Christ," including the glory of His Person (2 John 9, 10); the Gospel of the grace of God (Gal. i. 6-9); the doctrine of the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 33, 34); and in Hebrews vi. there are six doctrines declared to be fundamental, the first two of which are "repentance and faith," and the last two "resurrection of the dead" and "eternal judgment." We do not stay here to comment on the second couple, viz., "the doctrine [or teaching] of baptisms [not baptism] and of the laying on of hands." Not baptism and laying on of hands, but the teaching implied in these familiar Mosaic rites, "baptisms" (a word never used in the plural when applied to New Testament baptism, therefore referring to ceremonial washings), and laying of hands on the head of the offerings, the two classes of ceremonial acts typifying "regeneration and atonement."

For our present purpose we emphasize these points: first, that these are fundamentals—they pertain to the foundation, not to the superstructure—therefore the faith that has not these for its basis is not a genuine faith; secondly, that one of these is "eternal judgment." To say, with some, that eternal judgment only means "the eternal consequences of an act," is tantamount to saying that he who shoots a vicious dog visits it with eternal judgment—the consequences of shooting it are eternal! Scripture invariably conveys the thought of the punishment of sin being eternal, conscious suffering.

We conclude from this Scripture that this doctrine pertains to the foundation, and that, therefore, this error is not to be treated with toleration, but to be purged out. The Sadducees denied the resurrection and also the existence of angel and spirit. Modern Sadducean doctrine denies the existence of spirit apart from body. Non-eternity is essentially, therefore, the leaven of the Sadducees, and as such must be purged out. But those must be blind indeed who do not see that the non-eternity error touches every point in the circle of divine truth.

It touches the constitution of man, and the divine record of his creation. It touches the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It touches

the doctrine of the atonement, of conscious existence after death, of resurrection, of judgment. Admit this error, and the whole superstructure of Christian doctrine is shaken to its centre.

And one of the most serious aspects of it is only discovered in seeking to deal with those who become entangled in its meshes. It is that genuine reverence for the inspired Word of God is practically surrendered, and necessarily so, by those who contend for it. The plainest statements of Scripture have to be explained away and got rid of by some process of false reasoning; their obvious force must be evaded; and the shufflings that are resorted to in the attempt, betray the havoc that has been wrought in the mind and conscience of those who have been led into it. In illustration of this we only refer to one text, viz.: Luke xxiii. 43. So clearly and unanswerably does the Lord here assert His Own conscious existence, and that of the crucified, but pardoned, robber after death, that at all hazards the words of the blessed Lord must be perverted, and made to teach something else than their obvious sense—something that will be consistent with the annihilation theory. What, then, is the way out of the dilemma? Simply alter the punctuation, "Verily, I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with Me in paradise."

Such is the power of error, that the conscience of eminent Greek scholars can be brought down so low as to endorse a rendering that a schoolboy would be punished for; and that in the teeth of the authority of both Authorised and Revised versions! Surely a good conscience must have been somehow lost (as in 1 Tim. i. 19) before such shipwreck could be made of the truth.

In vain do those who condescend so to tamper with the Lord's words contend for the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.

As already referred to, differences of mind as to many doctrines may and do exist among true believers consistently with the maintenance of a good conscience, genuine godliness, and soundness in the faith as to the great foundation doctrines. But "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" The letting go of foundation truth is the plague spot that indicates a deep-rooted disease. The mystery of the faith can only be

held in a pure conscience (1 Tim. iii. 9). The power for holding the faith in its integrity is the Holy Spirit. Thus Paul exhorted Timothy: "That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us." If a defiled conscience be allowed, the Spirit is grieved and the power for maintaining the truth is gone. It is therefore certain that where fundamental error is embraced conscience has first been violated. This may not be apparent to others; it may have been in such a way as not to appear in this life, but as surely as the leprous spot on the forehead declares the man to be "utterly unclean," so surely does fundamental error discover the moral condition of him who holds it.

To say that a man may hold these views and be in the assembly if only he does not teach them is altogether futile. He may not publicly teach what he holds, but depend upon it he cannot help doing so in private intercourse, and that mainly amongst those who have the first claim on shepherd care, viz., the young and inexperienced.

One who is merely perplexed in mind does not usually talk about his difficulties except to those who are likely to be able to help him; but if ever one really holding fundamental error has managed to keep his place in an assembly it has sooner or later been found that irreparable mischief has been done. Of those who hold such fundamental error it is written: "Their word will eat as doth a canker." Leaven will spread, transforming that which comes under its influence into its own character.

Absolute separation from those who are possessed by such error is the only divinely-appointed way.

The doctrine of the non-eternity of punishment is the devil's gospel for a world that loves its sins. It is the foment of suicide, for wherever annihilation doctrine is propagated suicide becomes epidemic. One barrier against the torrent of iniquity is being removed that the enemy may come in like a flood. May the Spirit of the Lord lift up the standard and enable the children of God to be firm and uncompromising where the foundations are concerned.

From 1 Timothy i. 20, as well as from 1 Cor. v. 5, we learn that the purpose of the extreme act of discipline, viz., "putting away

from among themselves," or "delivering to Satan" the one who has embraced error or practised sin, is restoration. "That he may learn [or be disciplined] not to blaspheme": "that the spirit may be saved." It has sometimes been opposed as being harsh, and more likely to harden than to be beneficial. But if, as we doubt not, it is the Lord's way of dealing with such cases, then unquestionably it is not only the best, but the only right and safe course. All godly ends will be best served by obedience to the Lord's will, however painful to all concerned.

THE LAWS OF THE KINGDOM

(Matthew v.).

THE day will come when Christ shall take His throne, and out of Zion shall go forth the law. Though not yet reigning as He will then reign, He declared even as He stood before His Roman judge, that He was indeed a King. His subjects are they that are of the truth, and hear His voice. His kingdom was not of this world. It was in the hearts of His believing people. And thus at the opening of His ministry, in the Gospel which specially shows Him as the King, we see Him seated on the mountain in Galilee, and from thence giving forth the laws of His kingdom.

Never was more fully shown than in this passage that His thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor man's ways as His ways. He scatters the proud in the imagination of their hearts, and exalts them of low degree. The poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, happy are they! Theirs is the kingdom; they shall be comforted; they shall inherit the earth. "They that hunger and thirst after righteousness;" blessed are we if it is so with us. "The merciful," "the pure in heart"—He does not say "perfectly pure," but pure *in heart*, in contrast with washed hands and an outside cleansing. "Peacemakers," to be like Him who came to bring us peace; "children of God," in the sense of likeness, as verse 45, or John viii., or 1 John iv. 1-10. And while we commiserate our suffering brethren now, in the East or elsewhere, He calls them blessed, bids them rejoice and be exceeding glad, in view of the great reward in heaven. We shall not pity

them when we see them there with their crowns. Such, then, are the laws of the kingdom into which we are translated. How far are we its faithful subjects? Let us take the beatitudes one by one, and see if they belong to us. For it is thus we are to be the salt of the earth. If the salt have lost its savour, it is good for nothing. It is thus we are to be the light of the world. As long as He was in the world He was the light of the world. Now He has left that charge to us. He came as the living testimony to His Father's love, and by His death the fulfilment of that love to a sinful world. As the True Vine, He bore the full, rich cluster of fruit to His Father's glory. Now it is for each branch to fulfil its part, each to bear its cluster of the same, that His Father may be glorified. Our shining is to be in such wise that we may glorify, not ourselves, but our Father in heaven; to exhibit Him, so that men may see in us His character. Hate us they may, as they hate our Father and His ways. But let them see Him truly represented, "glorified" in us. And let us remember it is not said that we do this by our words. There is nothing of these here. It is by our "*good works*." By these we exhibit God.

Some take alarm when "good works" are spoken of, as if it would take them back to legalism. But let us rightly divide the word as to this. "Works," as opposed to faith in the work of Christ, the Spirit of God disallows. "Good works" He ever enjoins. By grace saved, not of "works," we are created in Christ Jesus unto "good works." All Scripture is given, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Being children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii.), we are manifested as His children by our good works. At regeneration, where "works [*as a ground*] of righteousness" cease, "good works" thenceforth become the Divine order which we are to be "careful to maintain." "The grace of God . . . teaches us . . . to be zealous of *good works*." It is of these the Lord speaks on the Mount.

In one notable Scripture "works" are commended. What James writes is of the "*doing*" instead of the barren profession; all in full accordance with the same teaching of the Lord.

Such a light shining in our lives is the mark

of our true Christianity, the image of God impressed on His current coin in the earth.

"The Law! Have we anything now to do with that?" Hear what our Lord says: "Think not that I am come to destroy (overthrow) the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." He indeed did fulfil all, in His own perfect obedience. But this is not what He here has to teach us. It is of *our* fulfilling the law. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." How solemn the words from His lips!

Let us ever remember that we have to regard the law from the standpoint of redemption. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." The law has no power to condemn them which are in Christ Jesus. Neither has it power to justify. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." It no longer has dominion over us. We are not under law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because of this? God forbid! And here the law finds its place, "the perfect law of [our] liberty;" the law of the kingdom of heaven, as propounded, and expounded, by the Lord Himself; "the law and the prophets," the precepts and examples of the Old Testament, all written for our admonition, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

Need it be said that the moral precepts and examples are to be taken to ourselves? Apostolic teaching makes this plain enough. St. Paul does not hesitate to appeal to the Decalogue in Ephesians vi. 2, 3; nor to "the law" in 1 Corinthians xiv. 34. He assumes it even more strongly in Romans xiii. 8-10, and teaches us in 1 Corinthians ix. 8, 9, 13, how to find in it principles to apply to present duties.

But all this is viewing the law from the standpoint of redemption. And so much the more when we look at the ceremonial law, which in the letter has been set aside by the coming of Him to whom it testified beforehand. But for that very reason we are called now to obey these *in the spirit*. We have not to slay the paschal lamb, or to bring the

bullock for our sin. Yet no less are we to fulfil these in the spirit, by faith applying the blood of the Lamb of God, or laying our hands on the head of the once-offered Sacrifice. The charge to keep the feast of unleavened bread is binding on us, according to 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, *only not, as of old, limited to seven days in the year, nor in the eating of natural food.* Thus used, in the spirit, even where we are not called to keep it in the letter, there is not one jot or tittle we can afford to break. Well would it be if Christians would recognise that for us Leviticus vi. 4 was written, and would see that they observe the Divine rule laid down in such cases. And the same in numberless other teachings, of which this may here suffice for an example of how the details of Christian walk are to be found in those of the Mosaic law.

When the Lord on the Mount thus endorsed the law, He showed that the obedience He sought was that of the heart, not merely of the letter. Here, too, we have to regard it from the standpoint of redemption; as it is written in Romans viii. 4, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We have to do with Him who tries the heart. Anger is but the bud of that evil tree of which murder is the ripe fruit. The look of lust wants only opportunity for adultery. All must be as weighed by our Father who seeth in secret. Blessed be God that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus!"

"But were not these teachings about the law intended only for Jews? Is not this shown by the 'Jewish' reference, in verse 24, to the gift before the altar?"

To Jews they were spoken, certainly, as were all His teachings. The Lord, in His ministry on earth, never, except on rare occasions, had any others to speak to. Throughout the Scriptures God spoke to men in their own language, and used illustrations familiar to them and their time. So did the Lord in His teachings when on earth. But here He spoke not to Jews *as Jews*. When it was to them as Jews, see for example Matthew xxiii. 37; or John viii. 37-44. This in Matthew v. was addressed to *His disciples*, and so to us, if we are His disciples. He cites one of the most urgent duties known at that time, that

the peace-offering must be eaten on the day it was offered, or the morrow at latest (Lev. vii. 18), to teach us that a yet more urgent thing is to settle a quarrel at once. So the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to Jews, about matters specially referring to their needs as Jews. Do we, therefore, neglect it as not being for us? To the Romans the same Gospel is presented under forms more especially familiar to them in their laws, marriage, &c., and all alike for us. Such is ever the mode of the Divine communications.

The circumstances recorded in the inspired histories, the cases addressed in the precepts, may be far from finding their exact counterpart in ours; but they may, and do, find in us their correlative, and thus become ours for practical instruction. Whether of precept or prophecy, these things are so written as *object lessons* for us to apply to our own circumstances and needs in our day, and in all time. See 1 Corinthians x. 1-11.

We may think of Old Testament saints as groaning under the burden of the law. But let us hear them, and take example from them. Psalm cxix. shows how they loved it, delighted in it, longed after it. Such is the covenant of grace in which we stand, as it is written: "I will put My laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts." And if we would be like our Lord Himself, we too shall say, "Yea, Thy law is within my heart." WR. C.

I AM HIS AND HE IS MINE.

Who can conceive the full joy of being Christ's beloved, and of having Him for our Beloved? It is love unspeakable that is the great tie between Him and His people—a love that makes Himself, and all that He has, *mine*; and that makes me, and all that I have, *His*! He is mine now, mine wholly, mine *forever*. He is *mine*, as nothing else is mine; I am *His*, as nothing else is *His*. Angels, indeed, and all things are *His*; but I am *His* far more than any of these can be. He made them indeed (John i. 3), but He did not redeem them to Himself by His blood; He does not live *within them* as He does in me (Gal. ii. 20). And O what have I in having Him as mine? He has in Himself all the fulness of God (Col. ii. 9), and He is mine! I am not almighty nor omniscient, but He is, and He is mine!

"CHRIST OUR HOPE."

Address by Dr. THOMAS NEATBY, Author of "Our Lord's Coming Again."

Read Philippians iii.

I AM exceedingly glad we have such a blessed subject for conference this afternoon. It covers the whole ground of Christianity. It is not one subject by itself, a part of Christianity, but it covers the whole of it. This chapter is a beautiful illustration of this. Our hope is not the coming of Christ but the Christ who is coming. The first chapter of 1st Timothy says: "The Lord Jesus Christ our hope." HE is, indeed, our hope; we hope to see *Him*. Of course, before we see Him, He must come, but it is He Himself who is our hope. There are specially three points which I want you to look at this afternoon. It is, 1st, Christ Jesus my Lord meeting the present need of a sinner; 2nd, Christ Jesus my Lord satisfying the whole heart, and filling the whole being with His glory. Christ Jesus my Lord all along the path an object to win, that is an object to run after; seeing *Him*, I run towards Him. I leave the things that are behind; I cannot see much behind me, because I am occupied with the object before me. "Forgetting the things that are behind, I press on to Christ Jesus my Lord, who is the prize *Himself*—the prize of the calling on high. This characterises the Christian's path. And then, 3rd, the end of it is, we are looking to heaven for Christ to come and finish the work that He has begun, and present us before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.

Thus, you see, as I said, it is not an isolated truth, but it is a truth, by its relationship to the person of Christ, that runs through the whole of Christianity, and there is no Christianity, properly speaking, without it. It is only the exception where we find anything else put before the Christian. Peter might, by the Lord's teaching, know that *he* had to die. Paul, at the end of His race, might have the certainty that death was the portion of his body. Those at Smyrna might have death presented as that which was very likely to be their lot, for they were to be "faithful unto death" (Rev. ii.); but you will find constantly that it is the Lord at His coming again which is the true hope of a Christian. We are converted to wait for Christ from heaven.

But, first of all, the blessed Lord Jesus wants a heart for Himself; that is the way it is put here. It is no doubt put otherwise in other Scriptures. An exercise of conscience about sin is very important, and there are many other ways that God takes to form the soul for Christ; but here we have the presentation of Christ to Saul of Tarsus as a blessed object that wins his heart at once. He is going on in his heyday away from God, persecuting Christ—that Church which is His body. He is going to blot the whole thing out, he thinks, from under heaven. He has received power and authority from the chief priests. The light from the face of Jesus shines through the clothes he wears, and lays bare the authority that he has to bring bound to Jerusalem those that called on the name of the Lord Jesus. It is a light above the brightness of the sun that streams from those blessed eyes; flames of fire, indeed, they are. He looks down not only upon Saul, but through Saul, and through him again, till the whole is naked and bare to Saul himself. "If a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away?" His name's-sake, Saul, the king of Israel, had said that when David had found him. But this blessed Lord Jesus Christ, He has appeared to Saul for this very thing, to make him a witness of those things in which He had appeared to him, to make him a witness for the Christ in glory who shines upon his path. He is blinded, he is cast to the earth, but the Lord Jesus has words of peace and comfort, searching words, but words of salvation for him.

And there beneath that light he finds that he is the chief of sinners, a thing that he had never suspected before that day. Yes, in the light of heaven Saul of Tarsus is the chief of sinners! You and I take up the word—I am sure we may. I am sure our conscience, enlightened by the Word of God, must make each one think that he is "the chief of sinners." He (Saul) was the one who had brought most enmity, most intelligence, the greatest name to bear against the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He was the chief of sinners. Thank God, that brings him into the exact place of salvation. There is no salvation for the chief of the Pharisees; there is salvation, thank God, for the chief of the sinners, and Paul found that just in the light of Jesus of Nazareth. O

what a surprise to him. Jesus of Nazareth, He that they said had been stolen out of the tomb; Jesus of Nazareth, there He is. There is no question of who appears to him. I don't know what he sees. I don't know whether he sees the pierced hands and feet, but he knows that it is Jesus of Nazareth. He knew that he was then and there engaged in persecuting the One that appears to him, who stops him in his course, but stops him to reveal Himself to him, and there, that day—that solemn day—which might have been the day of judgment, is a day of supreme grace.

He sees he has no righteousness. His righteousness is "filthy rags." It could do before; it did very well that morning, but it won't do now. It won't do in the light of heaven. It won't do in the light of the face of Jesus. O no, it is filthy rags. He is glad to be rid of it. It is dung, it is dross, it is loss, all of it. And there, beneath the light of heaven, he gladly counts it dung, and longs for that which Christ is. He longs for the new place that Christ brings His people into "to be found in Him." He was the best of Adam's sons, but he longs to be found in Him—to be in the new creation, to be in all the excellency of Christ Jesus before God. A true righteousness which is of God, he longs for that and He has found it—he has found it in Jesus who has appeared to him. A new standing before God, and the perfect righteousness of God that God must own. A perfect righteousness, for it is *His* own, thank God.

He has everything that can answer to his heart's deepest longings. He is safe for eternity in Christ Jesus his Lord. He has a new position before God. Henceforth God's favour resteth upon the Head of the new creation, and he is in Him. It rests then upon Saul blessedly, a child of grace. He is now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, and he has Christ Jesus for Lord that very moment. O it was a model conversion—a model case. O that we might be imitators of Paul as he was of Christ. From that moment Christ has won his heart. It is not a question of what is right and wrong now with Saul of Tarsus. No, no; it is a question of what pleases that blessed One; of what is for the glory of Christ; of what belongs to this new creation in which he now has his place.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XV.

THE MARRIAGE FEASTS.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

Author of
"Solar Light as illustrating Trinity in Unity."*

MATTHEW XXII. 1-14.

THIS parable, in its outline, is clear as crystal, so that a child can understand it, yet it is unfathomable in its depths of spiritual truth; and while adapted to a variety of circumstances, it has a specific meaning of its own.

A good deal is said about the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Who are they who object to it? Always those who have never realised its spiritual power, nor seen its Divine glories, and have never searched its wondrous mysteries. No one who has opened its treasures, explored its depths and heights, can fail to discover its boundless riches, or be so blind as to doubt the beauties of its scenery, or so deaf as not to be charmed with the melody of its music. Those who consider the Scriptures in the light of human intellect alone do not feel their spiritual power; they lack the anointed eye and the prepared heart.

The wonders of the Scriptures are not disclosed to the carnal mind, for "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). If the teaching of the Spirit of God be neglected, all other helps are vain. If you draw down the blinds, and close the shutters, you cannot see the sun; so, if you shut out the Spirit of God, human reason is left to manufacture a god after its own ideas.

Verses 1-3. "And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by [in] parables, and said: 'The kingdom of heaven [the heavens] is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage [a series of marriage feasts] for his son, and sent forth his servants [bond-servants] to call them that were bidden to the wedding [marriage feasts]; and they would not come.'"

In the preceding chapter the householder let out the vineyard to husbandmen, and required the fruits thereof—setting forth the DEMANDS OF THE LAW from Israel, to whom the law was given; but in this twenty-second chapter we have the PROVISIONS OF GRACE.

Who is the KING? God in His sovereignty;

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in the sovereignty of grace, not as on Mount Sinai, but on Mount Zion.

Who is the SON? It is the only-begotten of the Father, the co-equal, co-eternal Son.

Who is the BRIDE? She is only mentioned once in the Gospels. John the Baptist said: "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom;" He was the bridegroom's friend. But we can interpret this from other portions. The bride is the Church, the Lamb's wife.

The marriage feasts here spoken of are called, in verse 4, a "dinner." The word translated "dinner" signifies either the first meal, as when Jesus said, "Come and dine," or the noonday meal. It is necessary to distinguish between the marriage feasts (plural), public and open, made in honour of the approaching marriage of the king's son, to which many were invited and would not come, and the marriage supper, which takes place in private at the close of the day. What are the marriage feasts? The provisions of the Gospel as first presented, in the sovereignty of God, to the Jew. The Lord sent out His disciples at the first with the command: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. x. 5, 6). It was necessary that the Gospel should first be preached unto them, as it is written: "To the Jew first."

Verses 4-6. "Again, he sent forth other servants [bond-servants], saying: 'Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage [marriage-feasts].' But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants [bond-servants], and entreated them spitefully, and slew them."

After the sacrifice on Calvary, and the provision of the Spirit at Pentecost, a second invitation was sent to the Jew, in all the plenitude of Divine grace, and fulness of mercy and love; but this was again rejected by the nation at large. The disciples were persecuted, and Stephen and James were slain.

Verse 7. "But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."

In the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies under Titus, we see the fulfilment of this solemn prediction. Vast multitudes of the Jews were slain, numbers carried

into captivity and dispersed, the city was devastated, and the Temple burned.

When the commandments of God's law are despised and broken, retributive judgment is sure to follow; but not less so when the provisions of Divine grace and offers of mercy are refused and rejected.

Verses 8-10. "Then saith he to his servants [bond-servants], 'The wedding indeed is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways [branch-roads of the highways], and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage [marriage feasts].' So those servants [bond-servants] went out into the highways, and gathered together all, as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished [filled] with guests [recliners]."

It was necessary that the Gospel should first have been preached to the Jews; but seeing they put it from them, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, the invitation has been sent to the Gentiles, and many have received it. The commission is large and wide: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Go not only to the cities, but to the villages and hamlets; not only proclaim it in the streets, but in the lanes and alleys—wherever fallen man is found; press home the invitation, use moral force, compel them to come in. The feast is spread, the bounties are rich, and open to everyone; bad or good, Jew or Gentile, none are refused, no, not one. There is not only bread for the hungry, but water for the thirsty: whosoever will may take of the fountain of the water of life freely, for the Spirit has been poured out from on high, the Comforter has come; there is wine and milk without money and without price, the consolations of the Holy Ghost, and those foretastes of eternal joys which He is waiting to communicate.

As the Lord predicted, many have accepted the invitation, and they which have believed do enter into rest. The guests recline: there are couches provided for their accommodation; there is rest for the weary as well as provision for the needy. The Saviour's invitation is: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. xi. 28).

Verses 11-14. "And when the king came in to see the guests [recliners], he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him: 'Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a

wedding-garment?' And he was speechless. Then said the king to his servants [ministering servants]: 'Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen."

All things are naked and open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Man looks at the outward appearance, God looketh on the heart. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." The lamp of profession may burn brightly, but if there is no oil in the vessel, no love to God shed abroad in the heart, no fellowship with Christ in the communion of the Holy Ghost, the soul will ultimately be left to the outer darkness. The guest found speechless, on the friendly expostulation of the king, evidently implies there was no excuse, that the wedding garment had been provided as well as the marriage banquet. The same grace which has provided for the salvation of the LOST in the cross of Christ, and the pardon and justification of the guilty in the blood of the Lamb, has also provided for the quickening and regeneration of the soul DEAD in trespasses and sins, and the sanctification of the SINFUL, by the Holy Ghost sent down at Pentecost.

When the Lord Jesus comes, it will not be those who have outwardly accepted the provisions of grace, and taken their place amongst professors, but those who have the Spirit of Christ, who will be accepted. Those who received not the love of the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness will be given over to the bonds of strong delusion and to outer darkness.

The ministering servants who execute the sentence are not the bond-servants through whom the invitation was sent out, but the angels of God (Matt. xiii. 39).

Salvation is a three-fold cord. There is included the sovereignty of God, the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, and the regeneration and sanctification of the Holy Spirit; if one of these strands be missing the whole is incomplete.

"Many are called, but few are chosen." Those who are accepted and complete, under the scrutinising eye of God, are not merely those who outwardly accept the Gospel call, but those

who are "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter i. 2; see also 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14).

These, and these only, rest in peace under the conscious smile of God the FATHER, satisfied with the rich provisions of grace in the SON, and realising the communion of the HOLY GHOST, who conforms them to Christ, and gives them the foretaste, and is Himself the pledge and earnest of those joys which are at God's right hand for evermore.

PREVAILING TEARS.

Hosea xii. 4.

THEY fall before the throne, a precious flood,
Quintessence of the heart poured out to
God.

All sacred tears which suffering saints have wept
Are in His bottle of remembrance kept.
Behold, at midnight's lone, mysterious hour,
Two wrestlers struggle—weakness matched
with power.

One a mere worm of clay, the other He
Who spake and it was done; who gave decree
To the vast universe; whose word of might
Bespangled with bright worlds the dome of night.
Unequal contest this! How will it end?
Night watches fly, yet still they two contend;
But, just as on the sky faint streaks of grey
Announce the dawning of a new-born day,
The mighty One puts forth one touch of power,
And Jacob is a cripple from that hour.
Ah, blessed weakness! which but made him cling
With desperate grasp to heaven's eternal King.
Tears from his broken heart now freely flow,
And thus he cries: "I will not let Thee go,
Except Thou bless me." Quick the answer
came—

"Tell Me, thou weeping one, what is thy name?"
"Jacob?" "A nobler title I'll confer on thee,
Since by thy tears thou hast prevailed with Me.
Israel, a princely name, henceforth thou'lt bear,
Commemorative of this night of prayer."
Here lies true power with God. Prayer wet
with tears

The Lord will answer—such He always hears—
And we shall know at breaking of the day
How much He loved to hear His children pray.

A. W. P. S.

DAVID'S NUMBERING OF THE PEOPLE.

Notes of a Bible Reading by R. C. CHAPMAN, Barnstaple.

Scripture read—2 Sam. xxiv.; 1 Chr. xxi.

TWO thoughts come up before me as I read this portion of God's Word: (1) We are not, as saints, called to be in the high places of this world as matter of duty, and if believers do seek them they are out of character, and only weave a net for their own feet; and (2), We now have that great teacher of lowliness, the Cross of Christ, and the "Great High Priest" at God's right hand "able to succour the tempted." In the New Testament we have no record of saints as kings or judges, but we are to be subject and to pray for them, and it is not for us to speak evil of them.

How solemn is this record: it was after David had not only penned the 51st Psalm, but after he had gone through all the sorrows by the hand of Absalom. After that time of repentance and self-judgment we should have thought it was not possible for David to have done this: his fault was pride of heart—he did what the great nations of the world do, and they think they are quite right. The sin of a nation is oftentimes corrected by the foolishness of the king.

How singular that that wicked murderer Joab should have light, whilst the king's eyes were blinded. Joab was a man singularly enlightened, but, like Balaam, he was never a poor sinner. As a man, he was always faithful to David until he thought David's end as king was come, when he would set up Adonijah.

Moses numbered the people twice to show the faithfulness of God, but David would have it done against God, and then without the atonement money. A child of God out of fellowship with God may do what a worldling would shrink from doing; Satan never could have moved David to number Israel had not David given him room to do it. If we fall into "the snare of the devil," we shall come into "the condemnation of the devil." How precious to see in David a readiness to discover his sin; his heart smote him, and he said: "I have sinned greatly in that I have done;" and how it shows his deep acquaintance with God when he says: "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord." From early days he had been wont to deal very closely with God, and now,

years having rolled away, and having become the greatest king in all the world, we find him still the same at heart. How thankful we ought to be we are not in David's temptation! But compare him with Nebuchadnezzar. He was forewarned against pride, but how does he treat it? At the end of twelve months we find him saying: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" And how solemn the judgment; but he didn't know David's God. When the judgments came upon David, it brought him into communion with God. As regards moral condition and character, David always dealt truly with God; hence the record we have of him in 1 Kings xiv. 7, 8: "Thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do *that only* which was right in mine eyes." How true the words: "If we judge ourselves we shall not be judged;" he made a thorough work of his repentance—that went on and grew deep. God *now* judges his people by the general tenor and character of their life, and not by any isolated action. Now, observe David's honouring God, and God's honouring David, in the public answer of God by fire from heaven (1 Chron. 21-26). What a sample we have here of the words: "Them that honour me, I will honour." It is impossible that I can judge myself for any wrong done without the Lord honouring that repentance. When he says: Let Thine hand be upon me," it reminds us of Moses, "Blot me out of Thy book;" but it could not be accepted, and so David—there can only be one Mediator. One fruit of David's repentance is this, when natural strength is gone, he is twice the man of God within, and puts down the rebellion of Adonijah by the word of his mouth. When weakest, he is strongest; and what a heart it shows in David Godward, and for the people in 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, for as a king he might have sat down, but now the old man *stood* and says: "Hear me, *my brethren*, my people"—not my people, my brethren. He conjoined in himself all the honours that could be bestowed, for God promised that he would make Christ of David's seed. Another of the honours put upon him was his penning the book of Psalms, and again he had the pattern of the Temple. When we

see David in the glory, shall we not tell him what blessing we have received by the book of Psalms? He, with us, will know more then of their fulfilment. The discipline under which our flesh writhes now is our preservation. In looking back over my long life I see those dealings of God that were of all others bitterness, are now, in the remembrance and understanding of His dealings, the sweetest. If the Church of God now saw the self-will and pride of sin, and were truly humbled before God, as was David in his day, lowliness and love would be the fruit. How much greater our sin, we that have the manifestation of lowliness and love in the Cross of Christ and the Spirit of God indwelling us. One practical lesson to be learned from this reading is, that sin unjudged by us must bring judgment from God; but sin judged and confessed makes way for honour from God.

GOD'S OWN BOOK AND ITS APPARENT CONTRADICTIONS.

Bristol Conference on "The Inspired Word of God."
Address V.

By GEORGE MÜLLER, of Ashley Down Orphan Homes.

ON account of young believers present who may not know what we understand by the Word of God being inspired, I make a few remarks on that subject. This means, that the men of God who wrote the Holy Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments; wrote under the immediate power of God, the Holy Spirit, so that their pens were used by God Himself for writing. It was not Moses who wrote, but God by Moses wrote what we find in the five books of Moses. It was not Daniel who wrote, but God, the Holy Spirit, by Daniel wrote. So Jeremiah did not write, but the Holy Spirit by Jeremiah. And in like manner thus in the New Testament: it was not Peter, Paul, John who wrote; God, the Holy Spirit, wrote by Peter, Paul, and John. In like manner was it thus with regard to the evangelists; all was written by God, the Holy Spirit, through their instrumentality. This is what we have to keep before us.

And the deep importance of this is, that if we really enter into it, *reasoning* about the Word of God is at an end, cavilling according to our wicked old nature with the Word of God is at an end. As little

children, we bow before what we find in the Word of God, for it is *God Himself* who is speaking, not Peter, Paul, John. It is God who speaks through the instrumentality of these individuals using their pens: they were only instruments in writing down the Word of God, His promises, exhortations, commandments, the revelation which God was pleased to make of Himself and of the Lord Jesus Christ, the vanity of this present world, and the reality and substance and blessedness of the world to come. And on this account it is a point of deep importance in our inmost souls to be assured that, when we take this blessed Book into our hands, it is not the book of this good man or another good man, not even the book of the holiest man of God, but *God's own Book*, of which He Himself is the Author. Thus it is with *God Himself* we have to do when we read the Holy Scriptures. It is just in the degree in which we realise this that we bow before God. By the grace of God, as to myself, I want nothing but this: "*God has said it.*" The moment I come to this, I am satisfied. I want no more, for as assuredly as God has said it, so assuredly He will bring to pass what He has promised. It is the joy and delight of His heart to prove Himself faithful regarding what He has said in His Holy Word, both to His children and to the world, that they may see the *reality* of the things of God.

Now, I just give to you two passages (many might be given) in order to show that we have to do with the Word of God—with God's own declaration—when we read the Holy Scriptures. David saith in 2 Sam. xxiii. 2: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue." Nothing can be more plain and simple than this is. No difference, therefore, between opening our ears and hearing God Himself, by an audible voice from heaven speaking, or reading what David saith in the Psalms—hearing God Himself speak with our own natural ears, or reading what we find in the prophecies of Jeremiah, or in the prophecies of Ezekiel, or in the book of Daniel, or what we find in the Acts, or in the first epistle of John—no difference whatever. It is *God* who speaks; it is *God* who writes, though the pen is in the hand of an apostle, of a prophet, of an evangelist.

Now, I repeat, it is a matter of the utmost

importance to enter into this, because, let the heart believè this, let the heart receive this truth, and all reasoning about what we find in Scripture is at an end—we bow before what God says. What a strange thing it would be if the Lord Jesus Christ were in our midst personally this evening, as He was with His disciples, and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the universe, the Upholder of the Universe, were to tell us something, and we were to cavil about it, bring our difficulties against it, and reason and say: "This cannot be—it is impossible." Such a thing would be out of the question if the Lord in person were here. And if He were here, proud and high-minded would be the men and women who had anything to say to the Creator of the universe, to contradict Him, to know better than He does. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that in our inmost soul we receive this truth: the Scriptures, the Word of God really and truly, not in general merely, but out and out the Word of God in full. I myself, by God's grace, have believed this for seventy years, and I cannot tell you what an effect this has had on my life, for before the Word of God I bow as a little child receives what the parent tells it. By the grace of God I do not reason about it, by the grace of God I never cavil about it. I *bowed* before the Word of God because it was given by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is God Himself, God the Holy Spirit, who speaks, and what am I, a poor, fallen sinner, that I should know better than God.

I give you one other passage—Jer. xxxvi. 1-4. What we find there is, *God* speaking though Baruch was writing. God, speaking through Jeremiah, pronounced the words. Oh, how deeply important to carry along with us, verse by verse, it is *God* who is speaking.

Now, one may say: "How, then, does it come that we find sometimes differences, not exactly the same statements in one book and another book—how do we reconcile all this?" It seems to me important to make a very few remarks about this, because young believers who have not considered the matter may be staggered by it. Now, in the first place, many such difficulties are solved in this way, that in one book one name is given to a certain individual—truly it was his name—but in another book another name, also truly the

name of the individual, because the person had two names. That is important to keep before us, and solves the difficulties in a variety of passages.

But sometimes this also is the explanation, that at that time the Word of God was not communicated and propagated by the instrumentality of printing, but by copying it out; thus the possibility occurred, through carelessness, of not exactly, accurately copying it as it was before.

Now, in this matter, we find in the whole of the Scriptures not a single instance in which there is apparent contradiction as to the foundation truths of our holy faith, neither does the Old Testament contradict the New, or the New the Old, in the least regarding the fundamental truths and the attributes of Jehovah. All is of the same tenor—no contradiction is to be found in any part of the Word.

But there are apparent contradictions. I will give an instance such as occurs again and again. We read in one book Nebuchadnezzar, in another, *Nebuchadrezzar*. The explanation, to my own mind, is not difficult, for the Hebrew *r* (*resh*) is something like the Hebrew *n* (*nun*), and in copying out there easily might be substituted an *r* for an *n*. But it is remarkable that quite recently there has been discovered at Nineveh the name of Nebuchadrezzar, instead of Nebuchadnezzar. But that is a matter of no moment at all.

But sometimes there occur apparently great contradictions. How have we to deal with them? I do not hesitate in saying that in very many cases the apparent contradictions are no contradictions, but only arise from our ignorance in this present dispensation. I will give an instance: When chastisement came on the people of Israel because David had them numbered, and he was commanded to rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, in one book it says he paid fifty shekels of silver, or £5 of our money; in another book, six hundred shekels of gold, or £547 10s.—a vast difference, which I could not make out. I did not cavil about it or say, "It is a great blunder." Nothing of the kind; I bowed before the Word of God—I waited on God that He would be pleased to teach me. Month after month passed; I read it through again and again, and still did not understand it, but presently God gave me

light. David paid down fifty shekels of silver, erected an altar and sacrificed bullocks, and God sent down fire. This had a mighty effect on David. He was looking for ground to erect the temple on; now he says, "This is the spot, and I know by this fact that fire came down, that God will have me now on this spot erect the temple." This made the difference; it was not now a little spot, but a large area of land, for the building erected by Solomon occupied a very large piece of land, which is evident if 150,000 persons were employed on it, besides 3,600 overseers; and he now pays down a hundred times as much to get a large piece of ground for building the temple. Thus it becomes our business, patiently quietly, believingly, to look for more light. I did not get this light in a day, or in a week, or in a month, but after many months; and having more than once or twice read through the whole Bible, I saw it, and the matter became as plain as daylight.

Now, this last point I desire affectionately to impress on my beloved young brethren and sisters in Christ particularly, patiently to wait expecting light, looking for light, yet not fretting, not knowing better than God knows, not finding fault with what God has been saying in the Holy Scriptures, but bowing before the Word. But we must be owning to the full, from our inmost souls, our ignorance, that we do not understand why it is written so in one portion, and why so in another, waiting till God in His own time and way will make it plain to us, as I did in this case, and light came after a while.

Correspondence.

THE LORD'S WORK IN NORWAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.—With the object of deepening interest among the readers of *The Witness* in Scandinavia, I take the liberty of sending you a few notes of a brief visit I recently paid to Norway and Denmark.

Leaving Newcastle-on-Tyne on Friday evening, April 17th, after a pleasant passage across the North Sea, we reached Arendal, in the south of Norway, at ten o'clock on Lord's Day morning. I had several conversations with a fellow-passenger whom I observed reading a well-marked copy of the New Testament. The lady was a Norwegian by birth, was married to an Englishman, resided in Johannesburg, and was visiting her aged mother. I found that, though unsaved, she was deeply interested in spiritual

matters, and listened attentively to me as I sought to tell her of what Christ's death had accomplished. The New Testament that seemed to be her constant companion was given to her, on leaving South Africa, by one of the brethren in the Johannesburg assembly.

As we had several hours to wait at Arendal, I visited a lady, the wife of a Norwegian sea-captain, who used to meet with believers in Bandon, in the south of Ireland. She gave me a cordial welcome, and introduced me to several Christians who could speak English. We spent a pleasant and, I trust, profitable time together in conversation, prayer, and reading the Word. Leaving Arendal at six p.m., we reached Christiania early next morning. Mr. G. Hübert kindly met me at the steamer and took me to his house, which was some distance from the harbour. I spent two weeks in Christiania, and during that period was privileged to speak seven times in the open-air in the Cattle Market Square, and ten times in the hall used by the assembly. Speaking by interpretation was a new experience to me, yet I did not find it so difficult as I had anticipated. If, however, a gospeller forgets for the time being that he is speaking in an unknown tongue, and feels tempted to "soar," it won't be long ere he will be made conscious of the fact that his "wings" are clipped!

In preaching by interpretation, very much depends on the interpreter. One who thoroughly understands both languages, and is in hearty fellowship with the speaker, is indeed a very great help. Mr. Hübert has had much experience in interpreting, and in addition to that, has, as a Baptist missionary, preached for twenty years in many parts of Norway.

Our open-air meetings were especially encouraging. The audiences were good, and we had marked attention whilst the Gospel message was being delivered. The illustrated Norwegian tracts distributed by us were eagerly and thankfully accepted. From the Square we moved to the hall, which is only about eighty yards distant. On Sunday morning about fifteen of us remembered the Lord in the breaking of bread. The other meetings were as follows:—Sunday School from 12 to 1.15; Gospel preaching in hall from 5 to 6.30 (with attendance of 220); and, later on, a large meeting in a shed close to the Square. Seven years ago there were nearly 200 in the Christiania Assembly, but, through "Campbellite" teaching, it was broken up, and now it is in a very feeble condition.

From Christiania we proceeded to Moss, a town of 8000 souls, about forty miles south. Here we spent five days, and during that time addressed eleven meetings. The day after our arrival was a general holyday, called "Praying Friday," and special meetings were arranged

11 a.m., 5 and 8 o'clock p.m. On Lord's Day, from 10 to 11.30, about eighty broke bread; from 3 to 4.45, we had a capital open-air meeting; from 5 to 6.30, a Gospel service in the hall, with an attendance of 250; and from 8 to 10, a Bible conversational meeting.

We also visited Westby, Eistvold, Drammen, and Holmsboe. Spent a Lord's Day at the last-mentioned place, where forty assemble in a nice little hall. There was a Gospel service at 10 o'clock; a baptism of two believers, in Drammen Fjord, from 3 to 4 p.m.; breaking of bread at 4 o'clock; a Gospel meeting from 5 to 6.30 p.m.; and a Bible conversational from 8 to 10.15. On the following morning we took steamer for Christiania, arriving there at noon. When the late Mr. Darling left Norway, after labouring in the country for years, no brethren fitted to teach and help the assemblies followed up the work (I do not, of course, forget occasional visits paid now and again by various esteemed brethren). The result was that various preachers representing several heretical sects obtained the ear of the people and led them astray. Eventually several Norwegian labourers joined the "Disciples," or "Campbellites," and a number of assemblies followed them.

Norwegian Christians are not, generally speaking, diligent Bible readers, and are therefore liable to be led astray by false teachers. The "Seventh Day Adventists" and the "Campbellites" are active and energetic propagandists. The "Adventists" have a publishing office in Christiania, and scatter broadcast tracts containing their pernicious errors. The "Campbellites" in the United States have doubled their annual grant to Norway for 1896, and it is expected that even more aggressive proselytising efforts will be put forth by them.

The Lutheran State Church, although a dead, formal, worldly religion, has a tremendous hold of the people. Though there are no noblemen in Norway—all titles of nobility being abolished—out of 114 members of the Storthing only one of them is a Dissenter. Norway is said to be fifty years behind Sweden spiritually. The Lutheran "priests," as the clergymen are called, are very conservative, and there is very little active aggressive evangelistic work. I was surprised to find so many professing Christians holding non-eternity, baptism for salvation, and other erroneous doctrines. The "Free Mission" is doing a good work of evangelism, for which we cannot but be thankful. This, however, needs to be supplemented by sound scriptural instruction.

On Wednesday evening, 13th May, I reached Copenhagen, having broken my journey for a night at Gothenburg, Sweden. Mr. T. R. English met me at the station, and I was his guest during my week's sojourn in Denmark's gay capital, with

its 400,000 souls. There is a small assembly of fifteen or sixteen believers in Copenhagen, the only "open" meeting, so far as I know, in Denmark. Not having a hall in which to meet, the assembly breaks bread in Mr. English's office, Axelhuse 2A, nearly opposite the new Town Hall. On the Thursday night I met the assembly at our brother's house, and we spent a profitable evening together over the Word. Mr. English was brought to the Lord when a lad of sixteen or seventeen, in the city of London. As the preacher was giving out a Gospel hymn in a hall, in the great metropolis, the young Dane obtained rest and peace in believing. The "Free Mission" hall was secured for special meetings, and Mr. English, who speaks English fluently, interpreted for me. The attendance was good, especially on Lord's Day evening, when we had about 250 listening to the message of mercy. There is no liberty to preach in the open-air in Copenhagen, and we missed the privilege of sounding aloud the wondrous story under the blue canopy of heaven. The preacher of the "Free Mission" is an earnest gospeller, and has been much owned of God in soul-winning. He paid us several visits, and we had some conversation on Bible subjects.

A leading merchant (an earnest and devoted Christian worker, belonging to the State Church) invited me to address the clerks in his office. I was glad to do so, especially as I was able to dispense with an interpreter, the clerks understanding English. After a week's sojourn in Copenhagen, I took steamer on Thursday evening, 21st May, reaching Newcastle-on-Tyne on Sunday morning at 5 o'clock.

I should be pleased if this letter helped to increase interest among God's people in Scandinavia. Norway, Denmark, and Sweden are within two days' sail of England, and being nominally "Protestant" countries, have a special claim upon us. There are many open doors for the preaching of the Gospel. The people, so far as I saw, were simple, courteous, and hospitable. Danish—which is the written language of Norway and Denmark—is closely related to Swedish, so that one speaking Danish could tell out the "old, old story" to the inhabitants of the three countries, and surely Scandinavia would be a large enough "parish" for any ordinary labourer! Christian young men, who are ambitious to win souls for Jesus, our soon coming Lord, whether in good situations or poor ones, think and pray about Scandinavia. The language is not difficult to acquire. Scandinavians residing in England, Canada, and the United States may become exercised about the spiritual state of their "beloved land," and plead with the Lord of the Harvest to thrust forth labourers unto the harvest field.—Truly yours in Christ Jesus,

ALEX. MARSHALL.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavored to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; **the 15th of the month** being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

"MY FOOLISHNESS."—Can the words in Psalm lix. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv. when He showed to His disciples the wounds in His hands and feet? Or did He only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

WHAT IS A LIVING SACRIFICE?—Please explain Romans xii. 1: "Present the body a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service."

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST—WHAT IS IT?—Please explain the latter clause of Romans viii. 9. Is the Spirit of Christ in that verse the Holy Spirit by whom every believer is indwelt? Or does it refer to the spirit which Christ manifested towards those with whom He came in contact during His ministry on earth, and if the latter, how are we to understand the words, *He is none of His*, seeing that there are many of God's children (truly saved) who do not manifest a Christlike spirit in their daily walk and conversation?

SUFFERING: ATONING OR MARTYRS?

QUESTION 521.—What suffering is it that is spoken of in 1 Peter iv. 1? "Suffering for righteousness sake," or "suffering on the Cross and our having died in Him"?

Answer A.—The teaching here is similar to that in Romans vi. 11, where "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" is, evidently, "Account yourselves to have died in the person of your Substitute unto the penalty of sin," verse 10 showing Christ as dying on account of our sin, not unto it as if in Himself.

So here, "As Christ suffered for us in the flesh (i.e., in His own body on the Cross), arm yourselves with the blessed fact as your incentive (verse 2) to lead a holy life, for he who has suffered, in the person of His substitute, the death penalty, is a new creature in Christ, to so live henceforth."

A. O. M.

Answer B.—1 Peter ii. 18 tells us what was the suffering of Christ here referred to. He suffered for sins, the "just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh," &c. He died for us. If He evinced such a readiness to suffer thus for us, ought we not also, with a like mind, suffer with Him, that is,

die to sin. When a man dies naturally, he sins no more. In Rom. vi. 2-11 we have the same argument, and are exhorted to count ourselves dead to sin, with the same conclusion in verses 12-14 as here in verses 2 and 3, viz., that we will cease from sin. See Gal. v. 24, and Col. iii. 3-5. J. H. H.

Answer C.—1 Peter iv. 1, 2 is the continuation of what is stated in verse 18 of the previous chapter. Christ suffered on the Cross on our behalf, being wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, and now through grace believers are called upon to arm themselves with the same mind, i.e., the mind of one who, by reason of the substitutionary work of Christ, has undergone the entire penalty of sin. "For he that hath suffered in the flesh *has done with sin*" (see new translation).

In Rom. vi. 7-11 we have a similar truth. "He that hath died hath been justified from sin, and is to reckon himself dead unto sin but alive unto God in virtue of Christ Jesus our Lord." Jesus died and we died *with* (not *in*) Him, then raised with Him and seated in Him in the heavenlies. J. D.

Editor's Note.—As the flesh can do nothing but sin, to cease from sin necessarily involves suffering in the flesh. Death to the flesh, practical mortification of it through the Spirit, is the only process by which there can be a ceasing from sin. This means suffering. It is the dying of the old seed that is necessary to the fruitfulness of the new life. Every process in agriculture implies suffering. Ploughing, harrowing, rolling, dunging, all are symbolic of suffering, but they are essential to fruit-bearing. Christ came for the very purpose of suffering. The question here is not the nature of His sufferings—they arose from various causes. Some were of like character with His people's; some were such as only He could know. The fact here founded upon is that Christ was a sufferer in the flesh, and came armed with that mind. We, too, are taught to expect that we shall be sufferers, therefore to arm ourselves with that mind, to brace ourselves for endurance, for, the doing of the will of God, to which every motion of the flesh is opposed, involves suffering in the flesh as an absolute necessity.

ABUSES IN MINISTRY.

QUESTION 522.—What are the Scriptural means of preventing abuses in ministry, without curtailing the liberty of the Holy Spirit to speak through whom He will?

Answer A.—Self-judgment, and patient, persevering waiting upon the Lord on the part of those who have a single eye to His glory. So long as the Lord Jesus Christ is given His true place abuses of this kind seldom, if ever, occur, and then it serves to test the condition of the gathering.

Should the abuse take the form of unscriptural or misleading teaching, faithfulness to the

Lord will demand interference, in obedience to the written Word. Otherwise, the less human interference the better.

Closely connected with this question is another of no less practical importance and interest at the present time, namely: "On what conditions may the Lord's presence in power be counted upon for the maintenance of order, and for the direction of ministry in the Spirit, to meet the varied needs of the several members of His mystical body?" In other words, what does "Gathered together in the name of our Lord Jesus" imply? (Matt. xviii. 20; 1 Cor. v. 4). R. S.

Answer B.—It is to be feared that certain ideas of liberty have, to a great extent, taken the place of the clear teaching of Scripture as to the responsibility of those who are called of God to minister His Word being qualified by Him to do so. The great rule is, "Let all things be done unto edifying," and the liberty learned from Scripture is not liberty for anyone to do what he thinks fit, but liberty for the Holy Spirit of God to use whom He will. In the early days of God's Church ministry was chiefly of a prophetic character. That is, men spoke by direct inspiration of the Spirit; hence the special instruction about *prophets* in 1 Corinthians xiv. Since the Church has received the whole of the Scriptures, ministry has taken the form of teaching, or the unfolding of what is written. A teacher, therefore, or an exhorter, is responsible to wait on his teaching or exhortation (Rom. xii. 7, 8), and to be *ready* to use all opportunities for the exercise of his gift. These seem to be the chief forms of ministry of the Word, and they should ever be combined in due proportion. Then, in a meeting where several may be present, it is incumbent on them to consider this, and to be guided somewhat by it as to the time occupied, for it is generally found that edification is promoted more by definite and pointed words than by addresses that are very lengthy.

The grace that enables many to take audible part in *praise* and *prayer* who are not called to publicly minister the Word, is no small gift of God to His Church; but even in speaking to God the edification of others must not be lost sight of (1 Cor. xiv. 14-17). The utterance of true worship edifies, for it lifts the heart and soul of the hearers Godward, but, in order to this, the words spoken must be intelligible as well as spiritual.

Those who have not God-given ability to edify His people by utterance in the assembly are responsible to keep silence, and their doing this, especially if it involves the subduing of any liking to speak, will bring them approval in the day of Christ. The consideration that if I occupy any moment in a meeting that is not to edification I am wasting the precious time of those who—perhaps with great effort—have come for help, and am depriving them of what God would give them through others, has had its effect upon me

for many years, and I, therefore, do not hesitate to name it as one that should have weight with all.

Scripture distinctly recognises "guides" in the Church, and if any have not been able to form a "sober" (Rom. xii. 3) estimate of their own ability and their place in the body, it would seem to be part of the service of "guides" to seek to help them, in a wise and gracious way, to do so; they would then be responsible to carry out the word, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Here, alas! in the present day, is often the difficulty, for the spirit of lawlessness in the world influences the Church more than we are aware till the test comes. It need not be said, I hope, that nothing can supersede diligent waiting upon God both *for* and *in* all meetings, and if we are helped in fuller measure to this, we may see more both of His restraint and guidance.

W. H. B.

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

QUESTION 523.—Does 1 Timothy iv. 10 assert universal salvation? "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, *who is the Saviour of ALL MEN, specially of them that believe.*"

Answer A.—This passage, taken in its context, shows us that the *living God* is the preserver of all men, but, according to Psalm xci., specially of all them that believe in Him. It does not deal with the question of salvation from sin, but of temporal preservation. (Compare Job vii. 20; Psalm cxlv. 20; Psalm cxlvi. 9; Nehemiah ix. 27; Obadiah 21.)

A. O. M.

Answer B.—1 Timothy iv. 10 does *not* teach "Universal Salvation," but it evidently refers to salvation or *preservation in this present world*, and tells us that God is the Saviour, or *preserver*, of all men, specially of them that believe, or "*of believers*" (Rotherham). Had the salvation of the soul been meant, and this in a universal sense, there would be no meaning in the "*specially*," for, if all are saved, they are saved independently of any condition. "He that believeth not shall be damned" fixes the fate of the unbeliever. D. R.

Answer C.—This Scripture does not assert the eternal salvation of all men. It announces the all-pervading care of the living God over all His creatures, like Psalm cxlv. 16, "Thou openest Thine hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." He is the preserver of all men, like Psalm xxxvi. 6, "O Lord, Thou preservest man and beast." Our Scripture also states the special interest the living God has in those who believe, like Psalm xxxiv. 9, 15, "O fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him. . . . The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." Or again, the words of the Lord Jesus, "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. x. 30, 31).

THE SAINT'S THREEFOLD RESTING-PLACE.

By Dr. J. N. CASE, China.

"Yea, He loved the people; all His saints are in Thy hand: and they sat down at Thy feet; every one shall receive of Thy words."—Deut. xxxiii. 3.

THE above verse brings before us what I have ventured to call "The Saint's threefold resting-place." He has a place

- I. In God's heart;
- II. In His hand;
- III. At His feet.

Let us, then, for our mutual comfort and edification, briefly meditate on each point. But before doing so there are a few general remarks it may not be unprofitable to make.

In this verse the Revisers have made two slight changes which are worth noticing. The verb in the opening clause is changed to the present tense, so it reads, "*He loveth.*" This reminds me of a similar change in Rev. i. 5: "Unto Him that loveth us and washed us [or loosed us] from our sins in His blood," &c. It is well to try and realise that

God always loves us.

He loves me at this moment just as when He sent His Son to redeem me; He loves me to-day as truly as when He first, by the cords of His love, drew me to Himself. His love is like Himself—infinite, eternal, unchangeable. Again, the verse now reads, "He loveth the peoples." The word is in the plural, and was probably selected by the Holy Spirit to show that the love embraces all the nations as well as favoured Israel (see in Isaiah lv. 4, R.V., a similar significant change). Thus, Gentiles by birth though we are, we may take this glorious announcement to ourselves and praise Him for His great, great love. It will be noticed, too, that, speaking after the manner of men, there is in the verse an apparent

Grammatical error.

In the second clause the first personal pronouns do not agree. Notice the variation: "*His saints . . . Thy hand.*" Is it not that Moses turns from speaking of God to speak to Him? In Psalm xlv. 1 the writer exclaims: "I will speak of the things which I have made touching the King." But when he begins he does not speak of but to the King: "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured

into Thy lips." Again, in the opening of the Canticles, the spouse cries: "Let *Him* kiss me with the kisses of His mouth: for *Thy* love is better than wine."

Well would it be if each one of us naturally turned from speaking of the Lord to speak to Him. Our words might be fewer, but they would be far more effectual in producing the result aimed at. All ministry in the Spirit leads to communion with the Lord, and this, again, produces faithful service.

Having somewhat cleared the way, we now come to the first clause.

I. A PLACE IN JEHOVAH'S HEART.

Among men there is no sin more common than to doubt God's love. It is, in a sense, the root of all sin. Satan insinuated to our first parents that God could not really love them otherwise He would not have kept from them something that was good and desirable. This doubt of God's love—that first little rift in the lute—was the beginning of all man's sorrow and woe. So Moses sang, "*Yea, He loveth the peoples.*" He makes the great announcement as if He expected that some one will be standing by to challenge it. Alas! how often does the heart question His love. Again and again even the child of God finds himself saying: "Can God really love me when He allows such a sorrow to come upon me? when He permits me to be so misunderstood and neglected by those whom I love?" But for all these questionings we must fall back on

God's everlasting grace.

To the humble, submissive, believing heart He Himself whispers: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." In spite of all our sin and failure and unworthiness, because of His own everlasting love, He continues loving-kindness unto us. As of old, so now—God finds the reason for loving in Himself, not in the creature (Deut. vii. 7, 8). He loves us with all the capacity of the eternal and infinite One, and yet with all the tenderness and delight of a mother for her first-born. If Moses had cause to exclaim, "Yea, He loveth the peoples," how much greater cause have you and I. Can the one who even a little understands Calvary ever again doubt the reality of God's love to him? The greatest proof that could

ever have been given of His love has already been given. "We know and have believed the love which God hath in our case. God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him" (1 John iv. 16 R.V.). What a dwelling-place! May we never for a moment be allured out from its golden portals!

II. IN HIS HAND.

The "peoples" in the former clause here gives place to the term "saints." God's love goes out to all mankind, but only some among men give heed to that love and spiritually benefit thereby. These are brought into a special relationship with God: this it is that constitutes them saints. The very nature of the Christian calling is that the one who receives it should become a saint, a person separated from evil and consecrated to God (Rom. i. 7). In the present age, according to the Divine purpose, the terms saint and believer are co-extensive. Every true believer in Christ Jesus is also a saint, and it is still true that *all* His saints are in His hand. This position first of all speaks of

Safety and protection.

What rest to the soul that realises it is safe in the hand of Omnipotence! It is He who measures the waters—the Atlantic or Pacific—in the hollow of His hand; who sits upon the circle of the earth, the inhabitants of which are as grasshoppers. Yet great as He is, and because of His greatness, He cares for each one of His own individually. God is not the great political economist who cares only for the greatest good of the greatest number. The Good Shepherd knows every sheep of His flock, and has a name for each; the Father knows, loves, protects, and provides for every child in His family. In humble, holy confidence, to the magnifying of God's grace, the believer exclaims: "Who or what shall be able to pluck me out of the hand of Christ my Redeemer, of God my Father?" (John x. 28; Rom. viii. 35-39).

As instruments in His hand.

We are in His hand to be used how, when, and where it shall please Him. In Isaiah, the ideal Israel, the perfect servant of God, says: "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand hath He hid me; and He hath made me a polished shaft; in His

quiver hath He kept me close" (ch. xlix. 2, 3). This, though only perfectly answered to by Christ, is true in measure of every called and justified sinner. As the Son was sent into the world by the Father to accomplish a certain work, so every disciple is sent into the world by his Lord to live and witness for Him. As the vine is dependent on the branches for the production of its fruit, so Christ has made His people necessary to Him for the consummation of His purposes of grace among men. The ideal Christian assembly is that in which every member has a function to fulfil, though it is only that of a joint or a band. When will Christians awake to the truth that spiritual work of some sort or other is the privilege and duty of every saved one! But service to the Lord is manifold. It includes much more than what we term spiritual work. We cannot be too frequently reminded that we need not leave our home and friends and go to some distant city or land to serve the Lord.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Will furnish all we need to ask:
Room to deny ourselves—a road
To daily bring us nearer God."

As the vessel in the hands of the potter.

"Behold, as the clay in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel!" The figure is one frequently employed in the Scriptures. It speaks mainly of God's sovereignty. God's original claim upon man has never been laid aside. Man is but one of God's creatures, and He can do what He chooses with him in grace, and who shall dare ask, "What doest Thou?" Yet when God is spoken of as working actively as the potter, it is to produce vessels of mercy and honour. Vessels of destruction fit themselves for their own place. Every child of God rejoices to leave himself in the Father's hand to be moulded and fashioned into the vessel that shall please Him. He knows best, and will make the most that is to be made out of the material to His hand. We may be sure that He pays particular attention to every vessel He fashions. How happy should we be did we but really believe that "To them that love God, God worketh all things with them for good" (Revised margin).

III. AT HIS FEET.

We are to be there first of all as disciples,

as learners. This is evident, for it is said : "They sat down at Thy feet ; every one shall receive of Thy words." Moses has in mind the occasion of the giving of the law. Then, representatively, Israel as a nation sat at Jehovah's feet. If that was blessed and glorious, how much better is it in our case when we sit at the feet of Jesus our Immanuel and wonder at the gracious words that proceed out of His mouth. "For ye are not come unto a mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and unto blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words . . . but ye are come unto . . . Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant and to the blood of sprinkling (Heb. xii. 18-24). Are our privileges greater than saints of old? Then our responsibilities are also heavier ; for privilege and duty are but the two sides of the one shield. Are we, then, daily sitting at the feet of the Lord and hearing His voice speak to us from the Scriptures of truth? That is the becoming attitude for every believer in Christ. And then whatever He bids us we will seek to do. We will esteem all His commandments concerning all things to be right, and will hate every false way. The one who is daily found at His feet as a learner will also be found

At His feet as a worshipper.

For the more we know of Himself—His person, work, and ways—the more rapturously shall we join with all the redeemed in saying : "Thou art worthy to receive the honour, the glory, and the power, for Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood."

"'Tis Thou who art worthy,
Lord Jesus, 'tis Thou!"

We must not forget that we occupy these three places at one and the same time. And they are not mere passing phases of a soul's experience, for all saved ones will for ever have a place in His heart ; they will always be willing instruments in His hand for service ; they will ever be found prostrate at His feet in happy communion and worship. Then let us seek to cultivate an all-round spiritual life ; the Martha, Mary, and Lazarus character in one.

It may not be fanciful to see in these three clauses a reference to the triune God of our salvation : The Father who loved and gave His

costliest gift ; the Son, who through death and resurrection becomes an almighty Saviour and Keeper ; the Spirit, as the great teacher, who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them unto us. May we, then, daily keep ourselves in the love of God, serve Him who died to make us His own, and not grieve the Spirit by whom we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XVI.

THE PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY,
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MATTHEW XXIV. 32-36.

"Now, learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet [already becometh] tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh ; so likewise ye: When ye shall see all those things, know that it is [or He is] near, even at the doors. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass [in nowise pass away] till all these things shall be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My word shall not [in no wise] pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man [no one], no, not the angels of heaven [the heavens] but My Father only."

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IN the beginning of this chapter, the Lord Jesus, having spoken of the destruction of the Temple, when not one stone should be left upon another, the disciples ask Him when this should take place.

The Lord's answer to this question is not given in Matthew xxiv., nor in Mark xiii., but in Luke xxi.

In Matthew and in Mark the Holy Ghost records the Lord's prediction of the setting up of "the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet," in the latter day, which is yet future.

But in Luke xxi. is recorded the Lord's answer to the enquiry: What sign would be given when the temple and city should be destroyed?

The answer is: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." "And they shall fall by the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until

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the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." A prediction fully accomplished in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and in the present condition of Israel.

When God shall have taken out of the Gentiles a people for His name, then will He return in mercy to Israel. The last week of Daniel's seventy weeks of years will be accomplished, the last three-and-a-half years of which will be the time of the great tribulation; immediately after that will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, to take His kingdom (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30).

The seven parables which follow these predictions present truths connected both with the LORD's return for the Church, and also His manifestation as SON OF MAN to the world, in their variety and perfection. Before considering these parables, it may be well to apprehend the position in which the disciples of the Lord then stood.

They formed part of the remnant of Israel then, who received Jesus as their promised Messiah, when the rest of the nation rejected Him.

As such they represent the remnant of Israel in the latter day, who, after the removal of the Church, and previous to the manifestation of the Lord in glory, will confess Him.

But the Lord was about to build His Church (Matt. xvi. 18), and these disciples were to be among the first living stones built therein, and as such they represented the Church. Thus, personally, they receive instruction both for the remnant and for the Church.

We now proceed to the consideration of the first of these parables, that of

THE FIG TREE.

When, in early spring, the rising of the sap in the fig tree causes the branch to become tender, and the leaf to appear, this is an indication of the approach of summer.

In like manner, when the things predicted by the Lord appear, either in preparation or accomplishment, the evidence is given, either that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh to receive His Church (Luke xxi. 28), or, as in the case of the remnant, that the kingdom is about to be established.

The increasing spirit of enquiry in the Jewish mind, and the softening down of their

ancient prejudices, together with "the signs of the times" among the Gentile nations, manifesting the ripening of principles, which will be fully developed in the last days, all these admonish the disciples of Christ to stand on their watch with lamps lit and loins girt, as men that wait for their Lord, because they "see the day approaching."

The word "generation" here, as in other places, may be taken in a two-fold sense; that is, either literally or morally. The things predicted by the Lord, in Luke xxi., concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the dispersion of Israel, took place about thirty-seven years after, namely, anno domini 70. This was literal fulfilment.

Also, it is here intimated that Israel, nationally, will continue the same unbelieving, Christ-rejecting generation, until they look on Him whom they have pierced, and mourn for Him. Thus, morally, the generation will not have passed away until ALL these things be fulfilled.

The words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ on earth bear upon them the stamp of Divine authority and eternal truth. He spake in the world those things which He had heard from His Father, who Himself had given Him commandment what He should say and what He should speak.

The heavens and the earth came into being through Him, the eternal Word; by Him all things consist, and He upholdeth all things by the word of His power; the heavens and the earth shall pass away, but His words endure for ever. They are words of infallible certainty, more stable than the pillars of heaven, and more enduring than the material universe.

To the natural mind they are often mysterious, deep, and perplexing; the divine, eternal Spirit can alone infallibly interpret them to the understanding and make them spirit and life in the experience of the soul.

One of the last utterances of the Lord Jesus to His disciples, ere He was taken from them and carried up into heaven, was: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power;" and the language of the Holy Spirit, by Paul, to the Thessalonians, was: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord [that is of Jehovah] so cometh as a thief in the night." Whether it be the time when the Bridegroom

will come to receive His Church, or when the Son of Man will come to establish His kingdom, both are alike secrets kept in the Divine mind, neither known to angels nor among the truths communicated to the Son of Man to make known on earth (Mark xiii. 32). Can it be right, then, to take certain prophetic predictions, first to turn days into years, thus changing the words of Scripture, and then fixing on certain starting-points to calculate years and days and hours? As often as this has been done in the past, have not facts falsified the calculations?

The attitude in which the Lord left His Church was that of expectancy, with the command to watch, not for events and dates, but for *Himself*. To the Church, as His body and His bride, the one object of the heart's expectation and desire is the coming of the Bridegroom; and to the disciple, the coming of the Lord and Master, to estimate and reward his work. Hence the language of the Lord, speaking of His return, is ALWAYS in the present tense. He puts no interval between His going and His coming again. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again"—not I will come again—"and will receive you unto Myself" (John xiv. 2, 3). "He that testifieth these things saith: Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. xxii. 20).

THE DAY OF TROUBLE.

By J. HIXON IRVING, Author of *Life Booklets*.

THE term "day of trouble" is in Scripture applied to a time of personal affliction, as in the case of Asaph, who said: "*In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord*" (Ps. lxxvii. 2). It is also used to describe a period of national distress, as in the days of Hezekiah, King of Judah, who in his plaints said: "This is a *day of trouble*, and rebuke, and blasphemies" (2 Kings xix. 3). It is more often used to describe a prophetic day still in the future, as in Ezekiel vii. 7, "The day of trouble is near." There are quite a number of synonyms used for that day, such as—"The latter days" (Deut. xxxi. 29); "The time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. xxx. 7); "A time of trouble" (Dan. xii. 1); "The great tribulation" (Matt. xxiv. 21); "The hour of temptation" (Rev. iii. 10); and "That great day of God Almighty" (Rev. xvi. 14).

Some of these terms refer to a part of that day only, whilst some of them cover the whole of it. The "hour" would seem to spread over the whole of that period, whilst the longest term used (Rev. xvi. 14) will mark its closing portion. The prophetic "days" do not always run consecutively: in some instances they run concurrently, as "man's day" and "the day of salvation" now are doing. The "day of our Lord Jesus Christ" and the "day of trouble" will be concurrent periods. They will, at the same time, be *contrastive*. The former will be a heavenly day, whilst the latter will be an earthly one. The one will have Christ for its centre, the other the Anti-christ. The heavenly day will be one of joy and glory for the dwellers in the Father's house, whilst the earthly will be one of sorrow, gloom, and doom for those that dwell on the earth.

WHEN THE DAY OF TROUBLE WILL BEGIN.

Not until the Lord has fulfilled His promise to His people, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also" (John xiv. 1-3). The heavenly saints will be in the Father's house on high before the sore judgments of God are sent upon the earth. God's past dealings with His people seem to be confirmatory of this belief. If He waited until Noah and his family were shut in the ark before He sent the flood; until the sons of Israel had found a shelter under the sprinkled blood of the Lamb ere He commanded the destroying angel to pass through Egypt to smite all the first-born, and made a way of escape from Jerusalem to Pella for the followers of Christ before the city was sacked and its wretched inhabitants were enslaved or slain, will He not stay His judgments until His redeemed are translated? Analogy would answer "yes." But we have more than analogy to guide us in our conclusions. A very superficial study of the 1st and 2nd Epistles to the Thessalonians would for ever settle that in the mind of any unbiassed believer. Not until the "salt of the earth" has been removed will everything now morally evil unite and form a huge putrifying conglomeration which God will judge. Not until the "light" has been withdrawn will judicial darkness cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. At the translation of the saints that day will begin.

THOSE UPON WHOM THE TRIBULATION
WILL FALL.

So far as we are aware there is not a line of Scripture which, being rightly interpreted, points to it as coming upon the Body of Christ. It will fall upon the vastly increasing mass of nominal Christians who will be left when the true saints are translated to meet the Lord in the air. Yes, upon such as, at most, never had more than a "form of godliness," and who were highly contented with not even desiring to know the "power" thereof. Such will abound more and more ere the last of the "last days" comes (2 Tim. iii. 1-7, R.V.). Upon such God will in judgment "send a strong delusion that they may believe a lie," because they refused to receive the word and "ministry of reconciliation."

The day of trouble will fall upon the apostate Jews with special force and fury (Jer. xxx. 7; Deut. xii. 1, 2; Matt. xxiv. 4-21). "The great tribulation" will have special significance for them; but for the sake of the "elect" among them, the period of trial will be curtailed. The apostate Gentiles will be the subjects of awful sorrows during that day when God's twenty-one sore judgments are abroad in the earth which will "try all them that dwell on the earth." No class, no kindred, no nation, nor part of the wide world will escape the judgments of the wrath of Jehovah. Then will men "gnaw their tongues for pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, but repent not of their deeds" (Rev. xvi. 8-11).

SOME OF THE CAUSES OF TROUBLE.

God will make use of a variety of instruments in order to bring judgment upon men. He will permit Satan to be on the earth at least a part of that day (Rev. xii. 7-17). He will be full of rage, well knowing that his compulsory presence on earth is but a prelude to his imprisonment in the abyss. His rage will vent itself upon men. Another instrument used in that day in judgment will be the head of a ten-kingdomed confederacy who will "open his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven" (Rev. xiii. 6). The greater and louder his blasphemies against God and His people, the more abject will be the worship men will render him: all whose "names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb." He will have a coadjutor in the one "whose

coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. ii. 9), the man of sin—the one who bears more names than any other individual mentioned in Scripture save the Lord Jesus. Satan will have lesser satellites in that day, one of which will be the "false prophet" so often mentioned in Rev. xiii., xix., xx., who by words and deeds will seduce men to worship an image of the beast. These will all combine, with God's permission, to torment the dwellers on the earth. War will be almost universal in that time. "Wars and rumours of wars" (Matt. xxiv. 6, 7; Rev. vi. 3, 4) will prevail.

Famines will follow wars. "There shall be famine," said the Lord, speaking of that time (Matt. xxiv. 7; see Rev. vi. 5, 6). The staff of bread will be smitten, and peoples and nations will suffer terribly, and many will die from hunger. Pestilences will rage in various lands (Matt. xxiv. 7; Rev. vi. 7, 8), and cut off many. War, famine, and pestilence will form a trinity of evil which shall bring universal sorrow in that day. Persecutions will fall upon those who, having the Word of God, refuse to give it up and who hold to the Name and will not worship the "beast." Of a Jewish remnant at that time the Lord spake when He said: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My name's sake" (Matt. xxiv. 9). Thousands will be "slain for the Word of God and the testimony which they" will hold (Rev. vi. 9-11). Not only will "nation rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt. xxiv. 7), but there will be revolutions in each nation and kingdom on the earth; for then will the pent-up lawlessness of to-day break forth in all its force and fury. Law and order will be set at naught; rulers and kings slain; thrones will be overturned and dynasties brought to an end (Rev. vi. 12-17). To add to the sorrows of that season many will be demonized; out of the abyss (a department of the under-world), demons will ascend and enter into men—all those who have not the seal of God upon their foreheads—and so fearful will be the torments inflicted upon them that in "those days shall men seek death and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (Rev. ix. 6). "Seducing spirits" are abroad to-day, and "doctrines of demons are being taught. Men and women

are deceived by the former and greedily receive the latter. Thus is Christendom being prepared to throw off all profession of the name of Christ and embrace atheism. Ere that day of sore troubles closes it will witness the destruction of the great mustard tree (Matthew xiii. 31-33), in the branches of which the birds of the air have so long had their nests; or "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. xviii. 5). God will make use of the ruling head of the great ten-kingdomed confederacy "to make her desolate and naked," to "eat her flesh and burn her with fire" (Rev. xvii. 16, 17). That huge mass of moral corruption and infernal wickedness which will at that time corrupt the earth, will consist of a fusion of all the sects and systems of religion now known, and will be "drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." Swift and complete will be its destruction, over which a great multitude in heaven will sing: "Alleluia! salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments, for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornications, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand" (Rev. xix. 2, 3). Oh! that those, the saved, who are now in Babylon would hear the voice of God saying: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. xviii. 4-8).

THE LENGTH OF THE DAY.

The whole of that time will most likely be over seven years in duration. How much more we know not. The sorest troubles of that day will cover some three and a half years—that part of it which is called "the time of Jacob's trouble," and "the great tribulation." It will be a shortened season, however—"Except those days be shortened there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. xxiv. 20-22). Darkness covering sun and moon and other celestial disturbances will prepare the elect of God for the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds with great power and glory, at whose coming the elect will find deliverance from the hands and power of all them that hate them.

THE DESIRE OF GOD

FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS CHILDREN

By GEORGE ADAM.

IN seeking to impress on the people of God the loss which we sustain by not cultivating more habitual intercourse with the Blessed God, a thought came to my heart lately with fresh power, viz., the loss which God sustains through His children wandering away in heart from Him. The loss which man sustains in "departing from the Living God" is incalculable—nothing can make up for it; but by many believers the sin we are guilty of in depriving our God and Father of *our society*, seems never to be taken into account. The thought might naturally occur to some, What loss could the Infinite God sustain by man's departure from Him? The answer is that this depends entirely on the value which God Himself sets upon man, and on man's society. Let us try and glean from the pages of Scripture some things which they testify concerning this important and interesting subject; and, first, let us look at Prov. viii. 22-31. It is doing no violence to Scripture to say that when Wisdom is personified, it is the voice of Christ we hear speaking and He there says: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old." This passage closes with the remarkable words: "Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him: rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth: and *my delights were with the sons of men.*" Thus we see that before man was created the heart of the Son of God was set on the sons of men.

When God was accomplishing the first five days' work of creation, "He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. xxxiii. 9). But when man was to be created there was, to speak after the manner of men, a consultation. "*LET US MAKE MAN in our own image, after our likeness*" (Gen. i. 26). That image was soon defaced by the subtlety of the serpent. When the LORD God came down to walk in the garden in the cool of the day, the man whom He had created in His own image, along with his wife, went and "*hid themselves.*" The question which God asked at Adam, "Where art thou?" is usually looked on as a call to bring man into His presence in

order to convict him, and pronounce sentence upon him. Well, that lies on the surface of it; but it appears to me as if something deeper lay underneath. Man was not only lost to himself and to happiness, but he was lost to God. Man had not only lost God's companionship, God had lost the companionship of man. He could no longer come down to this earth, and walk in the garden with the man He had placed there. Sin had rendered this impossible; and if ever communion between God and man was to be resumed, it must be on a new basis. It is a most interesting study to follow out these two lines of thought.

1st, The desire of the Blessed God for man's society, a desire which has overcome every obstacle, and will finally triumph by having man in closest association with Himself through eternal ages.

2nd, The holy ground on which alone God can walk with man, or allow man to walk with Him. The easiest way would be to first pursue one line of thought and then the other; but I believe the most helpful way will be to take them both together, and mark how the love of God to man in His yearning after him, and the infinite holiness of His name and character, are blended together in the history of His ways with the children of men. Such a subject would fill volumes, but many Christians are too busy to read them, and so we will try as best we can and briefly tell the children of God how our Father loves us, and how He misses our company when we turn away from Him; and also how, if He is to walk with us in our pilgrim journey down here, or if we are to walk in the light of His presence, it must be on "holy ground."

To go back to the garden of Eden. We see that although man was convicted of sin, and turned out of the garden, he was not "given up." The last thing which God does in dealing with man is to give him up. Before Adam was shut out of the garden he got the promise of the "coming seed" to sustain his faith, and the shadow of atonement in the coats of skins with which the Lord clothed them. During the years before the flood man sank deeper and deeper in sin; but even in that apostate age God found some with whom He could walk. Although Enoch only is mentioned, doubtless there were many with whom, more or less, the

Holy One could hold converse. But as man became worse and worse, and hoary-headed in sin, God could not any longer suffer the world to go on as it was. How touching is the account that is given of this crisis: "And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth; and it *grieved Him at His heart*" (Gen. vi. 6). We are not to understand by this that God was taken by surprise—that man had turned out differently from what He had expected; but in his condescension God has been pleased to speak in language which man can understand and appreciate. He designs us to understand that He felt, as we would feel, when those we love have become so reprobate that we cannot tolerate them any longer. In that dark day there was still one man who "walked with God" (verse 9), and he was taken into the counsel of God in what He was about to do. But although all the reprobate were swept off the face of the earth, man was still the same. And it was not long before another attempt was made to shut God out of His own world by the building of the tower of Babel (Gen. xi.)

(To be continued).

BRISTOL CONFERENCE ADDRESSES—NO. VI.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

By WILLIAM COLLINGWOOD,
Author of "The Bible its own Evidence."

ANY who have visited Chatsworth will hardly fail to remember that wonderful work of Grinlon Gibbons, foliage carved in wood, of exquisite delicacy and finish, a masterpiece of human skill. But if you would go there now—it is more than forty years since I saw it—you would find it had grown nothing during the time. The tree has borne no fruit; it remains what it was, the admiration of thousands of visitors, a masterpiece of art, but without life.

Perhaps you have in your own garden an apple tree. The æsthetic passer-by would not pronounce it a model of beauty. Its branches are crooked and complicated; but you have gathered from it the pleasant fruit. It is a thing of life—the work of God.

Such is the Word of God. There are many here who know what it is to "sit under its

* Price 1/. Bible and Tract Depot, Bristol; or *Witness* Office, Glasgow.

shadow with great delight, and find its fruit sweet to their taste." They need no other evidence. It is light and life and peace to them. Tell them the Scriptures are not of God! they know better. They do not understand everything; but they can say: "*Thy* words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. xv. 16).

Yet it is not so with all. There may be some present, and there are many around, who have not so tasted of the good Word of God as to be above finding difficulties. And if they do not find such for themselves, they will be assailed with them by others. For such I speak.

Though the Bible is so simple and clear to a little child, difficulties start up as soon as we begin to reason about it. Some have bid us "swallow these questionings." Happy are they who can do so; they do well, and they will be no losers thereby. But if you cannot, or for the sake of others who cannot, let me say one thing:

DEAL WITH THESE DIFFICULTIES CANDIDLY AND PATIENTLY.

Candidly, I say. Credit the Bible, at least, with being possibly right. Most people appear to assume that the Scriptures are false till they can prove them true. On the slightest difficulty of understanding them, they conclude the Bible is at fault. It would be more sensible (for reasons I will give presently) to assume the Bible to be right, till it is proved to be wrong. Those who set up to be our teachers, and critics of the Bible, seem to have searched it as a detective would search your house to find the footprints of a thief, or to take note of whatever looks suspicious against you, to bring it into court for the prosecution. They have no interest otherwise in the Bible.

Patiently too, I said. Let me illustrate this by one example of a very large class of difficulties. Any one who reads so carefully as to compare the five places in which mention is made of the two pillars before Solomon's temple, Jachin and Boaz, will notice discrepancies in the numbers and measurements. I doubt if there are many who, simply referring backwards and forwards among the pages, would not give it up as a case of manifest contradiction. Let him go another way about it, do it more thoroughly, *writing out* each in

parallel columns, and he will see how each explains the other, and all agree.

This kind of thing is constantly met with in Scripture, whether in narrative, description, or, what is still more important to notice, *doctrines*. The Bible habitually presents these from various points of view—sometimes opposite points of view—and therefore appearing contradictory. They are different aspects of the truth, as seen by different observers, or as addressed to different conditions and needs; and our controversies are commonly owing to an overlooking of this, and setting up one side of truth against the other. But when we see it thus, it shines out in all the brightness of Divine wisdom, presenting the strongest internal evidence that the Scriptures are of God.

Another class of difficulties arises from the *language and style of Scripture*. We all notice something of its antiquated mode of speech. But the more we reverently study it, the more we discover of the vast difference between it and our modern style of thought, as well as of words. An expert in human literature—a scholar, as such—is often the last to be able to understand it. Neither college education nor classical learning qualify for this, beyond the mere translation of words, and that only to a certain limit. The mental training of our day tends to unfit for this task. Our critics are off the track. You have full confidence in your physician for treating bodily disease; but that does not qualify him for the healing of the soul. The professor of Greek or of archæology may know less of God than his infant child. What we want is to know, as Timothy knew, the Holy Scriptures which are able to make us wise unto salvation. We can do then without the Greek or the critics. But now some

REASONS FOR BELIEVING THE SCRIPTURES.

First, of the men who wrote them. Never were any so worthy to be believed. They are the honest men of every age, witnesses only for what is good against all that is evil—their characters tested in every way. On any other subject we would with confidence take their word. And while a superficial cross-examination may boast to have detected them at fault, a closer and fairer enquiry will, as I have affirmed, always bring out a wondrous depth of truth such as no human writings can show—a unity in variety which shines out as

the brightest internal evidence that the Bible of God.

Next, of the authenticity of the Gospels. Learned men tell us they were not written before the second century, because they see no evidence of the kind they are seeking. In so doing they shut their eyes to the real evidence, the internal. Luke especially they call in question. Only those who are determined to deny everything will dispute the fact that the same author wrote first the Gospel of Luke and afterwards the Acts, in much of which he was a personal partaker, and therefore the gospel was written within thirty years or so of the Crucifixion.

And as to the Gospels generally. The apparent discrepancies which stumble those who judge by man's canons of criticism, on closer examination bring out the most striking proof that only the Spirit of God could have woven together so marvellous a fabric of truth and consistency. In order of events or minute details they vary, but never contradict. Each is given with reference to the practical purpose of the respective teachings, not for statistical or chronological science.

Again, of the earlier Scriptures. If scholars cannot in their way find proof that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, any of you who looks for internal evidence may find it abundantly by tracing it up through the ages, step by step from the days of our Lord. We can put our finger on the second and third century B.C. for the Septuagint. Then in the fifth, come Nehemiah and Ezra. In the sixth was the exile—thus far undisputed history. In the seventh Jeremiah; in the eighth, Isaiah. Then back to the eleventh through the history of the Kings (now in spite of sceptics demonstrated to be historical), to David; the twelfth, Samuel—all these each in their day reciting as accredited, and some in full detail, the events of the fifteenth and sixteenth. And then we learn that Moses *wrote* these things—history, law, and prophecy—and made provision for them to be preserved for the future ages.

When Science is put in array against Scripture, it is because those who know so much of Science know so little of Scripture. It is true that the Bible is not given chiefly as a record of what science treats of, natural laws, but of the dealings of God and of His Spirit, that is,

of His workings above nature and its laws. But as we know Scripture better we find there is nothing Science can tell us but Scripture is in accord with it, so far as it goes. While all elsewhere was in the grossest darkness on such subjects, as we see in the heathen myths, Scripture is never at fault. Be it so that it speaks of the sun as if it went round the earth, it is only what our scientific almanacs do to this day, telling us when it "rises" or "sets," not caring to insist on the astronomical fact, as being of no importance to those addressed.

If we could listen to Sir Isaac Newton, or good Professor Faraday, teaching a Sunday-school class, we should hear nothing about gravitation or the chemical components of the atmosphere. Yet, however simple the terms, these would cover their consummate knowledge of the scientific truth. So it is when God speaks to His creatures. His knowledge shines out in the marvellous truth wherever natural things are spoken of. And more wonderful still is the truth as to human nature, the knowledge of our hearts, which we who have learned anything about them discover there.

Fulfilled prophecy is one of the strongest proofs so often cited, that I need not dwell on it here. Perhaps, indeed, this may be placed among the external evidences. A far more wonderful proof for those who would search it out—and it is only those who do search out these things that can expect to find the *internal* evidences—is the testimony of the Scripture concerning Christ, and our heavenly blessings in Him.

The morals of the Bible, too, are so often adduced in evidence that I hardly need do more than refer to them, and their contrast to all the religions of men, and the influence of the morals of the Bible on the earth for good.

I would rather speak of the glorious revelation of God's character and attributes, as far beyond all that man ever conceived of Him as heaven is above earth. And here, again, it is only as we know our Bible well we can well enter into it. With a little knowledge of Scripture, we carry away ideas of God's wrath and judgments. The more we reverently and lovingly study it, the more we find that these are only the dark background to show out His righteousness, goodness, patience, and love—such love to the world "that He gave His

only begotten Son." O the blessed discoveries we may make day by day, as time goes on of His wisdom and grace in redemption, and His long-suffering mercy to sinners. But I must not now stop to dwell upon it. You must search it out for yourselves. That is the burden of all I say. There lies the evidence that the Scriptures are of God. "Great peace have they that love Thy law, and nothing shall offend them." And let us each add: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee."

LEAVES FROM AN EVANGELIST'S NOTE-BOOK.—II.

SPEAKING FOR JESUS.

A CHRISTIAN lady went to pay a visit to her brother. One day she observed her little nephew stopping in the midst of his play and eying her closely.

"What are you thinking about?" inquired the lady.

"I have been thinking if you are a Christian, auntie. Are you?"

"I hope so, dear."

"But you never speak of Jesus. If you loved Him very much, would you not talk of Him sometimes?"

"We may love a person without talking about him."

"May we? You love to talk of mamma and papa, don't you, auntie?"

"Yes."

"And then you speak of other people, and things that you like, but you speak no word for Jesus. Don't you love Him, auntie? Then I think you could not keep from speaking of Him sometimes."

The lady never forgot her little nephew's rebuke. It is to be feared that many of us need to be reminded of the fact that all God's children are witnesses for the Lord Jesus. Not only are we to witness by life testimony and work testimony, but also by lip testimony. "I witness by my life," says one. Thank God for that, but let me remind you that your life cannot save a sinner from going down to the pit. Even Christ's perfect life never saved a soul from hell. His death was absolutely necessary in order to our salvation from the abyss of despair, and He has commissioned us

to spread abroad the "good news" that the "sin question" was settled by Him 1800 years ago, and that all who believe on Him are saved.

The boy's reasoning was sound: "If you loved Jesus very much, would you not talk of Him sometimes?" Most assuredly so, for "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If we abide in Christ and keep ourselves in the love of God, the apostle's words to the elders of Israel well express our thoughts, desires, and feelings: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts iv. 20). Satan will, however, suggest innumerable excuses. He is well acquainted with "Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan" of salvation, and knows that it is only hear, believe, and live. Hence his eagerness to keep Christians from speaking to the perishing of Him who loved them and gave Himself for them. All believers ought to be "pointers" to the cross. It should be our delight and ambition to say to unsaved ones: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29). The Holy Spirit's message to Cornelius was: "Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter, who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved (Acts xi. 13, 14). The "words" were the "wonderful words of life" regarding the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Let us, then, in God-given and God-sustained strength, witness for the Lord Jesus wherever our lot may be cast. As ambassadors of the cross we are responsible to

"Tell to sinners round

What a dear Saviour we have found."

"Have you not a word for Jesus? Will the world His praise proclaim?"

Who shall speak if ye are silent, ye who know and love His name?

You, whom He hath called and chosen His own witnesses to be,

Will you tell your gracious Master, "Lord, we cannot speak for Thee?"

'Cannot!' though He suffered for you, died because He loved you so!

'Cannot!' though He has forgiven, making scarlet white as snow!

'Cannot!' though His grace abounding is your freely promised aid!

'Cannot!' though He stands beside you, though He says, 'Be not afraid!'

TRUST.

AFTER the first blessed step of trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, who has fully atoned for all sin on the cross of Calvary, and opened up a new and living way into the holiest of all through His most precious blood, there is in the life of the believer, and should always certainly be, a continual trust and confidence in God for all the issues of the Christian life, and the necessities and duties which are involved therein. How truly happy is that one who can rest in the perfect peace of Jesus through faith in God while the wildest storms and strifes of this unsettled world are raging around them! How much God is honoured therein! It is His delight that His people should prove Him. To those who do so the windows of heaven are opened, and upon the earth, long parched by the sultry glare of a scorching sun, there falls at last the promised shower, His drooping flowers bloom again, the valleys are refreshed, and His creation sings once more its song of praise.

There are many

DEGREES OF TRUST.

There is the "faith as a grain of mustard seed," which in itself can achieve such triumphs, and, if we may follow the figure, in the history of the mustard seed there could also be the faith as the mustard tree, which is so large in comparison with its tiny seed.

The Psalmist David frequently dealt with these degrees of trust, and a search into his inspired writings proves an excellent Bible study. I think the keynote of all our trust in God may be found in Psalm xlv. 6, 7: "I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me." The beginning of all faith in God is distrust of self, and the "bow" and "sword" spoken of here are types of our own fancied powers and talents, useful it may be in an earthly warfare, but in the divine how utterly futile! Of necessity God must first teach us this truth. But it often happens that even believers who have found that in *themselves* is no strength or power, are apt to rest their confidence in their *fellow-believers*, and look to them for help in time of need. David did this, and David's human props failed him, so that when the Lord had taught him his error, he further

sang: "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man; it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes" (Psalm cxviii. 8, 9). Even princes are not to be confided in. The highest human agency in the Church of God, of which princes would to us be a type, are not to receive from us that confidence which should only be reposed in God.

This is a hard lesson to learn, and many a long and winding wilderness path has God been obliged to lead His children before they have learned at last that further truth, and come into the fuller light of that higher revelation. "*He* is a buckler to all them that trust in *Him*" (2 Sam. xxii. 31). This is a divine truth, and it is a blessed thing to know it, but our God wills that He should be *proved*, and therefore we are responsible

TO ACT DEFINITELY

upon every precept-promise. But how hard at times we find it to do so. Too often our language is no higher than that of Psalm lvi. 3, "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee." It is related that a servant of the Lord once went to see an old woman who was lying on a sick-bed, and having read and prayed, and spoken some kind words of help and sympathy, gave as a parting text the one above quoted, "What time I am afraid I will trust in Thee."

"Oh!" said the old woman, "I have a much better text than that."

"Pray, what is it?" asked the visitor.

"It is this," she answered: "'Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust, and *not* be afraid'" (Isaiah xii. 2).

The fuller our trust in God the less our fear. The martyrs of old calmly met their death—their faith was honoured by God, and He gave them such a realisation of His presence that they sang songs of triumph as they passed through the dark valley. I am reminded of these lines of the saintly Albrecht, Margraf of Brandenburg-Culmbach, when suffering in exile for Christ's sake (1566):

"My God is my sure confidence,

My light and my existence.

His counsel is beyond my sense,

But stirs no weak resistance.

His word declares the very hairs

Upon my head are numbered;

His mercy large holds me in charge

With care that never slumbered."

Having thus in our day realised that in God *alone* should be our trust, O let us sing with the Psalmist of old, every thought of fear and doubt cast aside, that fuller and clearer song: "I will abide in Thy tabernacle for ever; I will trust in the covert of Thy wings" (Psalm lxi. 4). This is the near and dear place truly, and this is the attainment to which God wishes us to attain.

O weary, burdened one, are you in doubt or trouble—misunderstood—burdened—clouded or grieved? Only trust Him; trust Him now, and the strain will be relaxed, the clouds removed, and all will be well. W. M'C.

The METHOD of DIVINE TEACHING.

By the late JAMES KENNAN, of Dublin.

"How long dost Thou make us to doubt" (or hold us in suspense).—John x. 24.

HOW common it is for people to charge God with the *uncertainty*, which is really due entirely to their own *unwillingness to receive His Word*. Men say that they cannot be certain about this or that doctrine: though God's Word is plain about it; but we need a *single eye* to see clearly; Matthew vi. 22, 23; Luke xi. 34; Revelation iii. 18: "Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve." To a pious Jew the words of the Lord Jesus in verses 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, would remind of Ezekiel xxxiv. 11-16 and 23. This last verse is an especially clear identification of the *Good Shepherd* with the promised Messiah (or Christ), the Son of David. Now, Jesus had just told them He was the Good Shepherd, and therefore they had no excuse for not recognising Him as *the Christ*. It is instructive to observe this *method of Divine teaching*.

Another instance of Christ's "*method of Divine teaching*" occurs to me. Matthew xi. 3: John's enquiry, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Verse 4: "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see," &c.

Unconverted men think God should answer their questions in the way *they choose to ask them*, but He will not be *catechised* though He is ready to teach the humble. Now, in the present instance, these men wanted the Lord

to say yes or no—was He the Christ? but He told them He was the *Good Shepherd*. This contained the answer to their question, but only those who felt themselves *lost sheep* needing the Good Shepherd, and accepted Him as such, would find Him as *Christ*, the Messiah—heir of David's throne.

Correspondence.

A WORK OF GRACE IN JAPAN.

10 Sanjo Machi, Utsunomiya,
Tochigi Ken, Japan, 16th May, 1896.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,—Though we lately have had difficulties here of different kinds, I have been glad in the work. Two weeks ago a couple—husband and wife—Ishikawa, formerly in Choshi—were baptized, and partook with us in the breaking of bread. It was a happy time both for them and for us. Ishikawa's father-in-law, who lives in Ibaraki Ken, and to whom he had written about his believing in Christ and his baptism, came up here and tried his utmost in order to persuade his son-in-law and daughter from this "wicked" doctrine. The old man even came to me and asked if my conscience would allow me to baptize them when I knew that from the very day they were baptized he would have no more to do with them. But they were both steadfast, and in earnest prayer committed themselves to God's care. I held before them God's promise of old: "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." The evening before the baptism I went over to see them, and found the old man, who, after a few common remarks, went into an adjoining room. I was told that he was as bitter as ever against them. We read a few verses in the Bible, and had prayer together. The next morning the baptism took place. In the afternoon the father came to my house with a small present, and told me that he had heard every single word uttered the previous evening, and that now he had not the slightest objection to their being Christians. I had a long conversation with him, which I hope has not been in vain.

The distribution to the soldiers passing through here is now ended, as the last batch passed through the day before yesterday. According to the statistics, in all 17,400 (not 25,000, as first stated to me) have come, and to these I have distributed 12,800 gospels, 2150 *Introductions*, 1300 John iii. 16, and 325 Testaments, with *Introductions* to the officers and a few soldiers. I told you in my last letter that the Division Com-

mander, Lieutenant-General Baron Nogi, received a Testament and an *Introduction*, and expressed his thanks for these. One of the staff officers, Lieutenant-Colonel Senba Taso, passed through by an ordinary train. He left his card for me, with thanks for the distribution, and I therefore took the liberty of sending him by mail a Testament and an *Introduction*, with an explanatory letter. He replied as follows, translated as literally as possible :

“Sendai, 25th April (Second Division Staff).

“Most respected and beloved Missionary, Mr. B.—I beg to address you, our dear and respected missionary. We are all of us heartily thankful for your kind presents of precious holy books to every one of the soldiers every time a body that belongs to this division passes by your place. I am instructed by His Excellency Lieut.-General Baron Nogi to convey his thanks to you. What I am personally thankful to you for is that you have kindly sent me a copy each of New Testament and *Introduction*. Before closing, we thank you heartily for your generous grace, and sincerely wish you 10,000 years (!) of your good health.—Yours respectfully,

“T. T., Lieutenant-Colonel.”

Three officers rudely refused to accept the Testaments offered them; all the others received gladly. Four or five soldiers tore their gospels to pieces and threw them at me. Some of their comrades, ashamed of their conduct, said to me: “We are sorry that this should happen, but please don’t mind it; they are Akita fools” (*Akita baka*). I found several Christians among the soldiers, but comparatively more among the coolies. The commander of the station here, Captain Oykawa, visited me the other evening. He told me then—what I did not know before—that he was a Christian, and that he had been converted fourteen years ago. Though he many times found it difficult to confess Christ to his comrades, God had not forsaken him. He was ridiculed by his equals and looked down upon by his superiors for being a Christian, though this had changed a good deal since the war, from which he told me several incidents. He had command of 160 men at the battle of Gaipoh—(?) Kaiping—and was by his fellow-officers considered to be a coward. He was ordered forward with his men, whom he urged to lay down their lives for their country; and, to use his own words, “through the help of God we were the first inside the walls. So quickly, indeed, had we come in, that our own soldiers from outside continued the fire, but happily without any of ours being killed from their bullets, though one or two were slightly wounded. I lost in all 49 men, and I myself fell wounded inside the walls, but, through the infinite grace of God, not seri-

ously. Since then my comrades have respected me.” He has six or seven decorations and medals. Though I did not know before of his being a Christian, I had several times wondered at his quiet behaviour, and that he often, though himself exceedingly busy, saw that all possible help and assistance were afforded me.

When the trains arrived and left, many citizens and deputations from Utsunomiya were on the platform, and “Dai Ni Shidan Banzai” could be heard at several blocks’ distance. Once, when the train slowly left the platform, some soldiers, instead of replying “Banzai,” cried out, “Senkioshi Banzai” (Long live the missionary), in which several hundreds, both of the soldiers and people on the platform, joined. I only relate this to show that the distribution was appreciated. I wish I could have taken a snapshot of a soldier standing on some cannon leaning on his rifle and bayonet reading the Gospel of Luke when the train left. He did not seem to care for anything but his book as he stood there all alone.

My supply of tracts and Testaments, which I thought would have lasted a long time, is all gone, and many thousands more; but I am glad for this opportunity, as I am sure it comes to bear fruit, as I have distributed these personally. I know that hundreds of tracts or Testaments accumulate on a few hands to be put away or destroyed, as has—from what I hear from a trustworthy source—been the case with much of what Mr. L.—has distributed.

The mission work in the prison is at a standstill. I think I told you in my last letter that the chief warder was absent, and his absence is owing to some arrangements concerning his exchange into another prison. A new warder will arrive shortly, and I sincerely hope and pray for a wide opening.

The condition up here among the so-called Christians is fearful. A pastor’s wife was arrested for stealing *yen* 160 from a neighbour’s house. She was sentenced to 170 days’ labour and three months’ police surveillance. The judge laid down that as she was a Christian she ought to know better, and therefore she must be heavily punished—according to law for such offences, not less than two and more than eight months. This has done some harm for the present.

JOHN R. BIRKELUND.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of “using the scissors” freely

in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; **the 15th of the month** being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

Are holiness and obedience the same?

Please explain the difference between spirit, soul, and body.

Explain Matthew xxvi. 45, 46.

Explain Matthew x. 22, xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13. Does our final and eternal salvation depend on our enduring to the end?

John xii. 25. What is the meaning of "loving," "hating," "losing," "keeping" the life?

Please explain Romans ii. 6.

Is not the Church, Ephesians ii. 20-22, or "Holy Temple," composed of the same persons as "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," Rev. xxi. 9-27?

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv. Or did He only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

WHAT IS A LIVING SACRIFICE?—Please explain Romans xii. 1: "Present the body a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service."

THE ROOT OF LAWLESSNESS.—In Judges xvii. 6; xxi. 25 we read: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This lawless state is frequently quoted as arising from Israel being in a wrong position, in having no kingly authority. Please compare with 1 Samuel viii. 6, 7, and explain.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST: WHAT IS IT?

QUESTION 524.—Please explain the latter clause of Romans viii. 9. Is the Spirit of Christ in that verse the Holy Spirit by whom every believer is indwelt? Or does it refer to the spirit which Christ manifested towards those with whom He came in contact during His ministry on earth; and if the latter, how are we to understand the words, *He is none of His*, seeing that there are many of God's children (truly saved) who do not manifest a Christlike spirit in their daily walk and conversation?

Answer A.—Verses 5 to 8 of Romans viii. speak of the miserable state of those in the flesh. Verse 9 gives the distinguishing feature of those

not in the flesh (indwelt by the Spirit of God) but states the same truth in two different ways. Thus, not in the flesh if the Spirit of Christ dwells in us; if the Spirit of Christ dwells not in us, then none of His. "The Christ" in us is the groundwork of two results following, the hope of glory, verses 10, 11; the adoption of sons, verses 13-16. Now, likeness in disposition to Christ we should have, but it is identification and vital union with Christ that secure these benefits alone. Surely the "Christ . . . in you," of verse 10 (referring to the expression, "Spirit of Christ," before), and "His Spirit that dwelleth in you," of verse 11, are synonymous. The view thus indicated seems the only one that agrees with the context.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, as He proceeds from the Father and the Son, and as the Son is now entrusted with the dispensation of Him, but more particularly here, because He witnesses to the believer's oneness of life with Christ. See also 1 Peter i. 11; Acts xvi. 7 (R.V.).

It is not our prerogative to say of any, he is not of His; but, personally, if we do not manifest the Spirit of Christ, and yet think ourselves His, we but deceive ourselves. We can only judge of His being in us by the impress—love to, and life like Christ—that His Holy Spirit makes in us.

J. H. H.

Answer B.—The allusion in Romans viii. 9 is to the Holy Spirit, who is there designated "the Spirit of Christ," as also in 1 Peter i. 11, and "the Spirit of Jesus Christ" in Philipians i. 19. Christ acted through life by the Spirit, for He says in Matthew xii. 28: "If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons." He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness (Matt. iv. 1); God gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him (John iii. 34); as the risen Man He gave commandments by the Holy Spirit (Acts i. 2). The Holy Spirit thus displayed Himself in Christ's life of unsullied perfection, and unflagging devotion to God's will here below, and is therefore called "The Spirit of Christ."

But if any one hath not Christ's Spirit the same is not His.

J. D.

Editor's Note.—The "Spirit of God" and the "Spirit of Christ" we believe to be two different titles for the one Divine person. He is the "seal," the "anointing," the "earnest," given to all believers. Those who do not possess this Spirit are "none of His."

The term "Spirit of Christ" is used here in preference to Spirit of God doubtless because the manifestation of the Spirit in Christ-like behaviour is the underlying thought.

Those who possess the Spirit will doubtless, in some measure, manifest the meek and lowly mind and ways of Christ; this will just be in degree as His instruction and guidance are

yielded to. But it is not the measure in which a Christ-like spirit is manifested, but the fact of possessing, or not possessing, the Spirit of God or the Spirit of Christ which differentiates between those who are in the flesh and those who are Christ's. Those who do not in any measure manifest the Christ-like mind have no claim to be owned as Christians at all.

"MY FOOLISHNESS."

QUESTION 525.—Can the words in Psalm lxi. 5 be applied to the Lord Jesus Christ?

ANSWER A.—It is never safe to apply to the Lord Jesus terms and expressions used in the Psalms which may, in part, refer directly to Him, as though all the Psalm was true of Him.

The safe rule is only to apply to Him such terms and expressions as are warranted by the Holy Spirit in the New Testament when He uses them of Him.

David's own experience is so often intermingled with truth, prophetic of (and applied in the New Testament to) a suffering Messiah, that we need careful, reverential minds so as not to trench on forbidden ground, and misapply terms and words.

A. O. M.

ANSWER B.—1. There is evidently nothing to show that because some things in the Psalms refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore all in the Psalms apply to Him. But neither is there anything to show that because in any given Psalm a part applies to Him, all in that Psalm so applies. Compare, for instance, verses 8 and 9 in Psalm xli. Therefore it does not follow that because in Psalm lxi. the 9th and 21st verses speak of Christ, verse 5 must be of Him also.

2. There is in the New Testament no utterance of the Lord, no citation concerning Him, no teaching as to Him, which agrees with attributing this text to Him. On the contrary, it uniformly exhibits Him as not only the Just suffering for the unjust, but as being consciously so, and maintaining it at every stage, down to the moment when He said, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My Spirit." Therefore we have no warrant in the teaching of the New Testament for putting such words into His mouth.

3. Should it be urged that from 2 Corinthians v. 21, or from the principle of imputation, we might find warrant for applying the words to Him, any such deductions must still be brought to the same test; and if not found in the distinct teachings of the New Testament, they should be dismissed as unsafe, if not erroneous.

4. It is submitted that this rule should apply to all teaching, concerning the Person and offices of the Lord Jesus, which is derived from the language of the Psalms. This is the more important in the expression now before us, where

it is a question not of His confessing our sins as His own, but of a moral condition, "*My foolishness*," the same as in Psalm xxxviii. 5. And this, too, as being *known to God*. On no principle of imputation or "identification" could this be true of Him "*who knew no sin*." W. C.

ANSWER C.—This question will be more easily answered if the Psalm, as a whole, is carefully studied; and when, as the trespass-offering Psalm, it is compared with Psalm xxxii, as the sin-offering Psalm; and with Psalm xl., as the Psalm of the burnt-offering, very similar expressions will be found in each. When, again, such passages as, for example, verses 4, 9, and 21 are found in the New Testament, applied, by the Holy Ghost, to Christ, we get ample warrant for regarding the language of the Psalm generally as *His*. Therefore, before we venture to disallow the application of this particular passage, forming the basis of the question, to Christ (as some do), due consideration ought to be given to the circumstances.

If He is seen as *the Surety* of His people, then (while He is, and ever was, personally, "the Holy One and the Just") becoming answerable for that which was exacted of us, it is surely conceivable that He might so identify Himself with us as that *our* "foolishness" and "sins," laid by the hand of God upon the Substitute, should be both *confessed* and *borne* by Him as if *they were His own*.

In the preceding verse the sufferer speaks of those who hated Him "*without a cause*;" of those who were His "*enemies wrongfully*;" and adds that then He restored that *which He took not away*. Then follows the confession: "O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and My sins are not hid from Thee."

Even as He restored that *which was taken away by others*, so He confessed as *His* the folly and sins of His people, on account of which He sank in deep mire, came into deep waters, and was overflowed by the floods (verse 2). "He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of My people (saith the Lord), *to whom the stroke was due*" (Isa. liii. 8., R. V. margin). D. R.

Editor's Note.—The foregoing three replies give the two views of this question.

The only principle on which such words could be applied to the Lord Jesus would be that of suretyship, whereby the debt of one becomes the liability of another than the one by whom it was contracted.

But we think the rule laid down in answer A and B is sound, and that to abide by it is safest, especially seeing that so many controversies and such serious error have arisen from applying (or misapplying) expressions in the Psalms to the Lord Jesus.

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST.

By W. H. BENNET, Author of "Christ and the Critics,"*
"A Warning from History," &c.

THE question *when* the manifestation of believers before the judgment-seat of Christ will take place has often been discussed, but it is to be feared that discussion rarely tends to deepen in the soul any solemn sense of the fact that such a manifestation is before us. All who value the revelation God has given, and the high privilege of fellowship with Christ, will desire an accurate acquaintance with the *order* of the great events of the future, in so far as that order may be gathered from Scripture; but they will still more earnestly desire that the events themselves shall be living realities to the heart. A man may know (or *think* he knows) enough to enable him to set down with great precision the order of all things that are to come to pass, and to adjust the chain of events to his perfect satisfaction, and yet not prove the sanctifying power of the "blessed hope," or the solemnising effect of the prospect of being made manifest before Him who is the *Judge* of His Church as well as her Saviour. And, on the other hand, it is possible that one with very little intelligence as to the details of prophetic interpretation may cherish the bright hope of the coming of the Lord, and may be using the gracious opportunities of the present time in such a manner as to lay up fruit for "the day of Christ."

It is of the utmost importance to distinguish clearly between the judgment-seat of Christ at which He will take account of *His servants* and the great white throne from which those who are not found written in the book of life will receive their sentence.

THE IDEA OF A GENERAL JUDGMENT

for the whole human race, believers and unbelievers alike, has brought in much confusion and led to much misunderstanding. It has held many of the children of God in bondage, and prevented their apprehending the blessed truth that judgment has been passed upon them in the person of their great Surety, and that in His acceptance they already stand accepted. The statement is absolute that the one who hears the word of Christ, and be-

lieves on the Father who sent Him, "hath everlasting life, and *shall not come into judgment*; but is passed from death into life" (John v. 24). Not less definite is the assertion—concerning those who are able to say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God"—that "we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ" (Rom. v. 1, xiv. 10). A learned and reverent writer remarks on such statements as these: "If we ask how we can reconcile these seeming inconsistencies, the answer is, that we are not wise in attempting to reconcile them by any logical formula or ingenious system." Certainly not; no Scripture statements require reconciling thus, but in the light of the simple facts—

(1) That a believer never can be called into judgment as to the question whether he is *saved* or not, and yet

(2) That all the servants of Christ (Rev. i. 1) must appear before Him as their Lord, that He may *reward them according to their works* (Rev. xxii. 12), all "seeming inconsistency" vanishes.

At the moment of the Lord's coming every one of His own will respond to the "shout" that will summon both sleeping and waiting saints to His side (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17), and, fashioned by His own mighty hand, will at once be perfectly conformed to His image. This He will accomplish as a "*Saviour*" (Phil. iii. 20) before He takes the place of *Judge*. That Paul ever thought of Him in

THIS TWOFOLD CHARACTER

is evident to every careful reader of his epistles. Glorifying in a present justification that could never be reversed and a permanent standing in a risen and glorified Lord, the coming of the Lord was the hope of his heart, while his service was always rendered with the conviction that in "the day of Christ" that service would be reviewed by Him who alone possesses the title of "Master."

That day he also sought to keep before the saints of God generally; but it is in his epistles to the Church at Corinth that we have his most explicit teaching on the subject. In 1 Cor. iii. he very forcibly presses its bearing upon those who take the place of teachers in the Church of God, stating that "every man's work shall be made manifest, for the *day* shall declare it,

* 1d., each, 1' per dozen, from Publishing Office, Glasgow.
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because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." Those who set aside the teachings of the Spirit of God, and, instead of feeding the sheep of Christ with heavenly food, seek to entertain them with that which is of the world—whether its intellectualism or its sensationalism—will find that they have been building up what will be consumed by the presence of the Lord, while true builders will only see the fruit of their labours shine forth with unfading lustre (verse 12). We may just notice in passing that in verses 16 and 17 we seem to have another class contemplated. The Spirit foresaw the place which men who know nothing personally of Christ would gain in the Church, and gave the solemn warning that those who corrupt the temple of God by bringing in "the wisdom of this world" will receive solemn retribution." Against this source of defilement the people of God had never more occasion to be on their guard than in the present day.

In 1 Cor. iv., after declaring that his position in relation to the Church was that of a *minister* of Christ and a *steward* of the mysteries of God, and that it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, he adds: "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's day: yea, I judge not mine own self; for I know nothing against myself," that is, I am not conscious of any unfaithfulness in my stewardship, "but He that judgeth me is the Lord."

That Paul judged himself in the sense in which he called upon others to judge themselves (chap. xi. 31) is very certain, but he did not judge himself in the sense of *passing sentence* upon himself. This he left to the Lord, and he exhorted others to do the same. Ability to judge "all things" (chap. ii. 15) and "approve things that are excellent" (Phil. i. 10) should be sought by all; but this is very different from passing sentence as a judge. This no one can do on *himself*, for he is unable perfectly to weigh his own actions and estimate the motives that underlie them; much less can he do it on others.

It is in that sense that we are called to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every

man have praise of God" (verse 5), *i.e.*, then shall each one have from God the praise that is due.

In the fifth chapter of the second epistle, also, we have special reference to the "judgment-seat of Christ." Having declared that the *resurrection* state, rather than the *disembodied* state, is that which the believer desires (verse 4), though till that is brought to pass his choice would be to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord (verse 8), he adds, "Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him" (verse 9), or as the R.V. gives it, "Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him." It is literally, "*We are ambitious to be well-pleasing unto Him*"; this is

THE ONLY AMBITION WORTHY OF A CHILD
OF GOD,

and too much of this none can have. The word *accepted* has often been misunderstood. It is not by *labouring* that any sinner can be accepted, for "to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5). But when *accepted* before God as to his person, the believer is called to make it his aim to be *acceptable* in conduct and service toward Christ his Lord.

The reason given for this is, "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ" (verse 10). The word *appear* does not simply mean that we must be there, but that we must be *made manifest*, must *appear as we are*, before the eye of Him who "searcheth the reins and the hearts." As the Bridegroom of His Church, "His eyes are as the eyes of doves" (Song v. 12); but as Judge of that same Church, "His eyes are as a flame of fire" in their penetrating power. It is a joy to consider that when as Judge He has passed His sentence and given His award, that attitude will give place to the full display of the relationship in which those *dove's eyes* will, in all their tenderness, rest upon His saints with infinite delight for ever. In other words,

THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST WILL BE FOLLOWED BY "THE MARRIAGE-SUPPER OF THE LAMB."

But our subject now is the reality of that

judgment, the object of which is "that each one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The Lord will carry out the principle laid down in His own command, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John vii. 24), "for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are *weighed*" (1 Sam. ii. 3). He can trace every action to its source and motive, and He can see the spring and object of all conduct. If it be the great matter of special service in the Church or in the Gospel, He knows whether love—love to Himself, love to His people, love to men—has been the motive and pleasing Him the aim; or to what extent lower motives and self-pleasing may have actuated us. He knows how far, in this day of confusion, the heart rises, in sympathy with His own heart, to the embrace in faith and love of all who are His, or how far obedience may be sacrificed to the traditions of men or to our own ease and comfort. He knows to what extent His people, as strangers and pilgrims here, are living in separation from the world, how far we are *sojourners* and not *dwellers* on the earth, and in what measure we are worshippers in the holiest, and are going "forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." He knows, also, the ways of His people in all the relationships and various positions of life, and can see whether "the Kingdom of God" (Luke xii. 31) stands first with us and influences our conduct; or whether, forgetful of the claims of infinite love, we yield to the counter claims which present things are always ready to assert.

HE KNOWS ALL THIS NOW, AND WE SHALL
KNOW IT THEN.

He will express His approval or disapproval, and so perfectly shall we enter into His own estimate of everything that there will not be in any heart the remotest wish to appeal from His judgment. Every one will also see, what we are already sure of, that though His judgment must be perfectly *just*, in that He can never call evil good, yet there will be infinite *grace* in it, inasmuch as He will make the most of the feeblest effort He has seen to please Him, however great may have been the

failure in carrying out the "counsels of the heart."

The closing words of verse 10 have perplexed many, while some are tempted to escape the edge of them by referring them to unbelievers. But the "*we*" of verse 10 surely denotes the same people as the "*we*" of the previous verses, that is Paul and his companion and the "saints" to whom he was writing (chap. i. 1). The fact that we have been saved from our sins through the sin-bearing of our great Surety forbids our attaching the thought of wrath to the recompense for what is *bad*. But, being delivered from what by nature we deserved, and brought into a position in which we shall throughout eternity reap the fruit of *His* sowing, we are now ourselves sowing for the same eternity. The harvest of *His* sowing—salvation with eternal glory—must be alike for all; but the harvest of *our* sowing will correspond with the seed sown by us, that is, with the deeds done in the body. That which He accounts as "good" means our eternal gain, and that which He pronounces "bad" must be our eternal loss.

If only this truth were written upon our hearts, so that, like Paul, we had "that day" ever before us, how great would be

THE EFFECT UPON OUR LIVES!

And the result would be our sanctification through the truth. Faith is the conviction of things not seen; and as faith caused Moses to fix his eye on "the recompense of the reward," the prospect of which enabled him to turn from Egypt and all its treasures, and cast in his lot with a nation of slaves because they were "the people of God," so faith now reaches on to that same "recompense," and enables the one who walks in its power to follow the Christ whom the world rejects. All present loss for His sake, whether of reputation, or comfort, or ease, must result in eternal gain; and all gain of present things, or advancement in the world, at the expense of faithfulness to Christ, can only lead to loss for eternity.

FAITH.—If we act only because our path is clear of difficulty, this is not Faith. Faith acts upon God's Word whatever the difficulty; and to walk by faith brings highest glory to God; but it is a crucifying the flesh. R. C. C.

ON ORDINATION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OVERSEERS.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

"And when they had ordained them elders in every church."—Acts xiv. 23.

IT is contended by some that the Greek word here rendered "ordain" signifies to appoint by holding up the hand, and that it implies appointment by the vote of the church. It only occurs in one other place, viz., 2 Cor. viii. 19, "who was chosen of the churches." In the latter case, whatever was done was the act of "the churches;" in the former it was the act of the apostles Barnabas and Paul. The fact that this particular word is used cannot make that which was done by the apostles to be the act of the church. Whatever form was gone through, whatever was done, it was the apostles who did it, and it was not confined to some churches—it was "in every church."

In Titus i. 5 we find that he (Titus) was authorised by Paul to ordain elders in all the churches in Crete. Timothy was specially cautioned to "lay hands suddenly (or hastily) on no man." Whoever appointed, whether it were Paul or Titus, or possibly Timothy, there was to be no doubt as to the fitness of the person for the work. There was to be no hasty action; otherwise he might, in a sense, make himself "partaker of other men's sins" (1 Tim. v. 22). In certain passages the laying on of hands is manifestly connected with the conferring of spiritual gift (Acts viii. 17; 2 Tim. i. 6). The theory of this is still maintained in Roman Catholic and Episcopal procedure in ordaining to "holy orders." It is part of the service of the ordaining bishop to say, as he lays his hands on the head of the novice, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost for the work of the ministry." With the light I have from the Word of God I cannot regard this as anything else than a pure assumption and, if believed in, an utter delusion. I cannot find that power to confer spiritual gift is vested in any individuals now, or in any body of men. The apostles had this power, but there is not a hint in Scripture of this power being transferred to others. Apostolic succession in this sense has no existence.

In 1 Tim. iv. 14 we again find the laying on of hands; not here as conferring gift or ordaining to office, but as the form in which the

whole body of the elders signified their assent and consent, their entire fellowship with Timothy as the one designated by prophecy for the special endowment of gift which he received by the laying on of the hands of the Apostle Paul.

So also in Acts xiii. 3: the laying hands on Paul and Barnabas was neither ordination nor the conferring of gift, but a hearty expression of fullest fellowship with those whom the Holy Ghost had called to special service. A happy thing it was for those sent out to be thus assured of the fellowship of the church expressed through those who were "the guides."

So far, then, we find that as the conferring of gift was a special apostolic function, so was the power to ordain. There is no record of the ordination of elders by any but an apostle, or one, as Titus, specially delegated by an apostle. It is not a church act, but an apostolic act. I never have seen from Scripture that there remains any ordaining power in the church. I do not believe it exists, or else Scripture would have clearly shown us in whom such power is vested.

If, then, the power to ordain was only in the hands of apostles, if it was only temporary and in no way transmitted for the permanent ordering of the church, what was the good of it? What end did it serve? Why was it not continued, and what now answers the ends that were temporarily served by ordination? At that time the churches had not the entire Scriptures as we now have them. They had not the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, or the Epistle to the Corinthians. They were therefore ignorant as to the nature of rule in the assembly, and as to the qualifications necessary ere any could be owned as guides. They therefore required some one in the full knowledge of the mind of the Lord to "set in order the things that were wanting." In our day the needed work is rather to "strengthen the things that remain."

What end, then, was served by ordination? Clearly, by this means God pointed out who were the fit persons in their midst to have shepherd or pastoral responsibility, so that these infant churches might not be—shall I say it?—cursed, by having the wrong persons to rule over them.

Surely ordination guided by divine perception on the part of the apostles thus served an important end. But only those specially gifted

by God with discernment for this service dare have so acted. To appoint one thus authoritatively to rule or oversight in an assembly who was not fitted would have resulted in irreparable mischief. They were churches before elders were ordained in them. Overseers are not necessary to the existence of a church, but they are essential to the well-being of a church. They were none the less churches, albeit things that were yet wanting had to be set in order.

The word "elder" is found in connection with the Old Testament economy. It does not occur in the New Testament from the first of Romans to the end of 2 Thessalonians. When it is used in the New Testament, as in 1 Peter v. 1, it appears to refer to the man's fitness as a mature Christian to exercise the function of oversight, being sharply in contrast with "the younger" (see verse 5). I use the word "function" rather than "office," for the word "office" is not in the original—it is always in italics. Officialism is foreign to the spirit of the New Testament. No amount of official authority will impart one atom of fitness for such a ministry; it must be of the Holy Spirit.

A bishop, overseer, pastor, guide—words all descriptive of the same ministry—must not be a "novice," or one newly come to the faith. It is an important ministry, and puts him who exercises it necessarily in a position of prominence in the church, which constitutes him at once a mark for the devil. Hence the necessity for his having had experience of God, of the deceitfulness of his own heart, of Satan's subtlety, and this involves time. One such as Timothy, comparatively young but many years in the Lord, might be well fitted; another, old in natural life, might have been only lately saved, and be a mere babe in experience. But, as a rule, it was the elder men, and not the younger, whom the apostles ordained to oversight work. I conclude, then, that there is no ordaining power at present existing in the church, neither is there any power vested in men to confer spiritual gift.

Ordination never constituted a man a shepherd of the sheep. It pointed out with divine certainty the man who was fitted, but unless qualified by the Holy Spirit putting the earnest care into his heart (see 2 Cor. viii. 16), neither ordination, nor education, nor anything else could ever qualify him at all.

What God does desire and look for is that every Christian of mature years, every man that has long known the Lord, should be going on to have the shepherd heart that cares for others. But the Scripture shows clearly that many who, *for the time*, ought to have been teachers or pastors were mere babes. Age alone won't do. What is wanted is maturity, growth in grace, spirituality. Even in Acts vi., where it was not a question of pastoral work but ministry in temporal things, the qualifications were exceedingly high. They were to be men of honest report, full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. So when the apostle ordained a man, would he not look out the most mature, the one who had most of the Spirit of Christ, in whom the likeness and lineaments of Christ were most clearly seen? This I believe was the object of ordination: that the right persons, divinely fitted and qualified, might be set in the place of responsibility, and that the church might be led to recognise such.

Sheep are never supposed to elect their own shepherds; the shepherd is set over them by the owner of the flock. It is the Holy Spirit alone that can make an overseer (see Acts xx. 28). Only by the Holy Spirit can God confer the necessary wisdom, love, and patience to exercise shepherd care in the flock of God. Unless a man be thus qualified, it is not merely mockery, but it is mischievous and destructive to recognise him in such a position.

But although there is no ordaining power, there is that which we can do. According to 1 Thess. v. 12, we can "esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." Not for their office's sake, or position's sake, but "for their work's sake." That means that their works have been a blessing to the saints, and they have thus discovered in them the marks of a true shepherd. In Heb. xiii. 7 the word is in the past tense, "Who had the rule over you—who spoke unto you the Word of God." Possibly some who had passed away are here referred to. They were men of faith whose end and aim was the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and the spiritual well-being of His saints. In Hebrews xiii. 17 we are taught the divine responsibility that attaches to this ministry: "They watch for your souls, as those that must give account." It was thus that Jacob acted; if any of Laban's flock were torn of beasts, he bore the loss himself (Gen.

xxxi. 38-40). It is no light thing, but a solemn responsibility, a serious trust, to be accounted for to the Lord at His judgment-seat, to take oversight of the flock of God.

I believe that not a few who are ordained by man in the denominations have a deeper and truer sense of the responsibility they incur as pastors than many among us whose chief function seems to be to attend oversight meetings rather than to watch for souls. But where true shepherds are seeking, in lowliness, patience, and love, to care for the souls of the believers, responsibility rests on the churches to acknowledge such, to pray for them, to hold up their hands, and to submit to them. How little of this there is among us!

But how can the churches do so unless those who go before them as guides or shepherds are men in whom they can distinctly trace the characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ?—unless they are men of experience, wisdom, lowliness, patience, love, men ready to say, like Paul, “I am ready to die and live with you.” If such be not their character, how is it possible for the saints to acknowledge, submit, and esteem them very highly in love?

I am persuaded that one thing which has caused us most sorrow and shame, and has brought most dishonour on the truth, is that men who were never qualified by the Holy Spirit have been acknowledged as overseers. There ought to be no recognition of men who are manifestly in a false position.

If there be only one in an assembly divinely fitted, and ten who take the place but are not, better a thousand times that the one only be recognised, and the ten go to their seats and be sheep and not shepherds. I believe we have missed the divine thought in ordination, and not perceiving its significance, we have deprived ourselves of much blessing. Novices have sat unchallenged in oversight meetings, young or carnal persons have visited applicants for fellowship, leadership has drifted into the hands of the forward, the carnal, the inexperienced, and confusion and barrenness have been the result.

May we have grace to own our error and our shame, and to seek of the Lord that fitted persons be raised up in every assembly to exercise shepherd care, and that the sheep may have grace to acknowledge them and submit to them.

“THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN SUFFERETH VIOLENCE.”

By GEO. F. TRENCH.

Notes on Matthew xi. 12.

“FROM the days of John the Baptist the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matt. xi. 12). This is generally taken to refer to moral violence, not physical, and to mean that men of strong character and courage were enabled to break through the restraints of education and predilection, or of tradition, and current Jewish opinion, and become disciples of John and of Christ, thus, in an extremely figurative sense, “taking the Kingdom of Heaven by force.” Now, the questions naturally arise, What has such a statement to do with the context? What men of moral courage are referred to? What notable conversions demanded the explanation? Surely in Biblical interpretation it is always safe to be guided by the connection in which a passage occurs. Now, if the chapter (Matt. xi.) be read from the beginning, it will be seen what the context is: John had been arrested for his faithful testimony as a preacher of a coming Kingdom to be founded on repentance and righteousness of life. He had been imprisoned for it. Through his dungeon bars the tidings of Christ’s marvellous miracles had reached his ears, justifying his words as the Lord’s forerunner and witness, “Behold the Lamb of God.” But still his chains held him fast, and never a word of deliverance at hand was sent to cheer him. At last, moved, it may be, by his disciples, who were unable to comprehend our Lord’s apparent indifference or inability to save their master, he sends a deputation to put the question: “Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?” If the coming King was He before whom every valley should be filled, every mountain and hill brought low, the crooked should become straight, and every rough way be made smooth (Luke iii. 5); if His fan was in His hand, and His floor should be thoroughly purged, was it not strange, indeed wholly incomprehensible, that His ambassador should be left to suffer in prison without apparently the smallest effort for his release? It will be noted that John, having come in the spirit and power of Elijah—before whom his enemies fell at a word (1 Kings xviii. 40)—his

disciples looked, as did the nation, not for a suffering but for a reigning Messiah—for a *Kingdom*, in fact, as that word was commonly understood.

To all so expecting, it was necessary to teach the truth, as yet unknown, that through much tribulation, through prisons, persecutions, and martyrdoms first, that Kingdom should come. Therefore our Lord, after pointing to the miracles of healing to show the character of grace attaching to His mission, that is a kingly power not to punish but to bless, reminds his hearers that John himself came not clothed in soft raiment, or as a frequenter of "king's houses," and then, lest any doubt should be entertained of His love and sympathy for His suffering martyr, bears testimony of unexpected strength to John's greatness and glory in His sight, and finally explains that the "violence" to which he was even now exposed was the appointed lot of the Kingdom of Heaven which John had heralded, and He Himself had founded. "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, actual physical assaults upon its heralds, and the violent ravage or tear it to pieces" (see Alford in *loco*). The Greek word *harpazosin*, which is translated "take by force," is employed in reference to the arrest of Paul by the soldiers in Acts. It is translated by Dr. Bullinger, "To seize upon, snatch away, carry off, *spoken of beasts of prey*." The idea of capture, as men take a fort or city and enter into possession of it, seems to be inadmissible, and is not supported in the New Testament. Our Lord uses the word twice in John of the enemy of souls seeking to pluck the sheep out of His hands, all of which uses confirm the allusion to John's arrest and imprisonment.

With this corresponds the parallel passage in Luke xvi. 16, which we may translate: "The Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every one useth violence against it." The Greek words translated "presseth into it" are *eis autēn biazetai*. That is the same verb which is employed in Matt. xi. 12, there translated "suffereth violence." It does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. The root of the word, however, is *Bia*, violence, and is employed four times in the Acts (and not elsewhere), each time meaning physical

force (see Acts v. 26, xxi. 35, xxiv. 7, xxvii. 41). There seems to be no authority for making the words mean "enter by violence," as implied by "presseth into it" (A.V.), or "entereth violently into it" (R.V.).

For the translation of *eis autēn*, "against it," suggested in this article, there is exact and frequent precedent in the New Testament (see Matt. xviii. 15; Mark iii. 29; Luke xii. 10); and numerous other examples given in Bullinger's Concordance.

For confirmation of the above suggestion it is only necessary to glance at the chapters that precede and follow our text, in which it will be found that violence as against His cause is a ruling thought in our Lord's discourses. In chap. x., for example, when the twelve were sent forth to preach the "Kingdom of Heaven," our Lord forewarns them of violence in verse 16, where He says: "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves;" verse 17, "They will scourge you in the synagogues;" verse 21, "The children shall cause their parents to be put to death;" verse 36, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household;" and "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (verse 39).

Of chapter xi., we have shown how the same teaching pervades it, namely, John's arrest, His own rejection, and the resistance of men to His mission and ministry. In verse 19 we have the parable of the children in the marketplace, showing how John was called a demoniac and the Christ a glutton and wine-bibber; then came the upbraiding of the guilty villages to whom His miracles had brought no conviction of His truth; then in the following chapters, in which we have His claim to be Lord of the Sabbath, greater than the Temple, greater than Jonah, and greater than Solomon, the Pharisees actually plot his assassination (xii. 14), and (when some had hailed Him as Son of David) denounced Him as a delegate of Beelzebub. Then He calls attention to the meekness foretold of God's servant who should not strive nor cry, nor break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, till that far future day which John's disciples and that nation had supposed to be present or close at hand—when he should send forth judgment unto victory.

Thus the whole context before and after the passage which we are examining bears out the

view that our Lord is explaining, not the eagerness, the great numbers, or the strong-mindedness of His converts, but the violent opposition of the arch-enemy and his children to His cause.

The above view is very strikingly confirmed by reference to chapter xxi. 33-43—the parable of the wicked husbandman—for there, as here, the Law and the Prophets that preceded John are also introduced, and it is given for the purpose of showing that the Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent ravage it. Place, for example, verses 35-38 beside our passage, and the connection can hardly be disputed. I quote them in part: “And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another;” “but when the husbandmen saw the son they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance; and they caught him and put him out of the vineyard and killed him.” Truly the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

And so once again we find that the best way to understand the Holy Scriptures is to read them as they stand, simply and naturally, and when they speak of the violent and violence, let us accept those words in their ordinary sense. Then we shall find that, in fact, this passage constitutes a most solemn and significant prophecy of the manner of John the Baptist's and the Lord's deaths: “This spake He signifying by what death He should die,” that when it should come to pass none of the disciples should be stumbled.

Furthermore, the translation, “Every man presseth into it,” is singularly at variance with the many Scriptures which teach that that gate is narrow and the way straight, that its passengers are few and far between, that many were called but would not come, that *no man* believeth the testimony, and, most significant of all, that when our Lord's betrayers and murderers wrought their foul deed of blood there was not one voice raised in protest or indignant remonstrance. But how true were the Lord's words of warning, that scene declares, if we take them to have been: “The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, the violent ravage it, and every man violently assails it.” In conclusion, when one hears from day to day of the sufferings of God's servants, the massacre

of workers in China, the exile and imprisonment of stundists in Russia, the persecutions of converts from Judaism and Islam, and even the arrest and unjust conviction and imprisonment of open-air preachers in Ireland, and trembling or stumbling faith casts about for some support at the apparent apathy of God to the cry of His people, how blessed it is to be able to rest one's soul upon a great principle of truth like this, and perceive that no strange thing has happened to those we love, and our fellows in service and the Gospel, but that, as it was in the beginning, so it is now, and so it shall be until the Lord's return: “The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and every man violently assails it.”

THE GOOD, GREAT, AND CHIEF SHEPHERD.

SING of Jesus now as Shepherd,
Able both to save and keep;
In His love He *died* to save us,
Now He *lives* to keep His sheep.

Rescued from the roaring lion,
Who had claimed us as his prey;
But our Shepherd paid the ransom,
Now we're His, yea, His for aye.

Well He knows the name and number
Of each lamb for which He bled;
Carried on His mighty shoulder,
Loved and saved and daily fed.

O the matchless love and power—
Love to cherish, power to keep;
Shepherd *good!* whose heart and shoulder
Join to seek and save His sheep.

Shepherd *great!* and yet so gentle,
Faithful, true, and kind is He;
Royal Shepherd, meek and lowly,
Heights and depths of mystery.

Chief of Shepherds! He is coming—
Chief among ten thousand He;
All His flock then gathered round Him
Shall His perfect beauties see.

Good and *great* and *chief* of Shepherds,
Worthy Thou, the Lamb once slain!
Thine the love and Thine the power,
Thine the kingdom, Thou shalt reign.

Barrow-in-Furness.

T. R.

THE SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS.

Address by Dr. T. NEATBY, at Kilbirnie, 18th April, 1896.

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing I *do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14).

THE Apostle Paul here states that Christ has apprehended him. You know what "apprehended" means. Christ had laid hold of Saul; now he wants to lay hold of Christ in glory. He wants to apprehend the One that has apprehended him. It is this One who is "the prize of the high calling." It is Christ, a heavenly Christ, a Christ at the right hand of God, a Christ that fills the highest place in the universe, yet stoops down to speak words of comfort and peace to even his enemy, Saul. He (Saul) leaves all behind because it is behind. He is running to win an object that he has before him, and he sees nothing but that object. All drops off, as autumn leaves drop off, that he may win Christ, "the prize of the high calling [or "the calling on high"] of God in Christ Jesus."

This divine Person sums up this divine calling. This prize of the calling on high is to be with Him, to know Him fully, to be like Him. That is all his object, all his desire. What is it that makes the apostle weep? His heart is filled with Christ, and he has as much as he can hold of Christ; he is satisfied, and yet he weeps. He weeps, alas! for those "who mind earthly things."

HE HAS A HEAVENLY OBJECT.

It characterises his path, and he weeps for those who profess the name of Christ and yet "mind earthly things," for, says he, "our citizenship is in heaven." Oh, what a difference has the cross of Christ made to the one who has apprehended what that cross meant. If you want to go into the world you must leap over the cross of Christ to get into it. Yes, you must go over a suffering Christ to get into the world. It stands there, an impassable barrier to faith, to the true Christian that looks to Christ, that has Christ for his object.

"Our conversation is in heaven." The

Christian, then, may be compared to the sheet that Peter saw. That sheet was let down out of heaven; it scarce touched the earth, and was taken up as soon as it had answered its end. Such is the Christian. A life from God, from heaven; hopes from God, from heaven; walk from God, from heaven; everything from heaven. From whence? Not from the east. From whence? From heaven. This is the point I want to press upon you, and I want my own heart to take it in as a deep reality. "Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour." Oh, we cannot be heavenly without looking for Christ in some measure, and we cannot be looking for Christ without being heavenly. In proportion as we get occupied with this Christ that has won our hearts, with this Christ after whom we are running; in proportion as we are occupied with Him we shall be heavenly people. It was a law in Israel that all actual property took its value from its relation to the jubilee, and all possessions here below take their value to the Christian from their relationship to Christ. If I can use what God has given me for Him, it is a precious possession, whatever it is. It is only value as I use it for Him, and I must soon leave all, for Christ is coming. The house in which I live is not worth a great deal, because to-morrow morning may see me leave it for ever. Property becomes just what it is worth in relationship to jubilee. Oh, thank God! "From whence we *look*." We don't look around; we look up. Looking around distracts the heart; looking up fills it with joy; looking up makes us single-eyed.

WHAT IS A SINGLE EYE?

It is one that looks at a single object. If you try to look at two objects you don't see either of them well. A single object is Christ in glory, and He is the single object that makes the single eye. Oh, to look at Him without trying to see anything else. We look. What is "look"? You say it is a simple word, and I agree with you that it is a simple word. Now you cannot *look* in the past, nor the future; you can only look *now*. Well, then, I say I am looking for Christ *now*. Christ may come now. I have been looking for Christ more or less for forty or fifty years; but, "from whence we *look*," that is a present thing, and

can only be present. It is a hope *now*; Christ may come before we separate. There is nothing to hinder it; and if we are *looking* we can only be *looking* as a present thing. From whence we look. Do you *look*, my brother, my sister? Can you say I am looking for Christ now? May God give you to see Him very soon.

"From whence we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour." Now, I transpose the words a little, but I am sure I am not going outside what is written of God. "From whence we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour." See, it is the person of Christ. From whence we look for the Lord Jesus Christ, the sent from heaven. That is from *whence* we look for Him. He said: "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." It was said of Him: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." "From whence we look for the Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, may that be really the way you expect the coming of the Lord, that you are looking for a person. Now, there can be no fear in this. Put it another way. On that bright morn of resurrection many a soul here will see a very dear object that they have missed from the lower circles of earth—from the family circle, from the assembly circle. Is there any fear? I shall see my mother in that bright moment? Any fear? Fear of what, I wonder? Fear, fear! No, No! pure joy, eternal joy to see the one that led my weary soul to repose on the breast of Jesus. Well, then, turn it to Christ.

HE IS THE DEAREST FRIEND.

He is a friend in need. He is not ashamed to call me His friend, and if I call Him Lord, it is not because I fear Him, but it is because I should call Him reverently "my Lord." O how dear to me! How dear! He died for me. He loved me, that Son of God, and gave Himself for me. Any fear? I don't know of what. I am made the righteousness of God in Him. I am in Him as the head of the new creation. I have no fear, as I think upon my Lord coming to receive me. I know that His joy, on that happy morning, will be infinitely greater than mine, as He stretches out His hand to bid me welcome. On that

morning His joy will exceed mine more than David's weeping exceeded Jonathan's. It is the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, blessed be His name. It is the One that "loved me, and gave Himself for me." It is the One that leads me, that loves me, that hears me speaking, that has won my heart; it is Christ Jesus my Lord.

"As Saviour." What does this mean? I shall see my Saviour. He is coming as Saviour. But I know Him already as Saviour. Yes, yes, I do, thank God; He has saved me. I have the salvation of my soul in the Lord Jesus Christ, as regards the favour of God, as complete as ever it will be; but I look for Him as Saviour. He has paid the price for this body. He has paid the price for me, for you. He has paid the whole that was needed in the righteousness of God. He has redeemed me, but He has not taken possession yet. I have not the redemption of my body, for which I wait. You know that passage, "We groan, waiting for the adoption." We have adoption in our soul's relation with God most certainly, for we call Him "Abba, Father," but this body is to be a child of God.

The tenth verse points it out distinctly. Read it at your leisure. "We are to be children of God, being children of the resurrection;" that is clearly the body. It is God's purpose that mortality might be swallowed up of life. You are to be in your body a child of God as much as you are now that spiritually.

HE IS COMING TO FINISH THE WORK,

to extend it to the body, to make His salvation complete in the whole extent of the moral being, of the body and everything connected with it. We look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. And you will find Him indeed a Saviour that morning. Supposing it should be before we separate. Many of you had a conflict this morning with the power of evil in your hearts. You have groaned within yourselves. You felt how sad it is that we respond so feebly to the fulness of divine grace, and this afternoon, if the Lord comes, you will keep holiday from all the conflict, from all the power of evil struggling against the grace of God. You will keep an eternal holiday. Oh, blessed be God! The Lord Jesus Christ, a Saviour "who shall change these

bodies of humiliation." Is it not a body of humiliation? You will admit mine is! Thank God it is to be like His body of glory, just like the Lord Jesus Christ's. The identity, of course, maintained, but likeness to Christ in body; or, rather, to put it in the order that God puts it in, "In spirit, soul, and body."

Likeness to Christ, that is the great and eternal purpose of God. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." As I said just now, "He is not ashamed to call us brethren." He is to be manifested in all that vast concourse of people. And you and I will have our place there, in the likeness complete and eternal of the Firstborn of many brethren.

"To look within and see no stain;
Abroad no guilt to trace;
To shed no tears, to feel no pain,
To see Thee face to face.

"To find each hope of glory gained,
Fulfilled each precious word,
And fully all to have attained
The image of our Lord."

FROM FAR FORMOSA.*

YET another missionary volume! This recent contribution to the literature of missions comes from the pen of Dr. George Mackay, the son of a Scotch Highlander, who, in the dark days of the "Sutherland clearances," emigrated to Canada, and settled in the township of Zorra, Western Ontario. George was the youngest of six children, and was brought up by his worthy parents in the fear of God.

On leaving school he became a teacher, and subsequently a university student. When his Arts course at the Toronto University was completed he entered the Princeton Theological Seminary. On completing the usual term at that institution, he went to Edinburgh, and attended the lectures of Dr. Alexander Duff and others, at the New College. In October, 1871, at the age of twenty-seven, he left Canada for China, as the "first missionary of the Canadian Presbyterian Church," and in due

time reached the "Celestial Empire." After consultation with others he took a trip to the northern portion of Formosa to "spy the land." Finding a teeming population in country districts, towns, and cities, without any one to make known to them God's way of salvation, he concluded that the Lord had called him to labour there. He immediately commenced the study of the language, and, by patient perseverance, he was enabled to preach in Chinese in five months.

The present attractively got-up and goodly-sized volume, with portraits, illustrations, and maps, gives an account of the author's twenty-three years' arduous labours amongst Chinese, Pe-po-hoans, and mountain savages. There is much valuable information given of the geography, history, geology, trees, and plants of the island; also of the habits and customs of Chinese, aborigines, and cannibals.

Formosa, which is east of China, is separated from the mainland by the Formosa Channel, and is opposite the province of Fu Kien. It is 250 miles long, 50 broad, with an area of 15,000 square miles, and is half the size of Ireland. Though for many years a Chinese dependency, it was only in 1887 that it was created a province of the Empire. At the conclusion of the recent war with Japan it was formally ceded by China to Japan.

The climate of the country is most trying to foreigners, the heat being very oppressive and enervating. Speaking of the rainy season, which usually begins about the end of December, and continues through January and February, Dr. Mackay says: "It is rain, rain, rain, to-day, to-morrow, and the next day; this week, next week, and the week after; wet and wind without, damp and mould within. Often, for weeks together, we rarely get a glimpse of the sun. All the year round we have to fight against depression of spirits, and say over to ourselves, as cheerfully as possible:

'Be still, sad heart, and cease repining,
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining.'"

Malarial fever he considers to be the "blackest cloud that hangs longest over the island. Because of it death and disease work terrible havoc among the inhabitants. Almost every form of disease is directly traced to this one source." It is interesting to know why Chinese wear

*"From far Formosa: the Island, its People, and Missions." By George Mackay, D.D. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, & Ferrier. To be had at *Witness Office*, price 7/6, post free.

THE QUEUE.

"The present Emperor Kongsu," says the Doctor, "is ninth of the Tartar dynasty, which succeeded the Ming dynasty in 1644. The first Emperor of the Tartar dynasty was Sun-ti, who belonged to Manchuria. One of his reforms was the introduction of the queue. All Chinese men were compelled to shave the forehead, and dress the hair in a long braid, according to the Manchurian custom. The queue was made the badge of fealty to the Emperor, and not to wear it is to endanger one's head. Westerners are slow to learn that the queue has no religious or superstitious significance, but is purely political. It is the old flag of the Chinese empire, the mark of loyalty to the reigning dynasty. The people have become accustomed to it, and what was once a disgrace is now regarded with pride. A Chinese without a queue is a traitor and a rebel. When this fact comes to be known by self-respecting people in the West, the emblem of Chinese loyalty will cease to be regarded with ridicule, and the offensive pig-tail will be blotted out of English literature."

ANCESTRAL WORSHIP.

A search-light is thrown upon ancestral worship in the following paragraph: "In a general and broad sense all their worship is ancestral, as their gods are the deified spirits of the distinguished dead. But the worship of their gods is not the real religion of the Chinese; the idol shrine is not their most holy place. Their real religion is the worship of their ancestors, their real idol the ancestral tablet. Their doctrine is that each man has three souls. At death one soul goes into the unseen world of spirits, the second goes down into the grave, and the third hovers about the old homestead. For the first the priest is responsible. The second and third claim the services of living relatives, the grave being tended for the one, while the other is invited to take up its abode in a tablet of wood; and from that hour the ancestral tablet becomes the most sacred thing in the possession of the family. It is simply a narrow piece of wood, about a foot long, two or three inches wide, and half-an-inch thick, set on a low pedestal, and on one side are inscribed the ancestral names. The eldest son has charge of the

tablet and its worship. It is placed in the main hall of the house; offerings are presented to it, and incense burned before it every day. The son regards that tablet as in very truth the abode of a personal being who is far more to him, for weal or woe, than all the gods of the empire. The gods are to be feared, and their favour is to be propitiated; but ancestors are loved, and their needs in the spirit world are generously supplied. To them the dead are dependent on their living relatives, and should they be neglected they would become beggar spirits, hungry, naked, penniless, with will and power to punish their undutiful offspring for their neglect. Food must therefore be offered before the tablet to satisfy the hunger of the spirit, paper clothing must be burned to hide its nakedness, and paper money to give it independence in the world of shades. . . . Pork, fish, fowls, vegetables, rice, and some spirituous liquor constitute the food which is offered, smoking hot, and the spirits feast upon its essence, carried up in the ascending steam. Paper clothing and mock money are burned, and as the smoke curls up the spirits are clothed and enriched."

How sad to think of the many millions of Chinese deluded by such ideas, who, if they but heard the glorious gospel of God's matchless grace, might believe it and be saved! Let us constantly plead with God to thrust forth labourers into the great harvest-field to tell the people of His great love to them as revealed at Calvary's cross.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN.

The position of women in China, though not so sad as in some heathen countries, is wretched enough. In giving us an insight into Formosan social life, Dr. Mackay reveals a condition of things which is indeed deplorable. "The birth of a daughter," we are told, "is no occasion for rejoicing, if, indeed, it be not regarded as a calamity. The inferiority of woman to man is not an open question. She is regarded as useful, but her death, even when a wife and a mother, is trivial compared with the loss of a brother or son. . . . When a daughter is born, little notice is taken of the event. If she is deformed in any way, such as having a hare-lip, she may immediately be destroyed. If the parents already have

girls, and are poor—even though it costs the mother a terrible struggle, for the maternal instinct cannot be easily eradicated—the child must sooner or later be put out of the way. As the struggle for life is hard and keen, the sooner the unwelcome baby-girl is sacrificed the better.”

MISSIONARY LABOURS.

It is cheering to see how patiently and enthusiastically this brave and gifted Gospel pioneer toiled on amid much to discouragé. Within a year of his arrival on the island he had the joy of baptising an intelligent youth, who is now an earnest and an able preacher. Dr. Mackay has been much more successful (speaking after the manner of men) than most missionaries. It was his privilege to reap abundantly as well as to sow. Reviewing his twenty-three years' labours, he gives thanks to God for over two thousand professing Christians in the sixty chapels built in Formosa, in addition to four hundred who have “gone before.” Nineteen meeting-places have been erected on the Kap-tsu-lan plain for the Pe-po-hoan congregations—the aborigines of Formosa—and forty-one for the Chinese. Numbers of the converts, in times of trial, sealed their testimony with their life's blood, preferring martyrdom to denying their Saviour and Lord. At the present time there is a goodly company of preachers, whose whole time is devoted to the spread of the truth. Dr. Mackay firmly believes that native preachers, and not Europeans, are the persons who are fitted by God to evangelise Formosa. Keeping this in view, he takes with him, on his missionary travels, a number of young men, whom he seeks to help and instruct. The Doctor is a fearless and enthusiastic missionary, and is prepared, if need be, to lay down his life for Him whom he loves and serves. He has had many narrow escapes from death. By the good hand of God he has been preserved from French bomb-shells and rifle balls, from typhoons and malarial fevers, from serpents and savages, from Chinese and Pe-po-hoan spears and knives.

RESULTS OF MISSIONARY EFFORTS.

Dr. Mackay has faith in the power of the old Gospel. Dealing with the question, “Are missions a failure?” he answers it as follows: “I profess to know something of the character of the Chinese, heathen and Christian, and something of men in other lands than

China, and I am prepared to affirm that, for integrity and endurance, for unswerving loyalty to Christ, and untiring fidelity in His service, there are to-day in the mission churches of North Formosa hundreds who would do credit to any community, or to any congregation in Christendom. I have seen them under fire, and know what they can face; I have looked when the fight was over, and know that it was good; I have watched them as they lay down to die, and calmly, triumphantly, as any soldier-saint, or martyr-hero, they ‘burned upward, each to his point of bliss.’ Tell me not that they will fall away. Four hundred of them have been counted worthy and have entered into His presence, the first-fruits of the harvests now ripening in the white fields of North Formosa.”

Let Christian workers thank God that they are privileged to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ to the perishing, in their corner of the great harvest-field. Don't let us forget the Master's words, “Occupy till I come.” Day by day let us press forward, remembering that work done for Him can never be in vain. In being thus occupied, may we not forget the noble men and women who have left friends and relations and have gone into the dark parts of the world to tell of Jesus and His love. We can greatly help them by remembering them at the mercy-seat. We can also have practical fellowship with them by ministering to them of our means. Let us, then, buy up our opportunities, not forgetting the Lord's words to His disciples: “Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth labourers into His harvest” (Matt. ix. 38).

A. M.

ABOVE AND APART.

THAT we are to be in the world, yet not of it, is one of the many paradoxes with which the Scriptures abound. It is made beautifully plain by the words in Matthew v.: “Ye are the light of the world; ye are the salt of the earth.” Light, to be of service, must be *above* and *apart* from that it shines upon. Salt, on the other hand, must be in immediate contact with that it is meant to preserve.

“So, I ask Thee for the daily strength
To none that ask denied,
And a mind to blend with outward life,
While keeping at Thy side.”

F. H.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF TRUSTING GOD.

By Colonel A. O. MOLESWORTH.

"I have commanded a widow woman....to sustain thee"
(1 Kings xvii. 9).

THE things written aforetime were "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." For surely the record of events in the Scriptures is not only to give evidence of the kindness and faithfulness (among other things) of God in the past, but to give present comfort to those who trust in Him. And often Scriptures, such as the one quoted at the beginning of this narrative, have a current fulfilment in the history of God's people, and serve as means whereby those in trouble may lay hold on His strength and find that He is ever the same to His children, and also that His means and ways of deliverance are in no wise shortened.

On this text, "I have commanded a widow woman . . . to sustain thee," was one of His children, Miss D., lately enabled to hope, in time of much distress. She had recently heard from her lawyer that she could not for the present expect the payment of the usual interest of her moneys which were held in trust for her, and that perhaps even two or three years might elapse before payment could be made.

Those who thus are almost wholly dependent upon their annuities will know how distressing such information must have been. Added to this was the fact that Miss D. had no relations who could assist her, and to whom she might naturally have looked for help at such a time. Yet was not her God and Father, who had redeemed her to Himself through Jesus Christ, and had given her newness of life in Him, and had made her His own dear child—was not He still "a present help in trouble?" Had He said in vain, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me?" So she spread her case before Him, and waited on Him in faith that He would undertake her case.

Nor was she disappointed. Walking up and down her room one afternoon, much exercised in mind as to *how* deliverance should come, her Bible in hand, she was arrested by the words, "I have commanded a widow woman . . . to sustain thee (1 Kings xvii. 9). These precious words, so strikingly fulfilled in Elijah's case, were borne in on her heart by the Holy

Ghost, and filled her with comfort and special hope.

Shortly after this her attention was drawn to an advertisement asking for "a lady to take charge of a household for an invalid." Miss D. at once made enquiry, and found that the invalid was a lady who had recently been deprived of her loved husband after a brief illness, and who, through the terrible shock, was utterly prostrate and unable to attend to anything around her. She had shut herself up in seclusion, losing all heart, in her grief, for worldly matters, until her household was in such confusion that her relatives (she had no family) felt it necessary to interfere, and accordingly advertised for a lady to come and take charge of the invalid and assume the direction of the household.

Miss D. sought out the confidential agent advertising, and was accepted as answering to the special needs of the case. She was at once installed and given every power to act as she deemed best under the circumstances. A happy confidence at once sprang up between Miss D. and the invalid lady, so that thus, in His kindness, sustenance and provision were made for every need, and the tired heart was fully rested by seeing the fulfilment literally of the promise she had been enabled to lay hold of in her hour of need: "I have commanded a widow woman . . . to sustain thee."

"Blessed are *all* they that trust in Him."

Correspondence.

A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL IN CHINA.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

I am recently back from a twenty-five days' itineration. For the first sixteen or seventeen days I was simply accompanied by a native brother; for the remainder of the journey, I was joined by Bro. Mudditt. We, as usual, visited a number of large markets and three religious (?) festivals. At the former only men are present; at the latter, women as well as men come together in large numbers. They burn incense and paper, and prostrate themselves before the idol. The paper is supposed to represent money for the use of the god. Then there is a great firing of guns and fire-crackers, processioning, etc. But the chief part of the "worship" consists in watching theatrical performances in the open-air. The whole thing, for noise and excitement, is very like a big fair,

and it is very saddening. We reach the place and take our stand in as quiet and convenient a spot as we can select, and we soon have a small crowd around. Some of these listen for a time with seeming interest, but it is a moving audience. They all eagerly receive tracts, and not a few spend a trifle and buy a book or two to take home to read. Sometimes we experience a little horseplay, or one comes up and seeks to disturb us, but on the whole they treat us well. We now and then meet with one who has heard the preaching before, and is earnestly desiring to know more of it. For example, at one place my native companion met with a man who seemed pretty well instructed in elementary facts and truths of revelation. It seems that several years before he had suffered much from his eyes. He went round to different temples, but derived no benefit, so he began to lose faith in the temple gods. The year before last he heard of us at Wei-hai, and on several occasions he came there, and I treated him and gave him remedies to use at home. He also then heard the Gospel and received books, which he has diligently studied. My companion (a Christian of some experience and discernment) was quite pleased with him. We hope that, in a few weeks, he with several others may come along here, when we will spend the most of the day for, perhaps, two weeks in definite Scripture instruction. Our expectation is that, ere long, two or three will give clear evidence of having received Christ, and will be baptised as His followers.

That same evening, when back at our stopping-place, an old man of nearly seventy came in to see us. The truth of the one God and the folly of idol worship were set before him, to all of which he assented. The truths that we are all sinners, and that Christ died for us, were simply set before him. This, also, he seemed to understand. On leaving, he thanked us and said he that he would daily praise God for his food, etc., and thank the Lord Jesus for dying for him. He added that he would not permit his descendants to take part in idolatry.

The old man could not read, but he seemed most earnest and sincere, and as he left, my Chinese friend turned to me, and with a look of surprise, exclaimed: "Well, I never before met a man like that!" Neither had I. We made some enquiries as to who the old man was, and learnt that last year he had returned from Peking, where he had spent some years. Now the secret was out. Probably, while there, he often visited a preaching hall where he heard the truth of God, for it is very improbable that a Chinaman could hear these great truths just once and understand them, as our conversation could not have lasted more than twenty minutes. We have his name, and when again in that place, we shall hope to see more of him. If he

is not already a secret believer in Christ, I feel that he is not far from the Kingdom.

This is the annual fishing season here. Hundreds of men from other places are in our midst. Each night two halls are open, and for several weeks very many have heard the Word. In a week or ten days the fishermen will be returning to their homes to harvest their grain. I expect soon to go on another journey, before the extreme heat of the summer is upon us. Continue to help by prayer.—Yours in best hands,

Shih-tao, N. China.

J. NAIMAN CASE.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

Please explain the difference between spirit, soul, and body.

Explain Matthew xxvi. 45, 46.

Explain Matthew x. 22, xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13. Does our final and eternal salvation depend on our enduring to the end?

John xii. 25. What is the meaning of "loving," "hating," "losing," "keeping" the life?

Please explain Romans ii. 6.

Is not the Church, Ephesians ii. 20-22, or "Holy Temple," composed of the same persons as "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," Rev. xxi. 9-27?

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv. Or did He only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

THE ROOT OF LAWLESSNESS.—In Judges xvii. 6; xxi. 25 we read: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This lawless state is frequently quoted as arising from Israel being in a wrong position, in having no kingly authority. Please compare with 1 Samuel viii. 6, 7, and explain.

WHAT IS A LIVING SACRIFICE?

QUESTION 526.—Please explain Romans xii. 1: "Present the body a living sacrifice, which is our reasonable service."

Answer A.—To offer up sacrifices signified the bringing to God of that which He could delight in—as savouring of His Son. A living sacrifice means the presentation to God, daily, of our whole being, to do His will, as constrained by the love of Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. A (surely!) reasonable service

from those who have been quickened from the dead and brought into newness of life. A. O. M.

Answer B.—The word "living" often in Scripture means not only having life, but conveys also the idea of continuing, or constancy. Thus "living water" (Zech. xiv. 8; John iv. 14, &c.), denotes a perennial fountain in opposition to a stagnant pool, typical of death—*c.f.* also Hebrews x. 20. It thus alludes strongly by contrast to the animals sacrificed, first being slain and then offered dead. They could not be offered again, and such sacrifice was of no permanent efficacy. But with us there is the very opposite of a service of death or inactivity required. We are to offer ourselves with all our living energies from day to day, while life shall last, as one long sacrifice. And we are to present our "bodies . . . by a rational ministry;" so the Syraic—*c.f.* R.V. (noticing italics). This word "rational" is opposed not to what is foolish or unreasoning, but to what is merely external. It means pertaining to the mind, or spiritual. We are to send up the savor of a consecrated life—wholly mortified as to the flesh; but alive to God, and not of the mere dead emblems of the Man Christ Jesus.

J. H. H.

Answer C.—To present our bodies as living sacrifices to God, holy and acceptable, we offer ourselves up, unreservedly, to be used in His service. When a sacrifice was offered, it became no more the giver's but God's; so we give ourselves up to God. Being His, we are used in His service; in everything we try to please Him and obey Him. The Apostle beseeches us "by the mercies of God." Considering what great things the Lord has done for us, it is a small matter that we should give up ourselves to Him, and work daily in His service. This explains the last clause of the verse: "Your reasonable service."

* It is a *living* sacrifice. The priests' sacrifices were dead, ours are living. We are not told here to die for the Lord, but to live for him. It should be *holy* and *acceptable* to God. If we would have the sacrifice holy and acceptable to Him, we shall study His wishes, and try to frame our daily life according to them. The whole chapter may be read in this way, and also the next. It will be found that the verses following are an explanation of the first. W. H.

Editor's Note.—The offering brought to Jehovah under the law (Lev. xvi. 7-9) was first "presented," then "offered." It was presented at "the door," and offered up upon the altar. The two goats were "presented," that is, put absolutely at the disposal of Jehovah, and He, by means of the lot, indicated which was to die and which was to live.

The word here rendered "present" is same as that in Romans vi. 13, rendered "yield;" in

xiv. 10, "stand before;" and in 2 Timothy iv. 17, the same word is used of the Lord, He "stood with" Paul, the meaning evidently, in each case, being to place one's self at the service or disposal of another.

The thought of the believer being laid upon the altar is not supported by any New Testament scripture. Whatever was consumed upon the altar typified Christ, and Him only. Other offerings were "presented," "waved," &c., but were not laid upon the altar.

The believer is to present or yield himself unto God as one alive from the dead (see Rom. vi. 13). It is in the energy of the risen life of the Son of God that he is to do this. He may be required to glorify God by a prolonged and active life as Paul and John, or by an early death as Stephen and James (Acts xii. 2), but his reasonable service is to put himself at the disposal of the God that loved him so, that He spared not His Son. "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." It is the body—the members—that must be presented, because it is through the body that the renewed mind is manifested, and it is the body, when not yielded to God, which opposes, in a thousand ways, the operation of the Spirit in the believer. Fleshly desires war against the soul (1 Peter ii. 11). Laziness, love of ease, pleasures, lusts, excess in eating, drinking, sleeping, love of dress, &c., are all connected with the body. Hence Paul says: "I keep under my body."

HOLINESS AND OBEDIENCE.

QUESTION 527.—Are holiness and obedience the same?

Answer A.—These are distinct one from another. Obedience to His Word and commandments causes a condition termed holiness, or practical righteousness.

Our sanctification or separation to God—in Christ Jesus—is the cause and spring of practical holiness through the Holy Spirit indwelling, and bringing spirit, soul, and body—the three departments of the human being—into subjection to the will of God (see 1 Peter i. 14-16). A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—Holiness and obedience are intimately connected. Holiness (or sanctification, which is the same word) signifies being set apart for God. This has been done by God the Father in His eternal purpose with regard to all believers, by the Holy Spirit at regeneration, by the blood of Christ through faith, and practically through the truth received and obeyed. Sanctification implies conformity to God's character, "be ye holy, for I am holy." Obedience implies conformity to God's revealed will, and the measure of the believer's obedience is just the measure of his practical holiness.

The second part of "The Desire of God for Fellowship with His People" is unavoidably crushed out, but will (D.V.) appear next month.

"CHRIST FORMED IN YOU."

By JOHN R. CALDWELL,
Author of "Earthly Relationships of the Heavenly Family."*
Gal. iv. 19.

IT is true of every believer that he is "in Christ:" it is equally true that Christ is in him. "Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobrates" (2 Cor. xiii. 5).

In the reckoning of God there are but two men: the "first" and the "second" (1 Cor. xv. 47)—Adam and Christ.

By nature we are all partakers of Adam's life and character. By regeneration every believer is partaker of the life of Christ. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh: that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." That new life, the Christ life, which is begotten by the Spirit of God in the believer, is spiritual. The body is not regenerated—it is not yet "a new creation"—it is in the spirit that the new creation has taken place.

In Eph. iv. 24 the saints are exhorted to "put on the new man, which after God [*i.e.*, after the image of God] is created in righteousness and true holiness."

In Colossians the exhortations to holiness are based upon the fact that they "have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. iii. 10). This took place on believing, but was symbolized in baptism (Gal. iii. 27).

This "new man" is therefore a creation of God, a spiritual being within, called the "inward man" (Rom. vii. 22).

It is not Christ personally, any more than it was Adam personally who was in me by nature. Christ Himself is not a creation, but the Creator. It is the life of Christ, that eternal life which is beheld in Him in all its fulness and perfections communicated to the believer by the Spirit of God.

Thus God begins within, in the spirit and works out through the soul and body. God always works from within. You can count the age of a tree by the circular lines in its trunk. But it is from within that the expansion has taken place. The innermost circle is the latest.

In Rom. xii. the exhortation "to be transformed" conveys by the word used the thought

that the transformation is from within—it is by the renewing of the mind. It is the same word used of the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus when the glory that was within shone out illuminating His raiment: a beautiful contrast to the glory which shone from the face of Moses, which was only skin-deep, for it is expressly said the "skin of his face" shone (Ex. xxxiv. 29, 30).

This divine image in the believer, this new life, is within in the spirit, and is to be wrought out or put on because it is within.

As a new-born babe, though small and weak, possesses every part that afterwards will develop into the man, so in the new-born spirit there is every lineament of Christ—it is "after the image of Him that created him."

And indeed the instincts and affections of this new-born life are often truer than the conclusions of a more mature understanding. That Christ is in the young believer from the very first dawn of faith, is evidenced by love to other born-again ones; by the vital breath of prayer; by love for the Scriptures; by the fear of God and the dread of sin; and by desire for the salvation of others. Every lineament of the life and character of Christ is there, to be afterward developed and finally completed at the coming of the Lord.

The apostle's desire for the Galatians was that Christ might be formed in them. So intent was he upon this that he, as it were, travailed in birth again on their behalf. Lacking this manifestation of Christ in them, he stood in doubt of them, fearing lest after all he had laboured in vain. This forming of Christ in them answers to the putting on of the Lord Jesus as in Rom. xiii. 14, and the putting on of the character and mind of Christ as described in Col. iii. 12-14.

It is not merely Christ as the inward man, Christ as the hidden spring, but Christ manifested, Christ formed in them so that all can see that they are born again, new creatures because of their likeness to Christ. As Christ, though "in the form of God," took upon Him "the form of a servant," so that all who saw Him discerned that to minister to others was the habit of His life, so the believer, though naturally in the form of Adam, is to be transformed so that he is in the form of Christ—the likeness of Christ indelibly stamped upon his whole life and character.

* Recently issued, cloth boards, 1/6 post free.

It is to this end that all ministry, all discipline, all the Spirit's teaching, and all the providential ways of God are directed. It is the great eternal purpose of the heart of God for every one of His children: He has predestinated them to be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. viii. 29).

Fellowship with God involves co-operation with Him in the working out of His cherished purpose. As it is God's aim, so ought it to be our aim. As it is God's desire for us, so ought it to be our desire and prayer to God that He would work it in us. Is Christ the Elect of God? so are we. Is He holy? so are we. Is He beloved? so are we. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved"—what?—"bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering," &c., &c. Is not this just putting on the Lord Jesus Christ? It is the first lesson in the school of God; it is true discipleship, this growing into the mind and ways of the Lord Jesus.

A ministry that results in hardness, high-mindedness, conceit of knowledge, self-righteousness, is not the ministry of the Spirit. The Spirit ministers Christ, so that He, being better known, is better trusted, better loved, better obeyed, and so His image developed and seen in the life.

Though by nature partakers of Adam's life, likeness, and character, yet Adam, as a person being dead, has no power to influence our lives. There is no means of communication between the Adam that lived and died and the children begotten of him in his own nature.

• But it is not so in the new creation. Not only has Christ, the great Quickener of the dead, communicated life to us, His own life, by the Spirit and through His Word; He has also made us partakers of His Spirit, so that, as it is written, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His." There is thus a living communication between Christ and those who are His. Christ thus dwells in the believer by His Spirit, communicating His grace, His thoughts, His affections, guiding, instructing, comforting, edifying. The Spirit communicates strength to the inner man, and is the power for mortifying the flesh (see Eph. iii. 16: Rom. viii. 13).

As the quickening power is in Christ and not in us, and the fruit-bearing power in Him

and not in us, as He said, "without Me ye can do nothing," so the conforming power is in Him and not in us. Apart from communion with Him there can be no conformity to His likeness. It is those who with unveiled face behold His glory who reflect His image. "But we all, with unveiled face reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit (2 Cor. iii. 18, R.V.).

Not to behold His face, not to hear His voice, is to be "like unto those that go down into the pit" (compare Ps. xxviii. 1 with Ps. cxliii. 7). Communion with God is the essential distinction between the believer and the unbeliever. It is this that secures conformity to Christ; the lack of it necessarily involves conformity to the world.

And, as already remarked, all the providential dealings of God with His children are to the end of forming Christ in us.

I once observed a work of art wrought out across the street from my office window. Two large, square blocks of stone surmounted the two great pillars of a building. One day a platform was erected in front, and a curtain drawn around so that what was being done was hidden from the street, but from my window I saw all that passed. The sculptor began with hammer and chisel and wrought day by day, week by week. After weeks of labour it became evident that a human head was being carved out. By-and-by the eyebrows, nose, lips were seen, and finally two great and beautiful human figures were completed, as it were, holding up and bending beneath the weight of the building. From the first the idea was in the sculptor's mind. Every stroke from first to last was but the working out of his ideal. He added nothing. He only cut away, and cut away, until the perfect figure appeared.

Such are the workings of the providence of God. Every stroke, every disappointment, every sorrow, every loss is but a taking away of something that was hindering the manifestation of the likeness of Christ.

The Great Divine Worker has Christ before Him as His perfect ideal, and conformity to Him is the end toward which all His dealings with us are directed.

Again I repeat, God begins within. First

He creates anew the Spirit in the image of His Son. Then Christ is formed in the believer manifestly by the operation of the Spirit through the truth, and that conjointly with the workings of the providence of God. Finally, when the Lord comes, our bodies, so frail, so apt to prove a hindrance to spiritual development here, will be changed and fashioned into the likeness of His own glorious body according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

"NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE."

Notes of an Address by Mr. THOS. NEWBERRY.

Scripture read, John viii. 1-11.

THIS scene took place in the outer court of the Temple of God at Jerusalem. There in the precincts of that temple; there as in the very presence of God, whose house it was ("the Father's house," as Jesus called it)—there He sat down, and there He taught. May we together come into the presence of God, may Jesus in our midst be our Teacher this evening, and may the Holy Spirit that rested on Him take of the words and doings of Jesus and reveal them unto us, and prepare our hearts to receive that word, engraven and engrafted there.

Verses 3-5—"The scribes and Pharisees . . . say unto Him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now, Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest Thou?" Jesus, because He knew their reason for asking, instead of answering by word, replied by action, significant but simple; for the recorded actions of the Lord Jesus have a golden voice. Even His silence is golden. Around the hem of the garment of the High Priest there were, alternately, "a golden bell and a pomegranate" (Exodus xxviii. 33-35), so that when the High Priest went into the sanctuary with his robes of glory and beauty every motion sent forth a golden note; one or the other of the golden bells was set a-tinkling, and, sometimes it may be, all the way round; so here.

We notice three actions of the Lord Jesus twice repeated. May we hear the tinkling of the golden bells. "Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground," or more literally, according to the Greek, "wrote into

the ground." There are two actions here, two tinklings of the golden bells. *First, His stooping down.* O what a significant stooping down was that! "He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 6-8). *Jesus stooped down.* He who was throughout eternity the only begotten Son of the Father, He became the Virgin's Son, the woman's Seed, "took upon Him the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men." "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same" (Heb. ii. 14). "Jesus stooped down," bending even till He reached the floor of the court of the temple. That action was significant.

In this writing with His finger upon the ground we have the second tinkle of the golden bell.

"With His finger wrote into the earth." His writing with His finger is significant. In Scripture the finger is the emblem of the Spirit of God. The Psalmist says, "The heavens are the work of Thy fingers (Ps. viii. 3). And in Job xxvi. 13 we read, "By His Spirit He garnished the heavens." The finger of God and the Spirit of God are identical. Our Lord in Luke xi. 20 said, "If I by the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you;" and in Matt. xii. 28, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

"Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote into the earth." He was born of the Spirit, anointed with the Spirit and power. He was the Christ in birth, life, and action. Every thought, word, and deed were in the Holy Ghost. Like as the fine flour in the gift or meat offering was pervaded and saturated by the oil with which it was mingled, so it was by that Spirit He lived, and taught and wrought His miracles. As He Himself said, quoting from the Prophet Isaiah, "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Me." And it was "Through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14). He did that lowly work even in the dust of death. That action of His with His finger writing on the ground,

or writing into the earth, was significant of that lowly, atoning death, "the death of the cross," when He, the Substitute for sinners, on whom "Jehovah laid the iniquity of us all," "poured out His soul unto death," and left His impress there, never to be effaced. Beloved, this world, saturated as it is with sin, in its fallen, rebel condition, though created by the almighty power of God, yet having revolted from the God that made it, has borne upon its surface the sacred form of "Emmanuel, God with us." It has been trodden by the footsteps of Him "whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting" (Micah v. 2), who was born in Bethlehem,

"Wandering as a homeless stranger
In the world His hands had made."

On the dust of the earth He left His impress. For 37 years He wandered here below from the manger to the cross, and downward to the tomb.

In the Garden of Eden, after man had fallen and the word had been given, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," God ratified the promise by a significant action. The first death was that of the victim in whose skin God clothed our first parents on their believing His promise concerning His Son, so that the first blood which fell upon this sin-stained earth was the blood of atonement; the blood of the lamb in whose skin our first parents were clothed, foreshadowing their acceptance in God's beloved Son.

I believe this world of ours, though it be little among the orbs of the heavens—even as but a grain of sand in the universe of created worlds—will ever have a significant place, for the incarnate Son of God, the crucified One of Calvary, has left His impress on it in the footsteps He trod, and more especially in the sacred blood He shed. He has left His impress in the dust of the earth out of which Adam was at first created. The world, after it has been purged with fire and the elements melted with fervent heat, will be reconstructed a holy world, wherein righteousness will dwell, no sin, no sorrow, no death, no curse. But even then that world will bear the impress left by the footsteps and atoning death of God's beloved Son, for the tabernacle of God among men will be His memorial.

"While they continued asking Him, He lifted

Himself up." A third tinkle of the golden bell. That action is also significant. Here we have His resurrection from the dead foreshadowed. "No man," He says, "taketh My life from Me. I have power [authority] to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again." "On the third day I will rise again from the dead." "Jesus lifted Himself up." He arose again from the dead. It was not possible that He could be holden of these cords. He being the incorruptible One, saw no corruption. On the third, the appointed morning, He burst the bonds of death and rose triumphant over death and Hades. It was through the eternal Spirit that He was quickened; but it was His own act, for He had authority to lay down His life and authority to take it again, for He was the anointed of the Lord, the One in whom the Spirit of life and power and glory dwelt in all His fulness. Jesus stooped down, He wrote on the ground, and lifted up Himself. Jesus in incarnation, atoning death, and resurrection power and glory!

What was the first effect of this stooping down, writing, and rising again? The conviction of the Pharisees, scribes, and the accusers who sought to entangle Him. Jesus said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast the stone at her." The first result of the work of Christ in life, death, and resurrection is to convict the world of sin. As He said in the prospect of the cross, "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out." His spiritual, holy life, His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, convicted the world of sin. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than the light, because their deeds are evil." God manifested His love in the life and death of His beloved Son. How did man, Jew and Gentile, treat that gift of sovereign grace and love divine? They crucified the Son of God and put Him to an open shame. They cried, "Away with Him, crucify Him." That was the condemnation of the world.

The first action of Christ risen from the dead, His action on the world, is to convince of sin, and so it ever is

"Law and terrors do but harden
All the while they work alone;
But a sense of blood-bought pardon—
This dissolves a heart of stone."

What brings the sinner to true repentance is a sight of the cross. It is not Sinai, but Calvary; it is not the thunders of the law, but a sight of divine grace. If we would know what it is to be convicted of sin, to be prepared to receive grace, we must go to the cross of Calvary and see the Son of God doing His lowly work of redeeming grace and love in the dust of death.

The first action is conviction of sin. Those bringing the charge went out (under the conviction of their conscience) one by one, and Jesus was left alone and the woman standing in the midst. The scribes and Pharisees who would be for the execution of the judgment of the law upon the woman did not say a word. They were partial in the law. Those who had used the law for the purpose of condemning Christ and convicting the poor sinner, under the conviction of their conscience, go out one by one. The aged and the young go out, and Jesus was left alone and the woman standing in the midst. O beloved! that is the place—alone in the presence of Jesus! No spot on earth so precious as that—alone in the presence of God! The convicted sinner, without a word of excuse, extenuation, or denial, in the presence of a holy, holy God, self-convicted, but now in the presence of that One who stooped down, wrote on the ground, and lifted Himself up. So is it now with the sinner in the presence of the suffering, risen Christ.

"Again He stooped down and wrote into the earth." There is the other aspect of the cross. Like the fiery, cloudy pillar that went before Israel into the depths of the Red Sea, there are two aspects of that fiery, cloudy pillar. It was darkness to the pursuing Egyptians, it was light on the other side to Israel going through the Red Sea—to the wilderness on their way to the promised land. There are two aspects of the cross. To the self-righteous, those that would say to the sinner, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou," to those that despise the poor sinner the aspect of that cross is darkness. Only the conscience-humbled sinner alone with Jesus is prepared for the second aspect of that cross. "When Jesus saw the woman He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers?" What is become of them? "Hath no man condemned thee?"

Mark, they had addressed Him as master or teacher. Like the dying thief on the cross of Calvary who, during those hours of darkness, isolation, and death, had learned his lesson, she had learned her's. She does not say, "If Thou be the Christ," like the other thief, nor simply master or teacher, like the scribes and Pharisees. What is the word she uses? "No man, *Lord*." No man can call Him Lord in such circumstances as these but by the Holy Spirit. There had been the work of the Spirit of God going on in this woman revealing Christ during those solemn moments when she was left alone with Him. These scribes and Pharisees are found out; they could not stand the light, but in going out they left the only One who could really help and save them. "No man, *Lord*." What was Christ's answer? "Neither do I condemn thee." "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." These scribes and Pharisees supposed that Jesus would have taken the judgment seat and condemned with a double anathema the foul sinner that stooped before Him, brought there for the very purpose of condemnation; but no. For He who was delivered for our offences was raised again for our justification.

If there is a free pardon through the incarnate, crucified, and risen One, may we live as we please? May we go on sinning? No, no. "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." There is the secret of sanctification as well as justification, and of peace with God. In the atoning death and in the risen and glorified Emmanuel, we learn where the conscience can be satisfied. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather is risen again," &c. We get cleansing of heart as well as purging of conscience by coming to the cross. And from Christ risen and glorified the Holy Spirit has come down, and He (Christ) says with authority and power to the conscience-purged sinner, "Go, and sin no more." Living in the presence of God, abiding in Christ and walking in the Spirit, the very righteousness of the law that condemns the sinner is "fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."

THE DESIRE OF GOD

FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS CHILDREN.

BY GEORGE ADAM.

II.

THE more one ponders over this aspect of Divine revelation, the more clearly it is seen to shine out on the pages of Scripture. "This people have I formed for MYSELF" (Isa. xlii. 21); "He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will rest in His love; He will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii. 17).

When we come to the New Testament, we find such expressions as, "I will receive you unto MYSELF" (John xiv. 3); "That he might purify unto HIMSELF" (Titus ii. 14); "That He might present the Church to HIMSELF" (Eph. v. 27); and again, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto HIMSELF" (chap. i. 5). To have fellowship with God is the sweetest, purest joy a human soul can ever know; but it is limited by our little capacity, and much hindered by our carnality and unbelief. But the joy which our God has in the society of His children has no such drawbacks or limitations. The joy which we will experience on finding ourselves in the Father's house will be beyond our present comprehension, but even that will be as nothing to the joy which our God and Father will have in seeing us all there beside Himself. The joy which I shall have in heaven I cannot know till I am there; but the joy it will give to the heart of God to have me there I can never know.

But let us return to where we were at the close of our last paper, and seek briefly to trace out the *visits* which God paid to this earth during the patriarchal age; and then His desire for a "dwelling-place" among the children of men, whom He had redeemed, and brought to HIMSELF" (Exodus xix. 4, 5, 6).

The building of the Tower of Babel (Gen. xi.) would appear to have been a gigantic and united attempt on the part of man to make himself independent of God. Such is man still. Nothing is so repugnant to the natural man as to be dependent on the blessed God. When the human race had again apostatized from God, and sunk into idolatry (see Josh. xxiv. 2, 14, 15), God "called out" a man from the corrupt mass to walk with Himself. To this man, Abraham, He appeared again and

again. In the interviews which God had with the "called out" patriarchs it is very striking to notice how He stooped to "talk" with them in a familiar way, and allowed them to talk with Him. And how often, in His angelic visits to the children of men, He said to them, "FEAR NOT." What pains the blessed God has been at, down through all the ages, to draw out man's confidence in Himself; and what poor returns He has got; and what poor returns He is often getting from our unbelieving hearts, notwithstanding our clearer light.

When the iniquity of the Amorites had been filled up (Gen. xv. 16), and God's "set time" had arrived, He "came down" to deliver His chosen people, the seed of "Abraham, His friend" (Isa. xli. 8). And when He had, with a strong hand, and an outstretched arm, delivered them out of Egypt, and brought them unto Himself, he was no longer satisfied with an *occasional visit* to the children of men. His revelation to His people was, "Let them make me a sanctuary that I may DWELL among them" (Exodus xxv. 8).

When that dwelling-place was "finished," as the "Lord commanded Moses," "Then a CLOUD covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle" (Exodus xl. 34).

Time and space would fail us to trace out how, in His love and pity, He "bore with their manners in the wilderness." How, "in all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them." "He bare them and carried them all the days of old" (Isa. lxiii. 9).

But He did not leave them in the wilderness; according to His purpose and promise He brought them unto His holy habitation. When, after all their wilderness wanderings, they were finally brought into "His rest," He chose a place where He put His name, and when Solomon had built a house for Jehovah He came down in a pillar of cloud, and took up His abode among the children of men (2 Chr. v. 13, 14). When His people whom He loved, and so delighted to dwell among, had made themselves so vile that, in His righteous government, He could not bear with them any longer, with what reluctance and yearning of heart He gave them over to the will of their enemies. "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?

How shall I deliver thee, Judah? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, My repentings are kindled together" (Hosea xi. 8). Again, if we read carefully the earlier part of Ezekiel, especially from chapter viii. to xi., with what evident reluctance the presence of Jehovah left His dwelling-place on earth. How the cloud of glory "stood over the threshold." It "then departed from off the threshold and stood over the cherubims." These "lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth" (Ezek. x. 4, 18). But the LORD had not yet finally gone from the place where He so loved to dwell (Psa. cxxxii. 13, 14). In Ezekiel xi. 16 He promises to be a "LITTLE SANCTUARY" to His people in their *scattered* condition. In verse 18 He looks on to the time when they will be *regathered*, and when He will again come down and dwell among His earthly people. Then in verse 23 we see the glory of the LORD going up from the "midst of the city," and it "stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city." It was probably near the place where the cloud of glory halted, ere it finally disappeared, that the Lord Jesus "beheld the city and wept over it" (Luke xix. 41). And there His blessed feet shall stand again on a coming day, that "one day," which shall be "known to the LORD" when He shall be "King over all the earth" (Zech. xiv. 4, 7, 9).

The whole passage we have referred to in Ezekiel shows how reluctant God was to leave His earthly dwelling-place; and in the writings of the prophets how often, in the midst of the darkest threatenings, the Holy Spirit seems to delight to look on to the time when God will come back in His manifested presence to dwell again on this earth.

Before going on to the New Testament, where we get a still clearer display of God's desire for communion with His children, we will look back at the provision He made for the guarding of the holiness of His own character, in thus condescending to dwell on this polluted earth, and in the midst of an unclean and oft rebellious people. But we reserve this for a future paper.

If thou would'st be mighty, keep low. "To them that have no might He increaseth strength."

HINTS FOR PREACHERS

AND ALL WHO WOULD LABOUR FOR GOD.

(Extracts from the writings of an old Author, arranged by F. F., Napier, N.Z.)

THE WALK.—If you would be eminently useful you must be eminently holy. The servant who would be successful must walk close with God. Get near the Cross; breathe the atmosphere of Calvary. Close walking with God makes labour for Him sweet and pleasant. God is then known and trusted as a faithful Friend. Close walking with God is a preventative of a thousand evils. Pray, preach, and live down prejudice. As you can have no cause to be ashamed of the Gospel, be sure you are never a shame to it. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." The servant of the Lord should be known by his *savour* as well as by his *service*. "We are a sweet savour of Christ." He that is not careful about small spots on his conscience is likely soon to have large spots on his garments. The levity of some preachers in private spoils all they advance in public—the platform and the parlour must agree. Never walk on the edge of Christian liberty—many things are lawful which are not expedient.

HUMILITY.—Be humble, but not cringing. Feed humility, and starve pride. Many have fallen from the spot where you now stand; be not high-minded, but humble. Esteem it a privilege to be employed to carry a crumb to the least of God's saints. Be willing to wipe the feet of the meanest person that hears you if it would conduce to the saving of his soul. We shall never be employed to do great things until we are willing to do little ones. He that is not willing to preach to a few is not qualified to preach to many—he is a proud man.

PRAYERFULNESS.—He that prays most will preach best. Spiritual beggars are powerful preachers. The more prayer to God, and the more faith in God, the better the preacher. Let all your vacant moments be spent in prayer—have no idle time or leisure hours. Remember, gifts will wither unless replenished with grace. Grace is the ornament and energy of gifts. Pray before you begin to study your Bible, pray while you study it. Read much, think often, and pray always. "Pray without ceasing."

STUDY.—Beware of what you read. The mind is no widow's cruse which fills with knowledge as soon as you empty it. Aim to apply every subject to yourself before presenting it to the people. The servant of God should always be a learner—there is much, very much, we do not know. Beware lest, while you furnish and strengthen the head, you starve the heart—this is not an uncommon case. Take heed lest you depend on your books, your abilities, instead of depending on the Lord. It is possible. Aim to be a workman understanding every part of your business. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

HOW TO PREACH.—Preach prayerfully, as before God. Preach to the conscience and the heart. Preach down self, and preach up Christ. Preach *to* all present, but not *at* any. Rather be short than tedious. Let Christ be always "Alpha and Omega." Preach the whole truth to saints or sinners, whether they approve or reject. Preach experimentally—what you have felt, tasted, and handled is most likely to be useful. Be sure you preach God's truth, and let much of it be in His own words. Back everything with Scripture. God's Word carries authority with it. He generally preaches best who preaches all the week, and walks close with God. Prayer, preaching, patience, and perseverance are four P's that should go together in a servant of God. It is much easier to bring our *heads* than our *hearts* to preach. God usually blesses the labours of the man whose heart is set on the conversion of his hearers. Be simple in your preaching. The Lord Jesus was—Paul was—and all successful preachers have been so. Never be ashamed of the Gospel; its plainness, simplicity, and peculiarities are its glories. Always set forth regeneration as the beginning of a course—good works as the result. Preach with fidelity, as one that must give account; keep nothing back, but declare the whole counsel of God. Lay the creature low and keep him low. Preach the truth in love: love to God, the Author; love to Christ, the centre; love to saints; love to sinners; love to truth itself. You are to labour *for* God; that is your duty. You labour *with* God; that is your honour. The more we labour *for* God, and *with* God, the more we shall receive *from* God. "There

is that scattereth and yet increaseth." Do something for God every day. I mean something definite; something that is likely to tell in the future; seeking to realise the value of the soul, the shortness of time, and the nearness of eternity. Satan is always busy, therefore God's servants should never be idle; while men sleep the enemy sows tares. Take heed to the napkin, the Lord is at hand. Whatever you do for God, throw the whole soul into it. Beware of round sentences; they roll off as fast as they roll on. Too much polish is worse than too little. "So preach," said Luther to Melancthon, "that those who do not fall out with their sins, will fall out with you." If you can be satisfied with anything short of bringing glory to God in the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, be not surprised if your ministry is barren. Aim to catch whenever you cast in the net. *Watch* for souls, travail in birth for them. Remember it is better to win a poor man's soul than please a thousand rich men's ears. One soul is worth many trials, therefore be not weary. Be patient. Removals should not be lightly made. Some preachers seem to be bitten with the gadfly. Be independent of man, but dependent on God. Aim to please God in everything. Be neither an hook nor an eye. Hang not upon others, nor have others hang on you. If the Lord use you, expect Satan to abuse you. You are a soldier of Jesus Christ, expect rough usage and hard fare. Who is your master? the world? the saints? or Jehovah? Whom do you serve and seek most to please? God's servants must imitate the eagle—fly and look toward heaven for light and life, for temporals and spirituals; but too many are like the barn-door hen, scratching in the dunghill, both for body and soul, for family and flock. Brethren, "Suffer the word of exhortation." "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

- I.—His *work* is Perfect, - Deut. xxxii. 4.
- II.—His *way* is Perfect, - 2 Sam. xxii. 31.
- III.—His *knowledge* is Perfect, Job xxxvi. 4.
- IV.—His *law* is Perfect, - Psalm xix. 7.
- V.—His *will* is Perfect, - Rom. xii. 2.
- VI.—His *love* is perfect, - 1 John iv. 18.
- VII.—He *Himself* is Perfect, Matt. v. 48.

AUTUMN THOUGHTS.

SUMMER'S sunny days are ended,
Harvest's fruitful season's past;
Though Salvation's day's extended,
Judgment surely comes at last.

Stubble fields look quite forsaken,
Where has waved the golden grain;
So when Christ His saints has taken,
Stubble only shall remain.

Serèd leaves so gently falling,
Lusted with the morning dew,
Whisper of the saints' home-coming,
Smiling as they say "Adieu!"

Summer's joys defy retention,
Fairest flowers bloom and die;
All the beauties of creation
Cannot satisfy the eye.

When the days grow dull and wintry,
Then the swallow quits our clime,
So I seek a better country,
Far above the ills of time.

Christ my satisfying portion,
E'en though earth shall pass away,
Mine, amid the world's commotion,
Mine to everlasting day.

Christ the fount of lasting pleasure—
Seasons change, but He's the same—
He redeemed me, I'm His treasure,
Mine the fulness of His name.

He's my Hope, my Life eternal,
Sharon's fadeless Rose is He;
Soon, 'mid scenes so fresh and vernal,
With Him I shall ever be;

Where the perfume of all flowers,
Blended into fragrance rare,
Shall pervade those heavenly bowers—
Christ shall fill the balmy air;

Where the skies are never shaded,
Where the day is ever bright,
Where the flowers are never faded,
Where shall be no dreary night;

Where the summer's ever glorious,
Where shall bloom the "Tree of Life:"
There with Him I'll reign victorious,
Far removed from mortal strife.

"THE PLACE WHERE THE LORD LAY."

"COME, see the place where the Lord lay."
We may ask why the angel gave this invitation; and the answer, we believe, lies in this: to assure us that God had been, in all particulars, *true to His Word*. The Lord Jesus laid down His life in the assurance that Jehovah "would not suffer His flesh to see *corruption*." Satan would have been only too glad to scent corruption in the tomb wherein He had been laid.

The *fact* of His resurrection was so guarded that 500 brethren saw Him at one time (1 Cor. xv.), out of which twelve were selected as official witnesses to the fact. They saw Him at sundry times during the forty days betwixt His resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of God (Acts i.).

Thus was He raised from the dead "that our faith and hope might be in God;" and in order still further to win our trust, God took means to secure that proof would be forthcoming as to His flesh not seeing corruption. "And they made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death." That is, man would have buried Him in a felon's tomb, the tomb dug for Barrabas; but God remembered what His Son trusted Him for; and, through Joseph of Armathea, provided a tomb wherein *no man had lain*. Had it not been *new*, corruption's smell would have lingered there. But, being new, the angels sat *in its sweet atmosphere*, and invited the women to "Come and see" that God had been as good as His Word—His Holy One having seen no corruption. So that, while His grave, in the natural course of human law, was with the wicked, corruption could not taint the Holy One, who lay FREE among the dead, in Joseph's new tomb.

Notice Isaiah liii. 9 (R.V.), "with the rich in His *deaths*." Why not in His *death*? Because He died for you, my brother; for you, my sister; for *all* the ransomed.

The passover feast was eaten with bitter herbs; and all the bitterness of *each* believer's sin was pressed into the bitter cup which our Lord Jesus prayed, if it were possible, might pass from Him. Thus His *deaths* make each bitter cup into a cup of blessing. Paul

could say He "loved me, and gave Himself for me," and each believer can say with Paul, "I was crucified with Christ."

Wondrous deaths! "All my bones (members) are out of joint." You and I were before His eye. He saw you lost and ruined when *your* sins were laid on Him, and when the full penalty was exacted, His love to you nailed Him to Calvary's tree.

" 'Twas love that nailed Thee to the tree,
Or iron ne'er had bound Thee." T. C.

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THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

By JAMES WRIGHT, Orphan Homes, Bristol.

WHEN we use the expression, the authority of the Holy Scriptures, we do not refer to any claim set up on behalf of these writings by any man individually, or any body of individuals, calling themselves a Church, Synod, Assembly, or Council. When we speak of the authority of the Holy Scriptures we refer to the claim which Scripture itself asserts. When we speak of the Scriptures we mean what are commonly known as the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, and we maintain that these assert a claim to absolute authority; a claim not simply to *influence* men's minds, but absolutely to control and rule the thoughts and actions of men in relation to God. I mention two Psalms which will confirm my statement, Psalms xix. and cxix. Read these Psalms carefully, and you will be convinced that the Scriptures claim to exercise absolute control over the thoughts and ways of every one of Adam's race. The very titles by which these Scriptures are known, in these two Psalms, prove it: "statutes," "law," "commandments." Now, just consider the difference between a statute, or law, by which righteousness is *enforced*, and an essay, in which truth is simply recommended. Early in the nineteenth century John Forster wrote an essay on popular ignorance, showing the duty of the State to educate the children. What was that essay? Simply a recommendation. It had no authority to *command obedience*. But in process of time the matter was ventilated and, about thirty years ago, William Forster moved in the House of Commons that

the education of children should become the *law* of the land, and in due time it was passed, and became *law*. The law commanding that children should be educated was a very different thing from an essay advising it.

Now, Scripture claims to be a *law* that comes straight from the almighty and eternal God. Its name implies this. Further, we assert that Scripture claims to have absolute authority over the *thoughts* of men, and the truly gracious soul owns that claim from the very bottom of his heart, and prays the prayer of the Apostle, that every thought may be "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Further, we say that the Holy Scriptures assert that this claim is *permanent* and *imperishable*. That is, they claim this absolute authority to-day as much as when they were first written. And this for two reasons; first, because to the Divine Author of these writings the whole future of time was present when He inspired holy men to write them. Unlike human law-givers (such, for instance, as Alfred the Great), who can only legislate for their own age, and whose laws, therefore, become more or less antiquated and obsolete as time goes on, the *Divine* law-giver legislates for *all ages*, as it is written (1 Peter i. 25); "The word of the *Lord* endureth *for ever*."

But another reason, and in this they are different from all other so-called "sacred" writings, the Scriptures are the vehicle and instrument of the living God—the Holy Ghost. The so-called sacred books of China, the writings of Confucius, the Vedas of India, what are they? They are simply the mental legacies of men who, by virtue of superior intellect or will, were raised above the mental level of their age. They are simply the recorded thoughts and imaginations of human creatures that have "returned to their dust," and whose "thoughts in that very day perished." Not their ideas; they, alas! live on in their writings, to mislead and destroy souls; but their "thoughts" (in the sense of their own purpose and power to disseminate their thoughts) perished. Whereas the Holy Scriptures are "God-breathed"; they are the product of the energy of the Spirit of God, who still, to-day and evermore, *liveth*, and is the *present-day* interpreter and quickener of

(i.e., imparter of LIFE to) His own written words. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Who said that? The "I Am." He says they "are spirit and life," thus impregnating that Word with the same eternity that is implied in His own name. And they *are* that to-day as much as in the day when the Lord Jesus spoke these words. Why? Because He who spoke these words *lives on*, and it is He who makes them "spirit and life" to the souls that receive them.

Further, the Scriptures maintain that their authority is *final*; there is no court of appeal above them. I only quote one Scripture to show that claim. (Isaiah viii. 20), "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this Word it is because there is no light in them." Now, could any word more fully and accurately express the truth that Scripture is the final appeal in all matters God-ward.

Lastly, this claim is *universal*; it embraces every individual of the human race. I only quote two Psalms to prove that. (Psa. xlix. 1), "Hear this, all ye people; give ear all ye inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together;" that is the preface with which the holy God opens communion with man. Again (Psa. l. 1), "The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof." God commands, as his audience, every intelligent being on earth. So the claim of this authority is co-extensive with the whole human race.

But some one will say: "It is one thing to *make* a claim to authority, and another to *enforce* it." Does Scripture *enforce* its authority? We answer that every *claim* to exercise *authority* pre-supposes two different ways in which that claim may be treated; for it may either be acknowledged and submitted to, or it may be ignored and resisted. And the Scriptures themselves continually imply this two-fold treatment of their claims. Thus, Ezekiel was four times commanded to utter his warning (chap. iii.), "Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." In effect, God the Holy Ghost says: "I claim authority over them in this matter, whether they will hear or forbear." In sending out His apostles the Lord Jesus recognised the contrasted ways in which their message would be met, and set

forth the solemn responsibility that would be incurred by those who rejected it. He also said to some who listened to His teaching, "Ye, therefore, hear *not* My words because ye are not of God." And the Apostle John, echoing his Master's words, says: "He that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us" (1 John iv. 6). Think of a *man* saying that! Yes, but he did not say it as a man, but as an apostle of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; as the depository of God's truth; as a writer inspired by the Holy Spirit.

So, beloved, whether the claim of the Holy Scriptures to absolute authority over the thoughts and actions of men be submitted to or rejected, the claim remains, and Scripture enforces it in either case. In the case of those who submit, what is the blessed result? They are made "wise unto salvation," and the happy souls that prove the authority of God's Word on this side exclaim, with one consent: "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth." On the other hand, if the authority of these Scriptures is rejected, will not the claim be made good? Ah, it will, surely! Doesn't the Lord Jesus say: "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath One that judgeth him"? (Notice, how He wraps up Himself and His Word together, implying that as men treat His Word they treat Him. Just as men treat that Word to-day, the living God regards them as treating Him.) "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." If I am speaking to one here who is playing fast and loose with God's Word, setting it at nought practically, let me plead with you. Let me entreat you to ponder the solemn warning contained in these words of Christ. They plainly show that, if you leave this world ignoring and despising the authority of the Holy Scriptures, you will not have done with them. "Be sure your sin will find you out," and these very Scriptures will "*judge* you at the *last day*." Let me plead earnestly with those who have not peace with God, who do not know they are sinners. Oh, see to it, that *now*, in this present life, you own the claim that we have been setting forth—the claim of the precious, written Word of God to dominate your actions and thoughts. Own that you are, as these Scriptures bear witness, lost, ruined sinners, dead in trespasses and

sins. You cannot move your little finger to alter your relationship to God, and hence it must be of His own free will and good pleasure that you must be saved. But, beholding the provision He has made in the riches of His grace to meet your need, and then resting on Christ, you will have the Holy Spirit witnessing in your soul to that blessed truth, that "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

But let me solemnly warn you that, if you "judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life," in the last day this Word, which you so foolishly criticised and rejected, will judge you. Oh, may God give you grace to judge yourself, and cast yourself on Christ for salvation."

GOD'S CARE OF EARTHLY MATTERS.

(Lev. xxv.)

IN the fourteenth to the sixteenth verse of this chapter, we learn that in all the dealings and trafficking of an Israelite he was to have respect to the year of jubilee, when the hand of God would restore in righteousness what the hand of man had disordered in His people's portion. The only way to conduct this traffic righteously was to have respect to the year of jubilee, measuring the bargain and the value of things according to that. In principle this holds now, for all our commerce in the affairs of this world should be ordered with our eyes resting on the return of the Lord Jesus, and our hearts acquainting themselves with this, that man's world is soon to end, and all present interests to cease.

In Israel, God watched over the worldly dealings of His people in such a way as to provide for the restoration of everything every fifty years. He then resettled the family estates, and put all in order again. In the Church, also, He watches the worldly dealings of His saints; but it is not in order to restore earthly arrangements again, but with respect to the maintaining of spiritual communion with Himself. In all their callings He tells His saints now, "therein to abide with God." This is the rule, this is the only limitation now. The soul, amid all around that is discordant and disordered, is to be preserved for heavenly citizenship, and exercised in relation to a heavenly life, where the flesh and man's world will be gone, and gone for ever.

THE SANCTUARY AND THE SEA.

(Psalm lxxvii. 13, 19.)

THE way of God is in the sea,
His path in waters great: I own
The trackless deep it is to me—
His footsteps there are all unknown.

The way His people oft are led
Is one where there is nought for sight;
But Faith can rest till He doth shed
On what is dark His own clear light.

Trace in the *sanctuary* His way;
There, when outside no path is seen,
Light, brighter than from orb of day,
Beams forth on what all dark had been.

The light of Nature's far too dim
To show God's way upon the deep;
"Inside the veil" I'd dwell with Him—
There He "in perfect peace" doth keep.

For whatsoe'er His way may be,
Where it is all my ken above,
It must be right, upon the sea,
Since in the *sanctuary* 'tis *love*.

Let this assurance calm each fear:
E'en be His way in "whirlwind," "storm,"
Above the roar His voice I hear,
Upon the sea behold His form.

Implicitly I'd trust my Guide,
And let Him lead me where He will;
Soon stormy seas He'll bid subside,
With one eternal "Peace, be still!"

And then, thro' everlasting day,
"The Sanctuary" my place shall be,
There to behold "*His perfect way*"—
All darkness past, and "*no more sea*!"

D. R.

Correspondence.

DEATH UNTO SIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

SIR,—Some of the replies which appeared in *The Witness* for July to a question about 1 Peter iv. 1, in which that verse is connected with Romans vi., suggest a few remarks upon the latter passage.

"Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sin" is evidently (says answer A), "Account yourselves to have died, in the person of your Substitute,

unto the penalty of Sin, verse 10 showing Christ as dying on account of our Sin, not unto it, as if in Himself." Now, the 10th verse shows nothing of the sort. The English translation is quite correct. He died *unto* Sin, not here "for," or "on account of" Sin. The Greek will not bear the meaning which A prefers. Neither will the Apostle's argument. For in this chapter the subject is not deliverance from the penalty of Sin. That is the theme of chapters iii. to v. Here it is deliverance from the power of Sin. In order to make the subject clear the Apostle compares Sin to a slave-master—"That we should not serve Sin" (*douleuēin*), serve as bondsmen. "Let not Sin therefore reign" (v. 12); "Neither yield ye your members . . . unto Sin; for Sin shall not have dominion over you" (v. 14); "His slaves ye are to whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto death," &c.; "Ye were the slaves of Sin" (v. 20); "The wages of Sin is death." I have written the word "sin" with a capital initial to show the idea. Sin is personified as a great king of men, possessing slaves, requiring obedience, holding in bondage, and at last paying the wages due.

Now, Christ died unto God to save us from the penalty of His broken law. But His death had another character—He died unto Sin to save us from life-long bondage. That is, He recognised the powers acquired in Adam's fall by King Sin, over all the human race, and died unto Sin to set us free from slavery. If Christ had ever, in the smallest degree, in thought, word, or action yielded to the claims of Sin, so terribly pressed upon Him in the wilderness temptation, He could not have saved one of His captives, for He would have become captive Himself. But though truly man, "made of a woman," He was sinless in nature and character, and could therefore lawfully stand forth as our champion and render up His life—not forfeited like ours, but free—to set us free. And this He has done, not by merely dying for us as in atonement, but by associating us with Himself in His death to Sin, so that we can truly say that we have died (beforehand) with Him unto Sin, and can now reckon ourselves corpses (*nekrous*) whenever Sin, our former master, claims our service.

But why is our death needful for deliverance? Because our Adam-life is forfeited, our Adam-nature has been lawfully enslaved. There is no legitimate method of terminating Sin's claims except by death. If I give a man a lease of my house for the term of my life he cannot lawfully be dispossessed but at my death. Unfortunately that is our position as sons of Adam. The house of Mansoul has been leased to Sin for the life of the owner. If some method of anticipating the death of my body be not discovered I shall be

bound, though a saved and justified child or God, to continue in Sin's employment all my life—a most terrible and grievous condition, graphically described in the next chapter (Romans vii.). But thanks be to God, the death that justified me before God set me free from bondage too, for in it I died. It is not experience; it is history.

Answer B says: "Ought we not . . . die to Sin?" It is a confusion of thought. We *have* died to Sin with Christ on Calvary, and we are free from Sin's sovereignty for ever. So that no Christian who knows his Rom. vi. will ever again bemoan himself as the inheritor of a nature in bondage to Sin. He *was* so, but has died, and so recovered liberty. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of Sin and death." Christ's resurrection is, in fact, mine. And the life that I now live in Him has no relation to Sin such as my former Adamic-life stood in. The resurrection life has never been subjected to Sin by any fall, as the natural life was. It is free to be yielded wholly to God. If we like to serve Sin again we can do so. But not of obligation. There is always "opportunity to return" for those who have clean escaped from Egypt. But let no man think that he must do so, that his evil nature compels him, that Sin has any rights over him. The death of Christ to Sin, and mine with Him, has ended these for ever.

And so both A and C seem to make a mistake in teaching that we have "died unto the penalty of Sin," and undergone the entire penalty of Sin. We have received our wages from Sin, no doubt, for we have died with Christ, and our service is ended, Sin "having paid all wages due." But the penalty of Sin imposed by the righteous judgment of God we neither have undergone nor shall have to undergo. As to this our blessed Substitute stood absolutely alone, and of the people there was none with Him.

Indeed, it could not be otherwise. For in this our death would end nothing, for there is no value in our life. It was the infinite preciousness of the life of our Substitute that gave to His death its ransoming value. But what worth has our defiled, polluted life for atonement. Let men talk of the criminal atoning for his crimes by death at the hands of the hangman, we know that he cannot.

So, as to *penalty*, Christ died for me Himself, alone. As to power of Sin, and bondage to Sin, Christ died unto Sin, and united me with Him in that death.

Thus it will be seen that B need not fear to take Romans vi. 10 as it stands, without alteration. When Christ died unto Sin it was not "as if in Himself"—it was *unto Sin* as an all-subduing, all-

ruling sovereign Power in and over the human race. To that He died, and to that we have died with Him, and are for ever free.

This knowledge will not of itself sanctify any one, but it is the groundwork, the bed-rock, on which all holiness rests. Without it Romans vii. 15-21 will be our experience. With it, what conscience and God's Word suggest, the Holy Ghost will enable us and love to the dear name of our Redeemer will inspire us to perform.

GEORGE F. TRENCH.

THE LORD'S WORK IN NORWAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

SIR,—About twenty-four years ago the late Mr. A. H. Darling was moved to take up his residence in Norway, in order to preach the Gospel and teach believers. The Lord greatly owned his ministry; many were saved and meetings were formed in various places. This went on for several years, during which time our brother travelled very much, visiting towns as far north as Hammerfest, near the North Cape. Ultimately, his eyesight suffered, and he was obliged to return to England. Our brother William Sloan was stirred up to take part in the work, and he visited Norway when Mr. Darling lived there, and now has again visited Norway for the fifth time, preaching and teaching the Word of the Lord in many of the towns. I joined him on one of these visits, at Christiania, seven years ago, and shared with him in his labour of love. Since then I have been with him a *second*, and this year a *third* time on a missionary journey. The Lord be praised for all His mercy to us in this service, and for the wide-open doors set before us in ministering to the Lord's people, as well as to the unsaved! Our brother Alex. Marshall also made a visit in the month of April (see July *Witness*), and did very good service both in Norway and Copenhagen, and we may not omit reference to the visit of our brother Maynard in the end of 1894, and to the many visits of Brother G. Stedman, who makes long journeys and visits many towns where Christians assemble in Norway and Denmark.

Does this not show that God has a work to do among the dear Norwegian people, who are a noble race, and have loving hearts? And I write this in my own name as well as in Mr. Sloan's to stir up a spirit of prayer and intercession for Scandinavia.

The work of the Lord there is passing through a crisis. There are many natives good Gospel preachers, and God has blessed them greatly, so that all over Norway there are many Christians outside of the Lutheran State Church, many of them baptised believers, who are ready to wel-

come those from this country who are fitted by God to expound the Word, and to instruct and ground believers in the doctrines of Scripture.

This is all the more urgent, as sectaries from America are being employed to disseminate their pernicious, soul-destroying heresies. Bro. Sloan and myself, along with my daughter, have just finished a month's visit, and our hearts are filled with gratitude for the openings we had, and for grace and help to minister the Word of God in eight or nine towns and places in the south of Norway, chiefly around the Christiania fjord. Bro. Sloan went on to Denmark, hoping to spend a time there, and to return again to Norway, but he has been suddenly recalled by telegram on account of the illness of one of his children, and has now gone back to Lerwick, where his wife and family reside. Prayer is desired that God may water the precious seed of the Word, so abundantly scattered, and cause it to spring up and produce much fruit; also, that some may be raised up of God, either from among themselves, or outside, who will be able to devote themselves to the ministry of the Word and to leading on of Christians to a firm grip of Scripture, not only as to life and walk, but as to ministry and worship. We shall not soon (if ever) forget the love and affection of the dear people.—Yours in Gospel service,

THOS. M'LAREN, Sen.

P.S.—I have not space to refer to the labours of the late Reginald Radcliffe in Scandinavia, and to the visits of Mr. Hudson Taylor and others, but these are well known, and have been greatly blessed.

TO THE EDITOR OF *The Witness*.

Commercial Road, Lerwick,
Shetland, Sept. 9, 1896.

SIR,—As our brother Thomas M'Laren has written to you with regard to our recent visit to Norway, I just add a few lines further. Our visit, I believe, has been very seasonable, and I trust the word spoken in the various places visited has been helpful in confirming believers in the Word, and we hope that the gospel preached has not been in vain. I stayed in Christiania a few days after brother M'Laren and daughter had left, and then went on to Denmark, where I was made very welcome by the little assembly meetings in Axelhus, where I had the opportunity of ministering the Word. I had arranged to be with them a short time and then to go to the island of Langeland for some gospel meetings, having been kindly invited there by a brother who is an assistant lighthouse-keeper; but a telegram which I got on the Thursday from my wife saying that the doctor had asked her to send for me has hindered me from

doing as I had purposed. I am thankful for the opportunity I have had of sowing the good seed in various ways during the two months I have been from home. On the steamer going to Grangemouth I met with several of the Lord's people. A good many tracts have also been scattered, and I am glad that a brother in Scotland has kindly provided the means for two booklets being printed in Norwegian which I believe will prove helpful to believers who are much exposed to be led away by the Campellite views of baptism and the non-eternity of punishment.

I am glad to say that my wife is now getting better, being able to be out of bed and move about the house. I am also glad to say that my visit to Norway has helped me bodily, so that I have returned much better than when I left.

With reference to the need of helping on the Lord's work in Norway, I quite concur with what our brother McLaren says: "Occasional visits are very helpful as far as they go, but if one or more brethren were led to devote their whole time to work for the Lord there it would be much better."—Yours truly in the Lord's service,
WILLIAM SLOAN.

Questions and Answers.

We shall greatly value remembrance in prayer that special wisdom and grace may be given for this service.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

We are most thankful to all our friends who have endeavoured to help us by replying to Questions, but the Editor hopes that Correspondents will study brevity, and when too long he will take the liberty of "using the scissors" freely in preference to rejecting answers, on account of their length, in which there may be points of value.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

Please explain the difference between spirit, soul, and body.

Explain Matthew xxvi. 45, 46.

John xii. 25. What is the meaning of "loving," "hating," "losing," "keeping" the life?

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv. Or did He only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

THE ROOT OF LAWLESSNESS.—In Judges xvii. 6; xxi. 25 we read: "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This lawless state

is frequently quoted as arising from Israel being in a wrong position, in having no kingly authority. Please compare with 1 Samuel viii. 6, 7, and explain.

FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

QUESTION 528.—Explain Matthew x. 22, xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13. Does our final and eternal salvation depend on our enduring to the end?

Answer A.—These exhortations to endurance are accompanied by promises of certain deliverance. Endurance to the end is proof of eternal salvation received and possessed. Hebrews x. 39 speaks of those who *cannot* draw back into perdition, seeing they have been born of God, but who have believed unto the salvation—eternally—of their souls. The passages alluded to entertain the thought chiefly of God delivering the Jews, who trusted Him, from the awful tribulation there spoken of.
A. O. M.

Answer B.—Setting aside all differences, surely all can agree to find a *practical* and *personal* explanation. Do we not all have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, "we may receive the promise." God has never promised eternal life but to those who persevere in the life of holiness (Heb. x. 38, 39). It is only as we hold fast faith and a good conscience, that we evidence due attachment to Christ, and manifest that we have received and are working out our own salvation in humble dependence on God.
J. H. H.

Editor's Note.—In Matt. xxiv. 22, we read concerning "the great tribulation," that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

The being saved, here spoken of, is clearly being preserved in the flesh for entrance into the kingdom. Eternal salvation is not affected by death to the flesh, but preservation of an elect company to form the nucleus of the millennial kingdom on earth will be an essential feature of that period.

Those who under pressure of Antichrist's persecution, or beguiled by his delusions, draw back, thereby demonstrate that they are not the elect of God, that they were not born again, that they never believed to the saving of their souls.

No man is saved because he "endures to the end," but every true child of God endures to the end because he is saved.

It is not so much the "final perseverance of the saints," as the final perseverance of the Saviour! Peter's faith would have failed utterly, but the Advocate had prayed for him that it might not, and so, though Peter denied his Lord, his faith survived the awful ordeal.

Endurance to the end does not necessarily imply an unwavering testimony, or an unclouded experience, or a faultless life, but it does imply the impossibility of one, who has obtained the precious faith of God's elect, ever apostatizing therefrom, and yielding homage to Antichrist.

"THE LAMB'S WIFE."

QUESTION 529.—Is not the Church, Ephesians ii. 20-22, or "Holy Temple," composed of the same persons as "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," Rev. xxi. 9-27?

Ans. A.—We have to distinguish between literal facts and figures of speech. "The Church" is a fact, the assembly of God's people, general or particular, gathered out of the world. "The Bride" or "The Temple" are figures to set forth our various blessings and responsibilities. That of the marriage relationship as instituted in Eden is used to teach us the love of God to His people, and what theirs should be to Him. That is applicable not only to the Church in the New Testament sense, but to all ages, to Israel (Isa. liv.; Jer. ii., iii.; Hosea ii.), and to the individual soul, as in Canticles. So of the Church, Eph. v., and notably in Rev. xix., the final home-coming is likened to the joy of a marriage-day. Lest we should confound these, it is important to observe that whereas the aspect of Eph. v., and in the Old Testament generally, is that of the wife as already married, in Rev. it is the marriage as only then "come," "the marriage of the Lamb." The Bride is "the Lamb's wife." We never read it as "the Bride of Christ," and we wrongly think of it if we lose sight of its figurative character. The Temple presents another aspect of God's people as they should be, a fit dwelling for Him, so constituted in the New Testament by being "builded together," Jew and Gentile, to be indwelt by the same Holy Spirit. It is to teach us the unity of God's people with each other, and the obligation thus laid on us to maintain that unity by forbearance in love. The latter figure, in its strict sense, applies only to this dispensation. The other is true of all times, not only of the Church now, but of all God's people in every age. w. c.

Answer B.—The Church and the Bride, the Lamb's wife, are identical, for those who compose the Church now, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit, of which the tabernacle in the wilderness is the type. But Christ is not only the chief corner-stone of the Church, but the head-stone of the corner, not only uniting Jews and Gentiles in one Church on earth, but uniting all the redeemed in heavenly glory into one holy

temple, of which the temple of Solomon is the type. In Christ the whole, or every building, is growing into a holy temple. We must keep distinct in our minds the tabernacle in the wilderness, which represents the Church now, the sanctuary in which God dwells, and the temple of Solomon, which was erected in the land when all was prosperity and peace, which represents not only the Church but the redeemed of every dispensation. Those who now compose the Church or Tabernacle of God in the wilderness in humiliation will constitute the Holy City of Rev. xxi., which is a symbol not of the habitation of the Bride, but of the Bride herself. As a city is a collection of houses with their inhabitants, so when the saints of this present dispensation will have exchanged their earthly tabernacle for their house which is from heaven, the resurrection body, they will together form the Holy City, New Jerusalem, the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

T. NEWBERRY.

JUDGED ACCORDING TO "DEEDS."

QUESTION 530.—Please explain Romans ii. 6: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds."

Answer A.—This agrees to the broad principle on which the righteous Judge must ever act, and is explained by the verses following. The apostle then shows man's inability, of himself, to justify himself before God, and then unfolds the glorious plan of salvation (and consequent holiness) through simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—God is Lawgiver and Judge of all because He is Creator and Life-giver. He has a right to legislate for those He has brought into being. The truth that God will judge all is plainly declared in the Old Testament as well as in the New (see Ecc. xii. 14). The assertion that "we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ is based upon Isaiah xlv. 23 by the apostle (see Rom. xiv. 10-12), and Paul, in anticipating the issue of that judgment, speaks of the Lord as "the righteous Judge."

To the unbeliever, judgment means "everlasting punishment." To the believer, it means reward, or else the suffering of loss (see 1 Cor. iii. 14-15). But in either case it will be "according to his deeds," and inflexible righteousness (see 2 Cor. v. 10 and Rev. xxii. 12). Those who have suffered the death-penalty in Christ, their Substitute, cannot be brought into judgment for their sins; but their service to the Lord will be judged in the light, and recompense meted out according to faithfulness. Those not approved as servants will suffer loss of reward that might have been theirs, but this does not touch the question of their eternal salvation.

OUR "IDENTIFICATION" WITH EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS.

By JOHN R. CALDWELL, Author of "Things to Come."

IT has been observed that at one time, say fifty years ago, good Christians were good Churchmen. They were zealous for their denomination—it was our "Zion;" the "cause" in their neighbourhood was loyally upheld, and "the minister" was regarded as representative of all that was excellent. Apart from him, no project was mooted, no service engaged in, no work for God initiated. Of late years a great change has taken place. The former condition no longer obtains. Evangelistic life and effort could no longer be cramped within the limits of sectarianism—it broke bounds. If the "powers that be," clergy, elders, &c., went in with it so much the better for them; if not, the work went on without them. The gospel was preached by those who were unordained or unauthorised by man, but from glowing hearts and burning lips. Conversions followed, and the "life" of the Churches gravitated to these evangelistic efforts, attracted by the warmth, the liberty, the evident blessing that rested upon such efforts, notwithstanding their being suspected, looked askance upon, and in some cases denounced by the unsympathetic authorities. The movements resulted in the formation of missions, evangelistic associations, &c., which were intended to be, and to a certain extent were, on unsectarian lines. In all such work the "lay" element predominated, "the ministers" in most cases standing aloof, or at most giving the instigators a patronising clap on the back. More and more such movements have become dissociated from the regular denominational systems, and the living Christian workers who with heart and soul go in for the gospel—working where they can, in kitchens, halls, tents, or open air—become less and less attached to sects and clergy, and more and more free to examine the Word of God and act upon its instructions.

In many cases, the traditional fetters being broken, it was not long till the truth of believers' baptism dawned upon their souls. One and another followed in obedience to the Word and were baptized. Next, the privilege of believers as such to meet together for the observance of the Lord's Supper began to be seen.

Without formally disconnecting themselves from their denominations, they met to "break bread" once a month, and found it so blessed and edifying that the once-a-month device soon resolved itself into the scriptural weekly feast on the Lord's day.

In certain cases the process has varied from the order given above, and a gifted man, with thousands of a congregation, seceding from the denomination with which he was connected, starts gospel work in a large hall, declaring the whole truth of God as far as he has learned it, and together with those who are willing to go on following the light, being baptized, and "breaking bread" as believers on the first day of the week in a separate hall.

Doubtless more or less of ignorance characterises all these movements. Knowledge as to the constructive truth of the Church, always a difficult subject, there may be very little. Excrescences there may be in some quarters, such as the free use of instrumental music, against which some consciences revolt, albeit with hopeless inconsistency they can avail themselves of it in their home sphere; collections may be taken without the unsaved being duly warned that they have no part nor lot in the matter—these and many other things time may modify and further light may mould into shape—but the whole movement is in the direction of the light, and they are blind indeed who do not trace in it the operation of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, the forth-putting of divine energy seeking for the liberty of scriptural ways and bursting the bonds of formalism and sectarianism.

On the other hand, there are gatherings of believers in all parts now who have grown up within the last thirty years or so, mainly out of gospel effort, outside all denominations, maintaining more or less of scriptural order, liberty, and discipline, and varying not a little in their views as to how far it is right to fraternize or co-operate with Christians belonging to the various denominations.

Some hold that anything short of absolute separation is to compromise the truth; that to be present at or take part in a meeting held under the auspices of an association is to practically endorse all that is done, and to sanction all the methods adopted. To appear as the Lord's servant on such a platform is to become

responsible for anything that goes on which may not be in accordance with apostolic simplicity.

Those who hold this view are right to maintain the separate path in accordance with their own convictions. But whenever they set themselves to judge those who do not see with them in this, they are interfering with that which is the prerogative of the Lord alone.

The servant of the Lord must not be the servant of men. If, explicitly or tacitly, he come under obligation to keep back any truth of God, he is subjecting himself to a yoke that is not the Lord's.

It may not be the Lord's will that he should speak on baptism, or fellowship, or ministry, or any disputed doctrine: he may minister many times and never be led to touch on such themes, but to be bound to keep them back would be to practically surrender his allegiance to Christ.

But wherever one is free to go with an open Bible, as the Lord's servant unfettered, there he is at liberty to go without being judged by his brother. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand" (Rom. xiv. 4).

It has been found again and again that such missions, associations, &c., as we have referred to were absolutely free to receive whatever truth God gave them from His Word. Gladly and thankfully they have heard, received, and obeyed. Yet the servant of God who, at the risk of his reputation, went to help them, has been judged and condemned for compromising the truth! Better in such a case to be the condemned than the judge.

The question is therefore raised, At what point are those to be met who are feeling their way after truth and liberty? Is it the duty of those who have more light, and are able to edify, to hold aloof until every link with sectarianism is broken and scriptural order attained? Are multitudes of hungry souls desiring bread to be left without the food that we have to give them because they do not yet see their way to the separate place that is occupied by others, or have not faith to step out? If in the providence of God the way is opened for the Word to be ministered, is the

servant of the Lord to stand outside and refuse his ministry until points of arrangement, &c., are adjusted to the measure of his light?

Whilst writing thus we would not be unmindful that this is essentially an age of self-will, and that commonly with the operations of the Spirit of God to which we have referred, there is a tendency on the part of some to strike out in independent ways, setting at defiance the claims of fellowship, and surrendering truth formerly held sacred.

It would require very special wisdom and grace to be truly a helper of such, lest it should prove that the intended help only resulted in the strengthening of evil that ought to have been uprooted.

In our judgment these are matters for the Lord's servant to settle between himself and his Lord. One may be free, and indeed called, to go where another would feel compromised. It is not to be expected that one mind on such points of detail as to service will be readily attained. Paul and Apollos differed as to the desirability of the latter's visit to Corinth at that time. Apollos acts on his own judgment; Paul does not judge him or reflect upon him.

Let the motive be tested now in the presence of God, and by His Word as it will be at the judgment-seat of Christ, and the fear of man that bringeth a snare will cease to enthrall. It is sometimes well that the Lord's servants are judged, or rather misjudged and spoken evil of. We are all so prone to be influenced by the thoughts of those with whom we are most closely associated that it is well if we are compelled to learn the divine art of walking before God and seeking to be well-pleasing to the Lord. Happy is he who can truly say, "I've now but One to please."

FOUR ELEMENTS IN TRUE SERVICE.

- I.—*Humility*.—"Serving the Lord with all Humility," Acts xx. 19.
- II.—*Fear*.—"Serve the Lord with Fear," - - - Ps. ii. 11.
- III.—*Gladness*.—"Serve the Lord with Gladness," - - - Ps. c. 2.
- IV.—*Fervour*.—"Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," - - - Rom. xii. 11.
"His servants shall serve Him." T. B.

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS—XVII.*

THE PARABLE OF THE DAYS OF NOAH.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of "*Englishman's Bible*."

MATTHEW XXIV. 37-42.

THIS parable has a two-fold application.

The word of exhortation given by the Holy Ghost, through Paul, to Timothy (2 Tim. ii. 15) runs thus: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." True preparation for the ministry of the Word begins with first ascertaining the mind of God in the portion of Scripture under consideration in the presence of God, and in communion with Himself, and in so presenting it as to meet His approval. In order to this, a right division of the Word of truth is necessary; that is, so keeping distinct truths separate and in their proper places as to prevent confusion of thought and erroneous interpretation.

There are many beautiful examples of this, as in Luke iv. 18-20, when the Lord closed the book at the precise point. The parable before us presents another instance of the importance and beauty of this right division. The remembrance of the distinction which we have already noticed between the coming of our Lord to receive His Church and the coming of the Son of Man to execute judgment on the world, as indicated by the Scriptural use of the two distinct expressions, "Coming of the Lord," "the coming of the Son of Man," will enable us to make the right division here, otherwise we shall get into confusion.

Verses 37, 38. "But as the days of Noe [Noah] were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe [Noah] entered into the ark."

Our Lord here divides the days before the flood into two periods. First, "Until the day that Noah entered into the ark," when Noah and his family were shut in. Secondly, "Until the flood came, and took them all away."

The first period closes with an act of loving-kindness—receiving the eight souls and securing them from judgment to come, like the wheat gathered into the garner (Matt. xiii. 30), and the good fish gathered into vessels (Matt. xiii. 48). We find from Genesis vii. 4, 10,

*These Parables will (p.v.) be continued to No. 24 next year.

that Noah and his family entered into the ark seven days before the flood came. Doubtless this is significant—this week of days being symbolic of the week of years intervening between the coming of the Lord to receive His saints and the manifestation of the Son of Man in judgment.

Up to the time that Noah entered into the ark everything in the world went on as usual: there were no signs of any approaching change; so when the Son of God comes there will be nothing especial to indicate His near approach; the course of this world will go on as usual, and the saints will be pursuing their daily avocations.

Verse 39. "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

Mankind, generally, will not recognise that the fact of the sudden removal of all the Church from the earth is the prelude and warning of approaching judgment, for "The day of Jehovah so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, 'Peace and safety,' then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. v. 2, 3).

When Noah and his family entered into the ark, by the command of God, and were shut in by Him, the righteous were taken and the ungodly left. But when the flood came, the judgment came upon the entire world of the ungodly, and the righteous were safe. Even so, at the end of the age, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, but the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matt. xiii. 40-43). For then: "The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire" (Matt. xiii. 49).

Verses 40, 41. "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken [received], and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

In these verses the Lord Jesus again refers to the time of His coming to receive His Church. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, both male and female, will be going on in their ordinary manner of life, until, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Verse 42. "Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

How important and valuable, then, is this exhortation, given by the Lord to the waiting saints in the present dispensation. And how cheering the word of promise: "Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii. 10, 11).

But His word to the faithful and persecuted ones, in the time of the Great Tribulation, will be: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is He that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Rev. xvi. 15).

THE POWER OF FAITH.

MR. GEORGE MÜLLER'S ANNUAL REPORT.*

MR. GEORGE MÜLLER'S fifty-seventh annual "Narrative of Facts" is exceedingly interesting and instructive. Mr. Müller, as is his custom, begins the "Report" by recounting some of the Lord's blessings bestowed upon him and his "beloved fellow-labourer" Mr. Wright, the workers, and the large family of orphans under their charge. Christians will be glad to know that this remarkable servant of God, now nearly ninety-two years old, has enjoyed "very good health" during the past year, and has been able to work "day by day, and all the day, and that with ease, as seventy years since." The needed supplies for his large family of orphans were forthcoming, the trials being smaller than they had oftentimes been in previous years.

NUMBER OF ORPHANS.

At the beginning of last financial year there were 1727 orphans in the five orphan houses of Ashley Down. "During the year, 206 additional ones were added, so that on May 26th, 1896, we should have had 1933 orphans had there been no changes; *but of these 1933 we were under the painful necessity of expelling three girls with whom we had long borne, but whom at last, in mercy to the other orphans, we were obliged to send in disgrace to their relatives. Of the 1933, twenty-one died—only twenty-one! eleven of whom had been a long time believers, and five were very young*

infants. One of the orphans was, as a long-converted pupil-teacher, sent to one of our day schools, to help in the work. Twenty-three we sent back to their relatives on account of mental or physical infirmities, of which in most instances we had not been correctly informed when they were received. Seventeen of the orphans' relatives were desirous of having them back, as they were now able to provide for them, and felt it their duty so to do, on account of alteration in their circumstances. Of these seventeen, two were converted. Seventy of the boys were apprenticed to a trade or business, of whom fifty-eight were converted, and most of them had been converted a long time. Notice this: 58 out of 70 converted! One hundred and twenty girls were provided with an outfit (as also were the boys) and sent to situations in Christian families. Out of these 121 there were 68 converted. Of those who left the institution during the past year, 140 were converted, and very many were converted for a long time. We have, therefore, 256 to deduct from 1933, so that on May 26th, 1896, we had only 1677 in the five houses. From April, 1836, up to May 26th, 1896, we had 9632 orphans under our care."

Surely this, indeed, is matter for hearty thanksgiving to our God and Father.

MR. MÜLLER'S DESIRES REGARDING ORPHANS.

Before giving statistics regarding the orphan work of the Institution, Mr. Müller speaks of his interest in the physical, mental, and spiritual welfare of the young people. Speaking of the spiritual aspects of the work, he remarks: "I aimed from the beginning at the salvation of the children. To make them see their lost and ruined condition by nature, through instructing them in the Word of God, and to lead them to put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, was my aim; and God has given us the joy of seeing *thousands* of them brought to believe in Him, so that few institutions, perhaps, have been more abundantly blessed in this respect than the Orphan Houses in Ashley Down have been."

COST OF MAINTAINING THE INSTITUTION.

It will be readily believed that the cost of feeding, clothing, and educating close on 2000 persons must be very considerable. "Hundreds of fresh orphans are received year by year, and

the new-comers are to be fitted out ; hundreds of boys and girls go out as apprentices, servants, or pupil teachers, and they are to be provided with an outfit at the expense of the Institution. The considerable number of boys who are sent out as apprentices year by year have, every one of them, a premium of £13 paid for them to their masters, which is about equal to another year's support. Further, remember the large staff of overseers of one kind or another, such as school inspector, matrons, masters, &c.; all their salaries are to be obtained from the Lord. All the nurses in the infirmary in each of the five houses, the nurses of the little infants, the laundresses and other servants (though the last are but few, as the orphans do the work)—all this costs very much, and for all this we look to the Lord."

HOW THE MONEY IS OBTAINED.

In October, 1830, Mr. Müller gave up his regular salary as the pastor of a church. "All these 65 years and 8 months," he adds, "I have had no salary as a preacher of the gospel, pastor of a church, founder of or director of this Institution ; but all my temporal necessities for myself and family I have had supplied by God Himself, simply through prayer and faith, having habitually all these many years committed my necessities into His hands, and He, as my heavenly Father and Friend, has supplied all that I needed for the life that now is as well as for the life to come. I have at no time, without one single exception, spoken about my need to any one except to my heavenly Friend and Helper. Should the reader, however, say : 'Did you then, in all these cases here recorded, never ask the donors to help you?' Our reply is, the reader will search in vain to find *one single individual in the whole world* who either directly or indirectly has been asked for anything."

SOME OF THE DONATIONS.

The income for the year has been rather more than £31,000. The gifts have been forwarded from all classes of Christians, residing in many parts of the world. Mr. Müller pertinently remarks that Ashley Down Orphanages are "not *our* orphan houses, nor the orphan houses of any party or sect ; but they are God's orphan houses, and the orphan houses for any and every destitute orphan who has lost both

parents, provided, of course, there be room in them." Amongst the year's gifts are the following :—From Scotland, £7 as a "thank-offering for passing an examination ;" from Canada, ten dollars as a "thankoffering for protection from fire for many years ;" £100 from "a servant of the Lord Jesus who, constrained by the love of Christ, seeks to lay up treasure in heaven ;" £137 from Scotland from one who works on the railroad, who "sends his all, which had been laid up for a day of need ;" £50 from New Zealand, portion of business profits ; £7 10s. from Bristol, "consecrated to the Lord on the sale of a house ;" 1s., being a boy's savings for a month ; £1 "in grateful acknowledgment to God for twelve years of happy married life ;" £3 from the neighbourhood of Sunderland as a "thank-offering for a good harvest safely gathered ;" £100 from Dublin, with the testimony that since the donor adopted *systematic* giving as the Lord had prospered, it had "changed the whole tenor" of his life—(would that many more of God's stewards practised proportionate and systematic giving!)—£5 from a commercial traveller, money saved on his journeys by travelling third class.

TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED BY MR. MÜLLER.

"The total amount of money received by prayer and faith for the various objects of the institution since March 5th, 1834," he informs us, was "£1,398,877 15s. 6½d. By this sum 121,236 persons have been taught in the schools supported by the funds of the institution. One hundred and eight millions, six hundred and fifteen thousand and forty (108,615,040) books, pamphlets, and tracts in various languages, have been circulated. From its earliest days missionaries have also been assisted from the funds of the institution and for about fifty years a considerable number of them. On this object and on the mission schools there was expended during the past year £5684 os. 6d., and from the commencement £256,306 15s. 10d. Nine thousand, five hundred, and thirty-two orphans have been under our care, and five large houses at the expense of £115,000, have been erected and fitted up for the accommodation of 2050 orphans at a time, and 112 helpers."

From these extracts it will be seen what :

delightful work is being carried on through Mr. Müller. If each of the *Witness* readers were to buy a number of copies of the "Narrative" and forward them to gospel labourers throughout the world, much good, we are persuaded, would be the result.

A. M.

SELAH.

THIS word is frequently used in the Psalms, and stands for a musical sign meaning "rest" or "pause." The life of the Church, and of the believer, resembles a psalm composed and set to music, by Him who was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. Such a view makes the word very suggestive of helpful truths for us all.

I. A *selah* or *pause* is found in the life of every believer. These come in sickness and in enforced retirement from family, business, and our daily calling. Be not surprised, then, when you meet with a *selah* or call to rest in your daily life.

II. A *selah* or *pause* is placed in the music and in our lips by the Composer. He knows where and when it is needed for the perfection of the psalm and for its effect upon the listener. When it comes, however trying it may be, say, "He placed it there!"

III. A *selah* or *pause* is a part of the music. We think that only sound is music, when a rest is often as effective as the full chord. Therefore, when any pause comes into your life, and your activity for the time ceases, say, "This is also part of the music," and be comforted by it.

IV. A *selah* or *pause* does not hinder the work of the singers who have not to pause. If our part is to rest, it will bring into prominence the work of the other singers and the beauty of the psalm. So when we are laid aside we hear other voices taking up the harmony in church, home, and daily life, and in our resting we are glad.

V. A *selah* or *pause* should lead the resting one to count time. When the singer is silent for a time, he is still in harmony with the choir, and also part of it, so while he waits he enjoys the harmony. Remember, silent times are thoughtful, counting times. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom."

VI. A *selah* or *pause* shows the resting singer eagerly waiting to go on. Is not this the truth, seen in many a sick-room and in

many a silenced worker's life. He says, "The psalm needs my voice," and soon this silence will become song.

VII. A *selah* or *pause* obliges the singer to keep his eye on the music and on the leader, so that he may begin in time, neither too soon nor too late. Remember this when you are commanded to be still. He who leads the song will give the sign for a wise beginning to the watchful one.

How often in the music of our life terrestrial

We learn 'tis wise to pause,

For, in the setting of the notes celestial,

The Master seeth cause.

The daily life of those whom God hath chosen

Has need of rest and calm,

Lest in the hurrying tide of earth-born motion

No soul could harp its psalm.

None but the great Composer knoweth
wherefore,

Yet has it mete effect,

For on the listener, as from out God's portal,

Falleth the sweet vibrate.

Yea, oft the pause, soft, sweet, and full of
meaning,

Enhances the full chord

And the rapt soul-entranced breathes balm of
heaven,

Whispers, "It is the Lord."

And othersingers, who meanwhile have rested,

Can then be heard by us,

Who to the music of our own parts listened,

Losing notes beauteous.

The silence of the soul, while beating time
to music,

Affords it sweet relief,

For in the psalms of heaven God's *selahs* oft
make

Soul-room for fresh belief.

God's *selahs* come when God Himself ap-
pointeth,

To wing the soul for flight.

God's choir of singers Christ, His Son, an-
ointeth,

To sing His praise aright.

Thus God Himself the heavenly music
setteth—

Selah, and notes, and psalm;

On God and on His Christ all eyes are fixed,
For song or *selah*-calm.

A.O.M.

THE DESIRE OF GOD FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS CHILDREN.

By GEORGE ADAM.

Paper III.

DURING the wanderings of the patriarchs, and during the history of Israel as a nation, it is instructive to observe how, when intercourse between God and man was interrupted, it was usually resumed on the part of God. "The LORD appeared" to those whom He had called out to walk with Himself, often when they seemed to have had no thought of nor desire for Him; and if they had any longing after "God, the Living God," that longing was begotten in their hearts by the monitions of His own grace. It is exceedingly pleasing to trace out on the pages of Scripture the desire which God has for the society of His people, but it is well in these days of irreverence to guard against presuming on His holiness. If the grace of God is to have its way with man, it must be "grace reigning through righteousness" (Rom. v. 21). If the Holy One of Israel was to dwell among His people and walk among them, it must be on HOLY GROUND.

The theory which is so pleasing to the natural heart, that God is too merciful to punish sin as He says He will, is fast gaining ground. The doctrine of the eternal punishment of the impenitent is explained away as if such a doctrine was inconsistent with the Divine character. Hence there is a deep necessity for those who would go before the flock being sound in the faith as to what God is. We need to be exercised to know that the God we believe in, whom we worship, and whom we preach, is really the God of revelation. It is so easy to be sound *intellectually* as to doctrines, and yet to become leavened *experimentally* by the infidelity of the present day. If God is to invite His children to "draw near" as worshippers now, and if He is to set them down in His own presence at last, it must be on principles of inflexible righteousness. So when the LORD condescended to dwell in the midst of His earthly people, it was in harmony with His own holiness. The various ceremonial washings under the law all teach important spiritual truths if we had discernment to read them aright. It is also well to notice here that, whilst many of the uncleannesses

contracted by *contamination* were removed by *water*, when it was a case of *sin* nothing could meet that but the *shedding of blood*. If a priest sinned according to the sins of the people (albeit he was still a priest), he was shut out from exercising his priestly functions until his sin was atoned for by shed blood (Lev. iv. 3). So now a child of God, although still a child, is shut out of the Father's presence by sin until that sin is confessed and forgiven, on the ground of the propitiation made by Christ.

Under the law ignorance was no excuse for sin (although it could not be confessed until it became known); but after the most vigilant care an Israelite could exercise, there was much uncleanness, and many sins which he could never detect, but which were patent to the eyes of Jehovah, and if He was to dwell in the midst of the camp these must be met and atoned for. Hence the institution and the chief import of the "great day of atonement." The high-priest went in once a year to make "atonement for the holy place." There could have been nothing unclean in the holy place itself. It was "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins" (Lev. xvi. 16). Jehovah's dwelling-place had to be atoned for because it was in the midst of an unclean and erring people, and there was much impurity which He saw, of which they were not conscious. So with the priesthood of Christ now in the presence of God for us because of those impurities of which we are not aware (Heb. ix. 24). We also read of the "heavenly things themselves being purified" (verse 23). There can be nothing unclean in the heavenly things or places themselves; but if believers with uncleanness within us, and often sinning when we are not conscious of it, are to be encouraged to enter the Holiest where the Lord Jesus has gone, the holiness of God must be maintained. Not only must the need of the believer's conscience be provided for, but, if we are to be allowed into the very presence of God, the need of His holy character must also be provided for.

This truth may come up again in a future paper, but it is so much needed that we require to be "put in remembrance of these things." There are some believers with tender consciences who are so conscious of their own

impurity, and who also have a salutary apprehension of the holiness of God, that they are afraid to draw near with that confidence which is pleasing to God, because they do not intelligently understand the provision *He has made in Christ for HIMSELF*, as well as for them. There is much less of this now than there once was. We have gone to the opposite extreme.

There are not so many believers now-a-days kept in bondage by a tender or sensitive conscience. It is rather a lack of conscience which characterises much of the present-day profession. The flippant familiarity in which some address the Infinitely Holy One is not the liberty of faith in what Christ is to God, and what He is to the believer. It is rather a licence engendered by ignorance of the true character of God, and shallow conceptions of what sin is. Some expressions which one often hears in prayer are not to be found in Scripture, such as "Dear Lord" or "Dear Father." Even the Son of God Himself did not use such a sentimental word in addressing the Father. It was "Holy Father" and "O Righteous Father" which were His reverent utterances. Another thing is worth noticing: Wherever the personal words *our* or *my* are applied to Christ, it is the title "Lord" which follows them. The only exception to this which I know is 2 Peter i. 1, and there it should be "Our God and Saviour." Such expressions as "My Jesus" or "My Christ" are not to be found in Scripture. "He is mine," every believer can say; but He is "Christ Jesus, MY LORD," or "OUR LORD, Jesus Christ." The familiar way in which some address the Blessed Son of God, as "Jesus" or "Blessed Jesus," is not the result of a correct apprehension of the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament; it is more the utterance of religious sentiment which savours of the flesh.

In thus endeavouring to show how our God delights in the fellowship of His children, and how guilty we often are of robbing Him of the joy *He has in us* when we draw near to Him, I have been led into the foregoing thoughts lest we should forget the "Glory due to His name." The children of God in the present age have a liberty of access into His presence which believers in bygone ages never knew. Under the law the place of communion was revealed in type, but it was veiled in, until

sin was put away by the death of Christ. (See Ex. xxv. 22, xxvi. 33, Matt. xxvii. 51.) But whilst believers now have "liberty" into the holiest where our great High Priest has gone, we must guard against irreverence. The way of approach is "*open*," but it is a *holy way* into a holy place. And whilst our God has made a full revelation of His grace in and through Christ Jesus, He has not changed His character since the time when Nadab and Abihu were "devoured" because they offered "strange fire which He commanded them not."

His word spoken then is still in force. "I will be sanctified in them that come nigh ME" (Lev. x. 1-3). In entering into our closets, and seeking to "draw near" to give our God and Father the joy of seeing our countenance and hearing our voice (Song ii. 14), let us never presume on the infinite holiness of the Triune God, nor lose sight of our own unworthiness and innate corruption. If we do either of these we will be unable to rightly value the provision God has made for having fellowship with His children through the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus.

AT HOME WITH THE LORD.

Tune—Believer's Hymn Book, 24.

"Not lost, but gone before;"

We say it as we stand beside the grave
Of a dear loved one who has crossed Death's
And gained the brighter shore. [wave

"Not lost, but gone before,"

Into the Father's home of light and joy,
Where nothing can that heavenly peace destroy,
Where sin can have no power.

"Not lost, but gone before;"

And dare we doubt our heavenly Father's love
Because He takes His child to dwell above
Beyond the breakers' roar.

"Not lost, but gone before;"

With this sweet thought we chase the tears away,
And look beyond to that eternal day
When partings shall be o'er.

"Not lost, but gone before,"

Where we shall follow when our race is run,
And when our work for Christ on earth is done
We'll rest for evermore.

Hammersmith.

C.L.

THE LAST DAY.

By J. HIXON IRVING, Author of "Christ's Great Allegory."

(See John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; xi. 24; xii. 48.)

THIS term, the "last day," must not be confounded with the "last days," which denotes the present period of time. Neither must it be with the "latter days," which refer to a period of Israel's history yet in the future. The words are not met with in Scripture save in the Gospel by John, and they are found therein some seven times—once used by the evangelist, of the closing day of the feast of Tabernacles (chap. vii. 38); and once by Martha, who expressed her faith in her brother's resurrection in that day (chap. xi. 24). In the remaining five instances it was used by the Lord Himself. It is to His use of the words mainly we must turn for information and instruction on this, the fifth prophetic day.

The phrase does not mean *the last of the days*, for two prophetic days at least lie beyond its close, viz., "The day of judgment" and "The day of eternity." If it does not mean the last of the days, what, then, does it mean? It signifies that it is the last day of the grave's power over the bodies of the dead; and also the last day of the power of the intermediate state over the spirits of the same. It is therefore the termination of the period of the grave's grasp over the bodies of men, and of the power of Hades over their souls.

This day will be divided into two parts—the morning and the evening, as they might be called. In the morning of the day the

RESURRECTION UNTO LIFE

will take place (John v. 29), which is the resurrection of the "just" (Acts xxiv. 15). Then in the evening of the day will take place the resurrection of the "unjust," those who in this life have "done evil." It will therefore be the

RESURRECTION UNTO JUDGMENT

(John v. 28, 29). Though these two resurrections will occur during the same day, they will not take place at the same moment of time. In fact, there will be a long interval between them; one of at least a thousand years in duration. Therefore, the last day will not be one of twenty-four hours, as is commonly understood, but one of at least ten long

centuries. It will cover and contain within its limits "The day of our Lord Jesus Christ," "The day of trouble" (which are parallel periods), and the "Day of the Lord." Long as this period will be, it is by our Lord called the "hour." "The hour is coming in, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the *resurrection of life*; and they that have done evil unto the *resurrection of damnation* (judgment)" (John v. 28, 29).

THE SONS OF RESURRECTION

(Luke xx. 34-36) will be raised from among the dead in the beginning of this day. The "sons of resurrection," who are they? Those whom God the Father from all eternity fore-ordained to belong to His beloved Son. Those whom the Son received as a deed of gift, and in doing so bestowed upon them the donation of eternal life. They who from that moment began to eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood (receiving His words by faith), and thus had nourished the life within (see John vi. 37-57). All such are sons of resurrection, being sons of God.

THE REDEMPTION OF THE BODY

(Rom. viii. 22, 23; Eph. iv. 30). In that day will the redemption of the body take place, for which the saved now wait. It is the hope both of the clothed and of the unclothed. Those who are now living and also those who have, as to the body, fallen asleep—put off the "tabernacle." Hope is active in both; in those who are "with Christ," as well as in those who are in the body. And what a redemption it will be! It will be redemption from *weakness*, for the resurrection body will be powerful. It will be delivered from *dishonour*, and made honourable—from the dishonour done it by sin and death and the grave. It will be freed for ever from *corruption*, and made incorruptible, as well as being transformed from a *natural* body into a spiritual one (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). In one word, it will be changed from a body humiliated by reason of sin, and fashioned like unto the body of Christ's glory (Phil. iii. 21). The Spirit's seal is upon all the sons of God for preservation for the "day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). When the looked-for, longed-for day breaks, then not only shall the "corruptible

put on incorruption," but "mortal shall put on immortality." Then shall the word written be fulfilled, "Death is *swallowed up* in victory." Ah, yes! and "mortality swallowed up of life." Such mighty works of God—parts of His redemption through His beloved Son—will the opening of the last day witness. It is thus the first part of this prophetic period will come to a close. The "dead in Christ" shall be "raised incorruptible," and the living in Him shall be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and then "caught up to meet Him in the air."

THE END OF THE LAST DAY.

When the end of the day of the Lord has come, and man's trial on earth is o'er; when the last rebellion of rebel man has been put down by a swift baptism of fire, and Satan has been hurled into the lake of fire and brimstone, then will the last day come to a close. Then will all those who have, during a period of seven thousand years and over, died in their sins be raised from the dead. Then will take place the resurrection of the "unjust" unto "judgment," and with it the last day will come to an end. With what body will they come forth from the grave? We know not. Each unsaved one will have a body; but of the nature and appearance of the same we are in ignorance. We may safely say it will not be spiritual and glorious. When the earth and sea have each given up the dead body, and hades the soul, then there will be a union of both for judgment. For it is after death and resurrection that judgment must come. The last moment of the grave's power over the bodies of the unsaved having come, and the last second of the keeping power of hades over the souls of the same having expired, the day closes, to give place to another more dreadful still, namely, the "day of judgment." So clearly linked is the former with the latter that it bears the character of judgment—at least in its closing part. This is seen in our Lord's words to the Pharisees, "And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me and receiveth not My words hath one that judgeth Him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him *in* the last day"

(John xii. 47-48). For this same reason the last resurrection of the last day is called the "resurrection unto *judgment*" (John v. 29). It, so to speak, yields up the unsaved body and soul into the custody of the "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Henceforth death and hades will be useless and will therefore be abolished (Rev. xx. 13). What a contrast there will indeed be between the morning and evening of this prophetic day; and what contrasts between those raised at the beginning and end of the same. The one class blest, the other unblest; the one happy, and the other unhappy; both eternally so. The former holy, the latter unholy; the former subjects of eternal salvation, whilst the latter will be the subjects of eternal judgment.

"THE FEAR OF THE LORD, AND THE COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST."

BY ALEXANDER STEWART.

THEN had the Churches rest throughout all Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied" (Acts ix. 31).

These are happy conditions. Blessed, one may say, is the assembly of which such things can be said. If we earnestly desire that it should be with us as it was with these saints, let us consider that we have here (1) that condition in the assembly which renders it morally fit for the blessing of God (all being of grace), that is, *the fear of the Lord*; and (2) the blessing which God bestows on all in whom that condition is fulfilled, *the comfort of the Holy Ghost*.

I. THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

When the yoke of sin was taken from our necks, it was not that we might do our own will, but that we might take the other yoke, the yoke of Jesus. "O Lord, I am Thy servant, Thou hast *loosed* my bonds," says the Psalmist (Psalm cxvi. 16). Being made free from sin, we are become servants of God. The *Saviour* Jesus is the *Lord* Jesus.

The Corinthians seem to have been forgetting this; and, accordingly, in the eleventh chapter of his first epistle, we find Paul press-

ing upon them the name of the *Lord*. In the compass of a few verses (20-32) we read of the Lord's supper, the Lord's death, the blood of the Lord, the Lord's body, what Paul had received of the Lord, what the Lord Jesus had done in instituting the supper, and that the judged person was chastened of the Lord. Surely the instruction in this is, had there been the fear of the Lord, there would not have been the disorder which the apostle sought to correct.

And if there are troubles among us, the cause is to be found here. The fear of God has not been before our eyes; the solemn sense of the presence of the holy Lord God has not been upon us. We have been foolish; for the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and we have not walked therein.

Is this "legal" language? Surely not. "In the fear of the Lord is *strong confidence*" (Prov. xiv. 26). "There is *forgiveness* with Him, that He may be feared" (Psalm cxxx. 4). "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," says an apostle, "forasmuch as ye *know* that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter i.). Man might have said, "Pass the time in fear, for ye do not know, and no one can tell, whether you are redeemed or not;" or concerning God, "There is *judgment* with Him that He may be feared." But His thoughts are not our thoughts. Our fear is the fear of those who know that they are redeemed, and that "there is *forgiveness* with Him" whom we reverence. The same Psalm (Psalm xxxiv.), which says, "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears," teaches us, "O fear the Lord, ye His saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him."

Still, as of old, God will be sanctified in them that come nigh Him. Holiness becometh His house for ever. And our fear is but the reverence (compatible with the happiest assurance of his love) which we owe Him as the Holy One, present with us by the Holy Spirit, on the ground of a sacrifice by which His holiness has been perfectly vindicated.

II. THE COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

This must be ours, if, self-judged, we approach God with due reverence. The river of God will flow in its widest channel, if only the

obstructions on our part are taken away. The Spirit (as it has been observed the Scriptures teach) may be resisted, He may be quenched, He may be grieved. We, in consequence, may be parched and athirst; but He is still the Comforter, given to abide with us for ever, and if we be humbled in confession, His gracious ministry will be abundantly fulfilled.

Let us weigh these things. If the condition of the Churches of God presses upon us, we shall be concerned that evil should be kept out, and that there should be abounding blessing within. On the fulness of the Holy Spirit among us these results depend. And how shall we have the unhindered action of the Spirit? By walking in the fear of the Lord, whose fear is to hate evil, and to depart from it (Prov. viii. 13; xvi. 6).

Let us not think to secure these blessings otherwise. Doctrinal correctness, how valuable soever, cannot insure Church purity. The power to resist and repel evil depends on the godliness of the saints, and neither on their gifts nor their knowledge.

In Zechariah ii. 4, 5, we read: "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns *without walls*, for the multitude of men and cattle therein, for *I*, saith the Lord, will be unto her a *wall of fire round about*, and will be *the glory in the midst* of her." This is the two-fold blessing we want, an object which attracts and satisfies, and a bulwark which will not suffer evil to encroach upon us. The walls raised by men (doubtless with the best intentions) have been proved to be walls of paper; the true wall is the wall of fire, even our God, who is a consuming fire, intolerant of sin; while yet He is the glory in the midst, the attraction of the hearts of His people.

Then how is it, it may be asked, that evil creeps in? God's manifestations of Himself are conditioned on our obedience and holiness. On the fear of the Lord depends the comfort of the Holy Ghost. God makes Himself known according to our state. "With the pure, he will show Himself pure; and with the froward, He will show Himself froward" (Psalm xviii. 26). That we have grieved His Spirit is our sin, and our weakness is consequent upon it. Our responsibility is not to have God among us—He *is* amongst us; but to take care not to hinder His gracious action.

In this we have failed. Can we wonder that we have been feeble to resist the enemy?

We may read Acts v. 1-14, as illustrative of the doctrine which it has been sought to set forth. God had acted in sudden judgment on Ananias and Sapphira. As a consequence, "*great fear* came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things." Further, we are told (ver. 12-14), "By the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch, and *of the rest durst no man join himself unto them*; but the people magnified them, and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women." Have we not here the wall of fire repelling "the rest," so that they durst not join themselves to the believers, and at the same time the attractive glory drawing to the Lord multitudes of believing men and women?

Let us walk in the fear of the Lord. So doing, God's presence shall be made known among us; sin will be speedily detected, and we shall be strong to put it away; the ungodly will shrink from the searching light; we shall have rest, we shall be edified, and, "walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, we shall be multiplied."

THE NEW CREATION.

Notes of a Bible Reading by Mr. R. C. CHAPMAN, Barnistaple,
Author of "Choice Hymns and Meditations."
Scriptures read, Rom. viii. and Rom. xii.

ONE thing to be especially observed in this epistle is the mention in chapter iv. of the words borrowed from Psalm xxxii. The Spirit of God by the apostle opens up this forgiveness—non-imputation of sin. O that we did all consider the word "justified"—it's a marvellous word. But how does that come to pass? Read verse 3: "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;" and in chap. v.: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God." The word "justified" shows that we have, in the very righteousness of God, a title to eternal life and glory. Do the people of God consider this, and do they in living faith call it to mind? Does it not lie at the root of all walking with God, and behaving as

we should in this present world? For to be justified is

- (1) To be cleared of all blame, and
- (2) To be presented as we should be in the eye of God.

This is far above all natural thoughts, and it is totally contrary to the religious man, for it cuts to pieces all his own religion, and doesn't it as much abase me as comfort me? For how came I by it? God's own Son bearing my sin; that brings me to nothing as the creature and the sinner, whilst it raises me above the highest angel of God. Ought this not to be from day to day the bread of my inner man? I have been more than seventy years reading it, and to-day it's more new and glorious than ever. All the angels of God now count it joy and honour to wait upon us. They don't appear before God in union with Christ. We, on the other hand, are made as near as it is possible for God to make us. What manner of persons, then, ought we to be? And what manner of hearts should be ours toward the God of all grace? Is it not very beautiful in this chapter to mark the Spirit's love? What a joy to the Spirit of God! "Christ having through the Spirit offered up Himself," now that Spirit not only quickens us, but reveals to our hearts Christ already glorified.

The Spirit groans for the same event that creation groans for—the "new creation"—and whereas the first creation was worthy of the first man taken out of the earth, the "new creation" will be worthy of the last Adam. The glory of it we cannot tell, but we are heirs of it, and the inheritance is better than any earthly, and the title, also, is better; we have a far better title to our throne than the Queen of England has to hers. Nothing can shake our throne. Is it not so, that if we all thought highly enough of ourselves we should all behave aright? We never can think ill enough of ourselves unless we think well enough. It is through redemption we learn to think thus; to be truly lowly before God we need to know how near we are and how dear we are to God.

The Spirit was in perfect fellowship with the Lord in His groaning at the grave of Lazarus. The Spirit sees in us two things—what we shall be in new creation and what we now are. Our groan is for the new creation, whether we have any pain or not. It is very lovely to see the

Holy Spirit longing on our behalf for that time—the love of the Spirit is so manifest in this, as well as His sympathy and fellowship.

The blessed Lord in His rule of all creatures is every day and hour moving onwards and ordering all things to that end, and if I have a mind in fellowship with Christ I shall be looking on to new creation, and I shall have a mind always to say, "Thy will be done," and that is holiness. This will help us, not to indifference about the things of God, but with a tender Spirit to behold the family of God as joint heirs with Christ, and to care for them even if they care nothing for me.

Now might we cast a glance at chap. xii. 1: "I beseech you." Did Moses at Mount Sinai beseech Israel? He not only did not, but could not. And what does the apostle beseech us to be doing?—"To present your bodies a living sacrifice." Then I am not to be my own at all! The reason why the apostle says this is, he will have the whole man for Christ. We not only belong to our God and Father by creation, we are BOUGHT—a very far higher title.

God calls our struggle against self-will a victory. If He sees me not making any peace with it, He is well pleased with me. God, who prepared a body for Christ on our account, now asks a body from us in return. He has given all He can give; what ought we to give in return? Our true happiness in this world hangs upon our pleasing God. We can never present the flesh as a sacrifice to God, but the body is purchased, and if we use the members for any other purpose we are prostituting what belongs to Him. "He is the Father of mercies," and as such full of pitifulnesses, and when He sees us unfeignedly desiring to please Him, He is well pleased with our little.

There is also in this chapter an admonition to us to remember that each of us is one of a body. Angels were never bound up in that way; they lost nothing by the fall of those who fell. We are bound up as members one of another, and therefore the grace in my brother or sister is my property and my joy, and the fault in my brother or sister is my fault. Is not that the right way to look at it? It's well for us to remember that evil which has become a custom, is by that custom, in the judgment of the common conscience, no evil at all. For instance, the carrying of the ark on a new cart

is a sample. It is hard for us to see in God's light the things which the Church of God practise from day to day. How much we need the affections of Christ for all the family of God, and we now have opportunities for pleasing God that we shall not have in the new creation. There are often complaints in the world that workmen well skilled are out of employment; but in the Church of God there ought not to be any out of employ.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN CURRENT ENGLISH.

WE have been asked to give our opinion as to the value, critically or otherwise, of "The New Testament in Current English, by Ferrar Fenton."

Knowing the great labour bestowed upon it by the translator, and the value set upon it by some whom we greatly love and esteem, it is with great reluctance that we are obliged to say that we do not consider it to be generally helpful, though in some particular passages it may convey more readily to an ordinary English reader the sense of the original. We append a few remarks upon it by one of our most valued correspondents, not written for publication, but sufficient, we think, to show that our objections to the work are based upon very sufficient grounds, and are not merely the result of prejudice or a natural shrinking from what appears novel.

"I have opened the first page, and find the words (John i. 14): 'His Majesty, such majesty as that of a Father's only Son—full of beneficence and truth.' I pass over the change from 'glory' to 'majesty,' and ask, What is the meaning of 'a Father's only Son'? In current English it means *any* only son of *any* father. One naturally turns to the Epistle to the Hebrews to see how the word 'Son' is dealt with there.

"It was bad enough for the Revisers to tell us in the margin that the Greek is 'a Son' (Heb. i. 2), but it is worse to give 'a Son' in the text. This is consistent, certainly, with John i. 14, but it is an entire ignoring of the rule, laid down by Winer, that words denoting an object of which but one exists, and which therefore are nearly assimilated to proper names, often dispense with the article. 'This, however, is the case [he says] only when the omission occasions no obscurity in the subject, nor leaves the reader in doubt whether the word is to be taken definitely or indefinitely.'"

"On *ὁς* in John i. 14, Bengel long ago said: '*ὁς* which here does not compare, but declares'; and Chrysostom, whose tongue was Greek, said: 'Not 'like,' but 'such as' belong to.' This, again, Mr. Fenton misses, for he dis-

tinctly gives it as comparison: 'Such majesty as that of a Father's only Son.' How much more simple is our old version, though in this case the Revised Version is still better (if the Revisers had not marred it by their margin), no English, surely, can express the meaning, but 'Glory as of the Only-begotten from the Father,' such a glory as He alone could display who was the Only-begotten from the Father.

"My eye lights upon Heb. x. 37: 'The Traveller will come, and will not delay.' Why did he not render 'the Traveller' in Rev. i. 4, or Matt. xxiii. 39? Was not '*chomenos*' a title of the Messiah given in the Sept. of Psalm cxviii., and accepted by Himself in quoting that word, and simply and beautifully expressed by 'the coming One'? Fancy turning 'the coming One,' which means that He is coming to and for us, into 'the Traveller,' which may mean anything!

"Heb. ix. 11: Are 'the good things' coming through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, or is that tabernacle connected with the ministry of the High Priest? The former interpretation is a novelty, to say the least.

"That Christ sits upon the throne 'by right,' we question not, but that that is the statement of Heb. viii. 1, I do question. Why should we have 'at the right of God' in x. 12, and 'My right hand' in i. 13?

"Heb. iii. 12: What connection is there between the exhortation to 'observe that the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus was faithful to His Creator' (!) and the context?

"The call to consider Him as (now) being faithful to Him who appointed or constituted Him High Priest is very different.

"Why the omission of the words (in chap. v. 9), 'to all them that obey Him'? And in what respect is 'origin' better than Author?

"If Heb. iv. 10, 'It (the rest) shall enter into its rest and rest from its labours,' is 'current English,' it is a current which I think some of us have no wish to discover.

"Gal. ii. reads: 'We know that a man is not made righteous by ritualism, except through a faith of Jesus Christ.' In current English this means that if a man has 'a (!) faith of Jesus Christ,' he is made righteous by ritualism. The Authorised Version here gives the proper force of *can mee*, which is the equivalent of *ei mee* in Luke iv. 25-27, and expresses a strong antithesis, 'not by works of law, but only by the faith of Jesus Christ.'

"What can we make of this: 'I live by the faith of the Son of the God who loved me and gave Himself up for me?' Who 'gave Himself for me'? God? or the Son of God?

We cannot accept the change in Rom. viii. 3, &c., of the familiar and well-understood word "flesh" to "physical nature" and "body."

The "body" and "the flesh" in Scripture express two very different ideas. It is said, "Your bodies are members of Christ." The body is 'to be used as an instrument of righteousness.' "The flesh" is not so spoken of, but as a rule denotes that essentially evil nature inherited from the first man, Adam.

His substitution of the word "preacher" for "prophet" is a confounding of things that essentially differ and a serious loss.

The one error of Heb. iii. 2, making the Lord Jesus to be a *creature*, is enough, in our judgment, to condemn the book. In such passages as John i. 14, "The word was made flesh," the Revised Version is a decided improvement, "The word became flesh." "Was made" is capable of being referred to as creative act; "*became*" implies personal volition.

But we forbear to add further evidence as to why we feel unable to recommend this translation.

Ed.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

Explain Matthew xxvi. 45, 46.

John xii. 25. What is the meaning of "loving," "hating," "losing," "keeping" the life?

In what sense had "no man ascended up to heaven" (John iii. 18), seeing Elijah, Enoch, and others had gone up ere this time?

Is it according to Scripture principles for a servant of the Lord to write and ask a meeting if he may come and preach? In a large city meeting four evangelists enquired *at one time* if the way was open for meetings. Light from example or teaching of the Word will be valued.

In Solomon's prayer, as recorded in Kings and Chronicles, the words differ considerably, though the sense is nearly the same. Are we to understand that the actual words used are not recorded in either case? This question would apply to many other passages, as for instance Matt. xix. 18, 19, and Mark x. 19.

Explain Rev. i. 10. Is it the first day of the week or the day of the Lord?

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRIT, SOUL, AND BODY.

QUESTION 531.—Please explain the difference between spirit, soul, and body]

Answer A.—Though very much lost sight of by those who, following heathen philosophy, have supposed the whole of man to be included in *soul* and *body*, yet the distinction between *spirit* and *soul* (1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. iv. 12) has

come down from the earliest times. This is shown by different words for them in both dead and living languages. What the *body* is, is obvious to all. It is that part of our being which is recognised by the senses, and which returns to dust in the grave (Gen. iii. 19). The *soul* is the natural life with which are connected the affections, instincts, and appetites which we have in common with the lower animals (Deut. xii. 20; Ps. cvii. 5; Prov. vi. 30; xxvii. 7; Luke xii. 19). "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7), and thus immortality* was conferred on the one made in the image of God (Eccl. iii. 21; Matt. x. 28; Acts xvii. 29).

The *spirit* is the seat of the understanding, the loftier part of man's immortal nature. It is not a mere communication from God given to inspire the lifeless clay, but is a creation numbered with the other great creations of God as of equal or more importance than stretching forth the heavens, or laying the foundation of the earth (Job xxxii. 8; Zech. xii. 1). It is sometimes put indifferently with "soul" for man's immortal part. When distinguished from it, however, it is uniformly characterised as the seat of the reason or mind and not of the senses or appetites. All intelligence is referred to the spirit as we read: "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?" (1 Cor. ii. 11). It is that which gives individuality and character to the man. Thus we read: Paul's "spirit was stirred in him," he was "pressed in the spirit," he "prophesied in the spirit." Though absent from the Colossians in the flesh, he says: "Yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order." (See also Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. v. 4; 2 Cor. ii. 13; vii. 13). "An excellent spirit" (Dan. v. 12; vi. 3); "Poor in spirit;" "A contrite spirit;" "Forsaken and grieved in spirit;" "A sorrowful spirit;" "A meek and quiet spirit;" "A perverse spirit," and such like expressions, frequently recurring, mark how perfectly the spirit gives its character to a man, and is that to which he owes everything of moral individuality (2 Kings ii. 9, 15; Hag. i. 14; Luke i. 47). Debased and earthly in fallen man indeed it is, yet it is that part in him which, if any, retains for him some feeble degree of likeness to his Maker. It is that, too, which governs and inspires the rest of his being; as we say, a man's spirit is so and so, meaning his temper and deportment, which are governed by his spirit. How common it is to find the unconverted, whilst intelligent and eager in pursuit of the knowledge and riches of this world, yet wholly without any sense of the claims of God upon them. Thus forgetful of "the first and great commandment," they think to have salvation because they have "been kind

[*The word immortality is here used in the popular sense of endless existence.—ED.]

to the poor," or "never did any harm to anybody" (Rom. iii. 11, 18; 1 Cor. ii. 14). In the believer the spirit is quickened into new life by the mighty power of the Word applied by the Spirit of God (John vi. 63; Jas. i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23). It is the spirit that is with the soul in the intermediate state (Acts vii. 59; Heb. xii. 23).

F. P. S.

Answer B.—Man's three-fold nature is seen from scriptures such as 1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. iv. 12, as also from the experience of Him who was made flesh (John i. 14), who was in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3), and who, in dying, commended His *Spirit* to the Father (Luke xxiii. 46), whose *soul* went to Hades (Acts ii. 31), and whose *body* was laid in Joseph's new tomb (Luke xxiii. 52, 53).

God is a Spirit, and hence the *spirit* of man is the highest part of his nature, being also the seat of his mind, intelligence, and thought (1 Cor. ii. 11; Mark viii. 12; Acts xvii. 6), and is ever identified with his thoughts and judgment.

The *soul* is the link between the spirit and the body by the senses, hence we find the soul identified with the blood (Lev. xvii. 14, R.V.), and it is the seat of the affections, longings, feelings, lusts, &c. (1 Sam. xviii. 1; Psalm lxiii. 1; Zech. xi. 8; Luke xii. 19).

The body is the tabernacle, the building, the house (2 Pet. i. 13; 2 Cor. v. 1), wherein the spirit and the soul are, and the organism to be kept under, or to speak, act, and run according to our spirit (1 Cor. ix. 26, 27; vii. 34).

The *body* of the first Adam, also that of his descendants, was a natural or soul body, flesh and blood (1 Cor. xv. 44-46-50), but the body that shall be, the resurrection body, will be a spiritual body, raised in incorruption, glory, and power (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). Christ's resurrection body had flesh and bones; nevertheless, doors and walls were no barrier to the free passage of such a body (John xx. 19; Luke xxiv. 31). s.

THE ROOT OF LAWLESSNESS.

QUESTION 532.—In Judges xvii. 6; xxi. 25 we read: "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This lawless state is frequently quoted as arising from Israel being in a wrong position, in having no kingly authority. Please compare with 1 Samuel viii. 6, 7, and explain.

Answer A.—The reference quoted (1 Sam. viii. 6, 7) seems to answer the question: "They have rejected ME, that I should not reign over them."

Jehovah was their King. In Num. xxiii. 21, we read: "God is with him (i.e. with Jacob), and the shout of a King is among them."

Judges i. 1 shows us all Israel in subjection to

their King: all waited upon Him and obeyed His voice. The last chapter of Judges shows the very opposite. God is no longer honoured and obeyed; every man is found doing what is right in his own eyes. The lesson is clear. "Jesus Christ is Lord," but we may refuse to own His Lordship, and so fall into the desperate state of Israel as recorded in the last chapters of Judges, doing our own will, forgetful that we are *not our own*, but bought with a price. W. H. S.

Answer B.—From the time Israel was a people till Saul's time, they had no king but God. He was the Supreme Governor and Lawgiver, and there was no other authority but the Judges (Deut. 17). When the carnal wishes of the people would have a mere mortal, God "gave them a king in His anger, and took him away in His wrath." Such an event was provided for in the law (Deut. 17), but only as an undesirable possibility, and even then God never gave up His supremacy. The king was only the deputy of the Lord, and could neither make new laws nor alter old ones. Israel thus was never without kingly authority, but the period of the Judges was one of confusion and anarchy, resulting not from want of mere human authority, but from unfaithfulness to, and disregard of, their divine King. Judges xvii. 6, &c., indicates that society was in such a perilous state that there was an entire absence of restraint (even human) of any kind. The root of such lawlessness was in the innate depravity of the human heart, always at enmity towards God, which admitted no authority but that of a depraved inclination. J. H. H.

Answer C.—Judges xvii. 6 and xxi. 25 show a condition prevailing in Israel of disregard of God and His laws, with no enforced legal administration, *causing* a sense of need to arise for a firm, righteous ruler, who could govern rightly. 1 Sam. viii. 1 shows how that Israel, instead of seeking and waiting for God's choice, chose them out a man after their own mind—a choice which ended in sore disappointment. Then God, in His grace, brings forth the man after His own heart—a type of His Christ—even David, who led them aright. (See Ps. lxxvii. 70-72.) A. O. M.

CHRIST'S GLORIFIED BODY.

QUESTION 533.—Did the Lord Jesus appear in His glorified body in Luke xxiv.? Or did He only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven according to Acts i.?

Answer A.—The Word is very clear why a believer's body must be changed—"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"—but the man's eyes must be fearfully holden to speak of the Lord Jesus in a way that would

suggest a changed body. The Christ that walked the earth was seen in resurrection. He saw no corruption. "This same Jesus" was seen taken up, and will be seen when He comes. His was the body of glory when it became flesh (John i. 14; Heb. i. 3).

Answer B.—In Luke xxiv. 36-43, the Lord Jesus is viewed as the Risen One, verifying to His followers the fact of His resurrection, and He establishes this, first by showing them His hands and His feet, and then by taking a piece of a broiled fish and an honeycomb, and eating before them. (See also Acts i. 3; x. 41; xiii. 31.) The Lord Jesus was the Humbled Man in death, the Risen Man in Resurrection, and the Glorified Man in exaltation; so that there seems to be no real ground for supposing that He assumed His glorified body till He was "received up in glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16, R.V.)

The body of His glory is that to which our bodies of humiliation are to be conformed when He comes again as Saviour (Phil. 3, 21). J. D.

Editor's Note.—The very form of the question, "Did the Lord Jesus only assume His glorified body as He ascended to heaven?" shows an erroneous thought.

The body of His glory and the body of His humiliation are one, but under different conditions. On the mount of transfiguration "He received from the Father honour and glory." For the time being He was glorified, but it was not by a change of body, but by a change of the conditions. The essential glory that was within shone out, so that the glory irradiated not only His body but His raiment.

In Acts iii. 13 we read: "God . . . hath glorified His Son Jesus." This does not refer to any change upon His body, or any assuming of a glorified body, but is equivalent to the statement in Acts ii. 33, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted," and to that in John vii. 39, "Because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

The expression in Rev. v., "a Lamb as it had been slain," surely indicates that the very marks of death were yet visible.

That body prepared for Him, conceived of the Holy Ghost, was incapable of corruption, and therefore needed not to be "changed," but was fit to be glorified without change. Ours, on the contrary, must either pass through death and resurrection or an equivalent change, which will take place upon the living saints in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—at the coming of the Lord.

It was the same manna that lay upon the cold ground of the wilderness that afterwards was glorified by being put in the golden pot and laid up in the holiest of all.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD IN THE ASSEMBLY.

Notes of an Address by J. R. CALDWELL.

I HAVE the impression that the coming together of the children of God on the first day of the week occupied in apostolic days an even more prominent place than it does among us.

Read Heb. x. 24, 25. "Let us consider one another to provoke [or 'for a provocation,' *i.e.*, not to others but to my own soul] unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

Now compare this with 1 Cor. xi. 17, 18, 20, also chap. xiv. 23. To "come together in the Church" does not mean in a building called a church, but "in Church capacity." These passages I read in order to place before you the divine thought of the whole Church coming together, and that, when the Church was not split up into different denominations and sects, and when it was separate from the world. Such a coming together of the whole Church was possible under those conditions. This "coming together," which the believers were exhorted "not to forsake," answered many important ends. In the passage we have read in Heb. x. it is connected with "considering one another." It is the occasion above all others when the saints have opportunity to see one another and to meet with one another, and if they neither see nor meet each other there is little likelihood of their considering one another. In this respect alone, therefore, it fulfils an important function.

In the first instance it was the occasion of their observing the Lord's Supper, or "breaking bread" together in remembrance of Him. Connected with this there was necessarily worship, praise, thanksgiving—all which was fitting and edifying. But it was also an occasion upon which the Word of God was ministered.

I do not know that we have much information in the Scriptures as to the coming together of the saints for the ministry of the Word on other occasions. I do not say that they did not come together at other times for that purpose; but in Corinthians and in

Hebrews it is in all probability the coming together on the first day of the week that is referred to.

From the very beginning of the Church's history on through the whole age the first day of the week has been kept as a sacred day, and it is our happy privilege so to observe it. It is not a legal enactment, but it is one of our most blessed privileges.

I am glad to find that in the assemblies which have reverted to the first principles of the Scriptures for guidance, there is an effort made by most to come together on the first day of the week, and I don't think we can be too much exhorted to abide by this scriptural and healthful practice habitually. Circumstances may often arise to hinder, especially those who serve in family life; but to allow trifles to prevent, or to be absent through carelessness or indifference, is to incur serious loss, and indicates a condition of soul far from that which is pleasing to God.

But in apostolic days, and as a matter of fact still, many are with us on the first day of the week who cannot get any other time, hence the immense importance of the little time that may be spent together being utilized according to the wisdom of God.

Now, I would not say a single word to detract from the importance of that which forms the central thought in the gathering. It is a gathering on the Lord's Day around the Lord's table to eat the Lord's Supper. These three things seem to me to have an obvious and significant connection. We gather around the Lord Himself or unto His name to do that which He commanded us to do. The fact that this command of our Lord's, first given on "the same night on which He was betrayed," was afterwards by the direct injunction of the ascended Lord repeated and confirmed to the Churches of the Gentiles by the Apostle Paul, gives it a very special claim upon us.

This gathering together, then, is a time of "communion" or "fellowship." They are the same word in the original. But communion is two-sided. It includes the worship, praise, thanksgiving, and prayers which ascend by Christ Jesus from us to God. But it also implies that God has opportunity of speaking to us.

In Ex. xxv. 22, God said to Moses concern-

ing the mercy-seat, "There will I meet with thee and I will commune with thee." And in Num. vii. 89 we read that when Moses went into the tabernacle to speak with God, "then he heard the voice of One speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat." Thus we see that communion is two-sided, and that service which consists only of prayer and praise cannot properly be called communion. The other side, the divine side, is the hearing of the Bridegroom's voice. That is the side upon which I desire now to dwell for a little.

I will ask you to look at a word in 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11. "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." That word "oracles" only occurs four times in the New Testament. Stephen speaks of the "lively oracles" received by the fathers. Paul, in Rom. iii. 2, enumerates as one of the chief advantages of the Jews that unto them were committed the oracles of God. In Heb. v. 12 those who for the time ought to have been teachers required to be taught again the very first principles of the oracles of God. Comparing the four passages together I think the term "oracles" refers clearly to that which God has spoken, and which is given to us in the Scriptures.

All that God ever did communicate to us of His word, His mind, His will, He has been pleased to communicate through Israel. The "Word made flesh," and the written Word have alike come to us Gentiles through Israel. And it is these communications of God through holy men of old who spake moved by the Holy Spirit which are called the oracles of God.

When it is said, "If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God," it seems to me that he who so speaks ought to recognise that he is speaking for God, that for the time being he is the one by whom God is conveying a message to His people, the channel through which God is speaking to their hearts.

Now this has nothing to do with the question of "*inspiration*." A man may be speaking a God-given message without any pretence to being inspired. The written Word alone is inspired (2 Tim. iii. 16). That which any man receives to minister to the Church will be (like prophecy of old) to "edification, exhortation, and comfort," but the man is not therefore infallible. Even the prophets in the early

Church were not above the judgment, discernment, of their brethren (1 Cor. xiv. 29). Something of the man, something of the flesh, may mingle with that which is from God.

Now you see this is the Godward side of communion. I ought to expect, I do expect, that when any one stands up to read God's Word, or to speak from it in the assembly, he is going to be the communicator to me of thoughts which God has given him for my blessing.

I am afraid that we have very little realised the deep responsibility that attaches to the ministry of the Word of God in the assembly.

Has it not been taken up without a due sense of responsibility, in a light, indifferent way, as if anything would do, as if to speak just what comes up was the divine principle of ministry? One goes with unexercised heart, saying no doubt God will give us something. Another starts up and speaks from a verse something that "did his own soul good." And all this is said to be of the Spirit!

Ought not those who are gifted of God to teach or to exhort to be in the very secret of His presence, hearing from God that he may have to give not only that which has done his own soul good, but that which is suited to the need of the hearers? A shepherd is very careful how the flock is fed. I have seen a shepherd at a certain time of the day go out with his dog to chase the sheep from the rich pasture of the valley up to the poorer pasture of the hill tops; too long amid the clover would have hurt them. So it is for those who minister to the flock of God, with divine wisdom to know what is the present need of the saints, and getting from God to be able to meet that need.

All this, I think, and more is included in the words, "Let him speak as the oracles of God."

It clearly implies that he speaks according to the Word of God; nothing else could be from God, seeing he has given us therein a *complete* revelation, "All things that are profitable for life and godliness." We don't require to go outside the Scriptures; all that is needed is that God by His Spirit be the guide, the instructor, the filler of the one who ministers the Word.

I am not going to contend for the clerical

position, or for any formal human ordination; this subject I have recently given my mind upon plainly enough; but I do not hesitate to say that many an "ordained minister" feels deeply the responsibility of being put in charge of the congregation he ministers to, and truly seeks to get a message from God for the people; whilst, on the other hand, there are those who, without ordination, take upon themselves to minister the Word with very little sense of responsibility to God. It is this sense of responsibility to God in the ministry of His Word that I believe to be one of our deepest needs.

That a man must necessarily go to college, and pass through a certain curriculum, in order to be able to minister the Word, we do not believe. Though I can boast of little learning myself I do not disparage it; I am thankful for what little I have, and am glad to be debtor to others who know more.

But let it ever be remembered that nothing worth having is got without labour, and this specially applies to the knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. A haphazard sort of way of ministering the Word will not permanently edify. We must bend ourselves to labour, and search and learn in some college; and the only true one for us is at the feet of the Lord Jesus—the Instructor, the Spirit of Truth. Failing diligent labour it will be poor food that we shall have to give to the flock of God.

In Proverbs xiii. 4 we read, "The soul of the diligent shall be made fat." In outward things we know it is the diligent workman that "gets on," but the same principle applies to spiritual progress.

There is such a thing as a spiritual sluggard, and there is such a thing as a diligent labourer in the Word—one who works out the vein of silver, one who digs for the jewels of truth, deep things and precious that are not obtained without labour.

I do not mean by this that one can by labour prepare a subject to be given in the Sunday morning meeting. I might do so, and might find, when in the meeting, that the Spirit of God was leading in quite another direction. But the diligent searcher of the Word in the presence of God, who does so for the nourishment of his own soul, esteeming the Word

of God "more than his necessary food," "nourished up in the words of faith and exercised unto godliness," will "have to give to him that needeth." "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished; but he that gathereth by labour shall increase" (Prov. xiii. 11). See what a premium God puts upon labour! We have great talk in these days about the dignity of labour and so on, and God knows that labour is best for every man, whether it be by the hand or the head. But look beneath the surface here, and you will see that there is a man who gets his knowledge of the Word of God cheaply, like the man who makes a fortune by speculation—by a few strokes of his pen;—he gets his knowledge second-hand—by hearing addresses, by reading books—but bestows little labour in diligently searching the Word. He may be able to give it forth fluently, and be regarded as having a wonderful gift; but knowledge so gained will not increase. It will not fatten your own soul; it will not edify; it will not bless; it will not tend to form Christ in those who hear. It may puff up and develop spiritual conceit, but it will not exercise the heart and the conscience.

(To be continued)

THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS.—XVIII.

THE PARABLE OF THE HOUSEHOLDER.

By THOMAS NEWBERRY, Editor of *Englishman's Bible*.

MATTHEW XXIV. 43, 44.

Verse 43. "But know this, that if the goodman of the house [master of the house] had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up [broken through]."

THIS parable, though definite in its teaching, has a two-fold application. It is a parable of the coming of the Son of Man, which, as we have seen, relates to His open manifestation as Son of Man to the world.

The language of the Apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians v. is very distinct on this point, as showing the direct application is not to the Church, but to the world and to the remnant of Israel: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto

you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord [Jehovah] so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say "Peace and safety," then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake [watch] or sleep, we should live together with Him."

All calculations of times or seasons by turning days into years, and fixing on certain epochs of commencement, and so on, are not only unnecessary, but also unscriptural and misleading. The injury done to the cause of truth by such ingenious, but unwise speculations, may never be estimated till the clear light of eternity reveals it. "It is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." Of the day and the hour when the Son of Man is manifested and the day of Jehovah cometh knoweth no man, neither the angels in heaven; neither was it given by the Father to the Son to communicate while He was here on earth: that day will come upon the world as a thief in the night, and find the world totally unprepared for it. The world is unbelieving on this point; its language is: "Where is the promise of His coming?" Not so with true believers now; their hope, expectation, and longing desire is for "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him." Though that coming and the taking up will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, it will not be an event unlooked for and undesired by the Church, but the fulfilment of the promise: "Surely I come quickly." And, whether at the moment watching or sleeping, all who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and are sealed by that Holy Spirit

of promise, will share with the Redeemer in His resurrection life and glory.

But, as we have said, there is an application of this parable to the believer and the Church, and this we find in Revelation iii., in the address to the Church in Sardis, where the Lord says: "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." It is the duty, the privilege, and for the inestimable blessing of the believer to be found watching, waiting, and ready for the Lord's return; but if this duty be neglected, and through worldliness, lukewarmness, or false teaching the believer refuses to watch, the coming of the Lord will be to him, as the coming of the Son of Man to the world, a surprise and a reproof, and a sudden breaking off of cherished plans and projects.

Verse 44. "Therefore, be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh."

This exhortation, in its direct application, was addressed to the disciples as the representatives of the elect remnant of Israel and their fellow-believers, who, after the removal of the Church, will pass through the scenes of trial and tribulation previous to the manifestation of the Son of Man, to whom the exact day and hour of His appearing will be unknown, and to whom, unless thus watchful, His coming will be at an hour least expected.

This exhortation, as thus addressed, we find again recorded in Revelation xvi. 15, under the sixth vial, immediately preceding the battle of the great day of God Almighty. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."

Thus, whether it be the Church now, or the remnant then, there is a blessing pronounced on those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching, with their loins girt and lamp burning, that, at His coming, they "may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

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STEVENSON A. BLACKWOOD.*

IN this handsome volume of six hundred pages we have a graphic picture of a remarkable man. Sir Arthur Blackwood—better known as Mr. Stevenson Arthur Blackwood—was for many years one of the best known and most highly esteemed of the many Christian workers in the city of London. As Financial Secretary of the Post Office, at the head of 130,000 employés, his influence was extensive and far-reaching. The remark of a post-master to a visitor on the announcement of Sir Arthur's death, expressed the feeling of multitudes in the postal service: "There is a death in every office in the kingdom to-day." "We feel," said a London official, "that we have all lost a friend in Sir Arthur Blackwood."

Stevenson Arthur Blackwood was born at Hampstead on 22nd May, 1832, and was the only son of Mr. Arthur Johnstone Blackwood, who was Gentleman Usher to King William IV., and subsequently to Her Majesty Queen Victoria. On leaving school at Sandford Grange, he spent several years at Eton, Cambridge, and Mecklenberg.

During the Crimean War he was made a field-acting commissariat officer, and so well did he perform the arduous and difficult duties of his office that his name was honourably mentioned in the House of Commons. On his return to England, in the end of 1855, he was promoted to a post in the Treasury Chest Department.

Through the death of a favourite sister he became concerned about his soul's welfare, but it was not until 29th June, 1856, that he was brought to know the Lord.

Mr. Blackwood, at his conversion, took a decided stand for Christ in the upper circles of society in which he moved, and immediately commenced Gospel work. For nearly forty years he was "instant in season, out of season," preaching and teaching, pleading and warning, working and warring. At one time he is addressing an audience of working men in the open-air; at another time he is conducting Bible readings amongst the upper classes; now we get a glimpse of him speaking to immense audiences at the Opera House, London,

or the Dome, Brighton; there he is addressing gatherings of policemen in his own house; and yonder he proclaims the Gospel to the letter-carriers at St. Martin's-le-Grand.

He was a most successful soul-winner, and was privileged to see much blessing as the result of his whole-hearted labours. In December, 1858, he was married to the Duchess of Manchester, a devoted Christian lady, who still survives him. Mr. Blackwood was appointed Financial Secretary to the Post Office in 1874. During the nineteen years that he filled this important and responsible post he discharged the multifarious duties devolving upon him with such remarkable tact and skill that at his death very high encomiums were passed upon him by Post Office officials. The Postmaster-General, at the Lord Mayor's banquet, referred to the "great ability and unimpeachable integrity of character which he had brought to the performance of his duties;" and to his death as "casting a gloom over the whole postal service of the country. Thousands of men and youths felt that in him they had lost not only a chief but a friend."

In this portly volume, compiled by a friend and edited by the widow, we have many valuable letters written by him to persons in various spiritual conditions which are well worthy of careful perusal. Being a general favourite in London society, his conversion caused quite a stir. To one who wrote asking

WHY HE GAVE UP BALLS,

theatres, &c., &c., he replied as follows: "It was no longer a question of what I must *give up* in order to win Christ, but having won Christ, what can I *do* for Him? How can I, who am redeemed with the precious blood of my Saviour, take pleasure in the amusements of the world that crucified Him 1800 years ago? How can I, when every moment is precious (for they are not my moments, but God's), spend my time in dancing, frivolous talking, and false, hollow civilities, when there are such realities as heaven and hell, and souls perishing at my door for lack of knowledge? Shall I, who am a son of God and destined to live for ever in His glorious presence, live here as a man of the world whose only thought is the amusement of the moment? God forbid;

* Some Records of the Life of Stevenson Arthur Blackwood, K.C.B. To be had at *Witness Office*. Price 12/.

I could do it no longer. Captain Trotter gave me a good rule at starting: 'Never go anywhere where you cannot conscientiously ask the Lord Jesus to go with you.' Writing on the subject of

SECRET PRAYER,

he remarks: "It is in the closet, when a man is shut out from the world, and can come calmly and leisurely before God, and draw very near to Him, and speak face to face with Him, that his soul makes progress in the Divine life. An hour alone with God in reading and prayer is worth the whole of the rest of the day; and a man comes out of his chamber, after pleading with his Father and pouring out his heart before Him, refreshed for his daily course, with heaven in his heart, and thankfulness on his lips. Point out the men who have been notable as holy, consistent Christians, benefactors of their generation, and eminent servants of God, and you will find without one exception that they have been regular in their morning, noon-day, and evening devotions. . . . A man's fondness for private communion with God is just the thermometer of his spiritual life" (p. 194). His intense earnestness and winning ways secured him many openings for the Gospel. Wherever he went, in whatever society he mingled, he sought to witness for Christ. Whether in London or Edinburgh, Cambridge or Dublin, Vienna or Constantinople, Paris or Lisbon, he proved himself a faithful ambassador of Christ. Princes and Princesses, Dukes and Duchesses, Barons and Baronesses, Earls and Countesses, listened with rapt attention to his faithful Gospel addresses. Nor was his ministry confined to the upper classes. Brick-makers and farm labourers, policemen and soldiers, sailors and postmen were reached by him with the glad message of mercy.

OPEN-AIR PREACHING.

Sir Arthur was a capital open-air preacher. When he resided at Crayford it was his custom in the summer months to preach on the Crayford Bridge. Numbers were arrested and saved through the word spoken by him in the open-air, cases of which are recorded. A man now holding a position in China was led to Christ through Sir Arthur's preaching on

Crayford Bridge. An interesting case was that of a young man who spent his Sunday evenings in a tavern called the "Bear." One night, while on his way to the "Bear," he heard Sir Arthur saying: "Sinner, what have you done for Christ?" He was awakened, and afterwards found peace when working in the Creek Paper Mill. A shopkeeper writes as follows: "Sir, I know it will gladden you to hear I was brought to know my Saviour through hearing one of your discourses last summer on Crayford Bridge."

THE PEN OF A READY WRITER.

Though a very busy man, Sir Arthur found time to write a number of valuable booklets and books. Many who never saw his face or heard him speak have been blessed through his writings. Amongst his books we would mention the following: "Forgiveness, Life, and Glory;" "The Shadow and Substance," addresses on the Passover; "Heavenly Places: or the Book of Joshua;" "Position and Progress." In addition to these, he wrote a number of excellent booklets for believers and unbelievers. "Eternal Life," a splendid Gospel tractate which has been greatly blessed in conversions, is now into its five-hundredth thousand. Numerous cases of blessing through these tractates are recorded, some of which are very striking. We have only space to relate the story of a Sunday-School teacher who writes that she took up—just to pass the time—the little book, "Assurance of Salvation." "There," she says, "I found what I so greatly needed—a *full, free* salvation through the blood of Jesus. My first feeling was of great surprise. This *present* salvation was so new and strange to me it did, indeed, seem too good to be true. But thank God, I know that I am saved, not because I feel it, but because God says it. I know that I shall be one of the stars in your crown which you will cast at the feet of Jesus."

ENTERS INTO REST.

In the early part of 1893 Sir Arthur's health began to fail, and his physician ordered him abroad. Towards the end of September, while at Ems, he grew much worse, and on his medical attendant assuring him that there was no hope of his recovery he said to the

nurse: "Oh, nurse, I have had glorious news to-day." Instructions were immediately given that he should be taken back to England. The delays, however, were numerous, and he had scarcely reached Harwich when he was summoned into the presence of Him whom he had served so long and so faithfully on 2d October, 1893.

Sir Arthur Blackwood's "Records" form, indeed, a most helpful volume, and the perusal of it is eminently calculated to stir up Christians to "works of faith and labours of love."

A. M.

"JEHOSHAPHAT."

Notes of Bible Reading by Mr. R. C. CHAPMAN.

Scriptures read, 2 Chronicles xvii., xviii., xix., and xx.

IT has always been in my mind that the story of Jehoshaphat both encourages and also solemnly warns. How solemn, after the prosperity according to chapter xvii., to find him not pursuing the course that was right. For had he been dealing aright with the Scriptures—they then had the books of Moses, also Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, and Psalms, a very large revelation of God—if, after having swept the land of idols, he had gone on diligently searching the Scriptures, he would have found how impossible it was for him to strike hands with wicked Ahab.

One great lesson from this story is, we ought to be trying our ways by the Scriptures. He began in the Spirit and ended in the flesh, but, considering the time in which he lived and the temptation to which he was exposed, Jehoshaphat was a marvellous man of grace.

Then, also, we see this, and it is a vast advantage, that God never will or can forego the claim he has upon our conscience for obedience. I have always had sorrow in reading the account of this man of God—how full of warning it is against resting in any obedience we have attained to. The whole family of God stop at a certain point, and don't search and try their ways, and so are overcome. How much easier it is for the fly to get into the spider's web than out of it! Psalm xxvi. should have been a guide to Jehoshaphat. He sincerely feared the Lord, but did not search into the Word, for had he, it would have been impossible for him

to be in fellowship with Ahab. "His eye was not single, and therefore his body was not full of light."

Then how solemn the story of his son. Jehoshaphat's affinity with Ahab encouraged his son to marry Ahab's daughter, and the fruit of this was that he murdered all his brethren. Let us remember Paul's words in 2 Corinthians vi. 17: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Let your fellowship with God be such that you may not be defiled with a *touch* of the dead.

But the eye of God never passes by anything that is of good in his child: we are apt to do so. The commandment is: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Then in Philipians iii. 15 there is a promise to those, and those only, who do not rest content with any measure of obedience. Then any of our ways not pleasing to God will be revealed to us. The mark of the perfect man is a keen eye for his own imperfection. The great pattern Psalm of self-knowledge and heavenly integrity is the 119th. How instructive the first eight verses—the very path that Jehoshaphat should have pursued. This is the diligence that ought to have been in him; but what shall we say of the Church of God in the present day? Christ the Great High Priest and our leader in worship is not generally considered by them, and if the hearts of the most of God's people be examined, the Epistle to the Hebrews will not be found there. Then there is the code of laws in Romans xii. If our ways be tried by them would they stand the test? We ought to have as tender a conscience about the body of Christ as we have quickness of feeling if a grain of dust gets into the eye. One fruit of the diligence in Psalm cxix. is love to the Word, v. 97. Then how does this Psalm end? In a depth of self-knowledge, so that it is not exalting myself above others, but taking the lowest place. Those are my best circumstances that best serve to check self-will, to try faith, and help humility.

If thou wouldst be borne with, bear with others.—*Fuller*.

TELL IT TO JESUS.

DO temptations oft besiege you,
Pressing round each day,
Go and tell them all to Jesu—
He will clear the way.
Do not let them long be lurking,
Gnawing at your heart;
Go, confess at *once* the working
Of the poisoned dart.

Have you trials? Is there weakness?
Have you doubt or care?
Tell Him all your grief and sickness,
Tell it out in prayer.
Steal away from toil and bustle,
Come apart and pray;
He will give you strength to wrestle;
Courage for the fray.

Why withhold thy sorrow longer—
Come and make it known;
Well thou knowest He is stronger,
Bear it not alone.
He is near thee in thy weakness,
Offering love and care;
Doubt no longer, then, His fitness
All its weight to bear.

Bring thy cares to Jesus ever,
That thy peace may be
Calm and steadfast as the river
Winding to the sea;
He has promised! *You* believe it?
Trust His written word;
Bring thy burden, then, and leave it
With thy loving Lord.

Glasgow.

J. A. W.

THE DESIRE OF GOD

FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS CHILDREN.

BY GEORGE ADAM.

Paper IV.—New Testament.

IN pursuing this theme we will now turn to what is known as the "New Testament," which is simply a clearer revelation of Jehovah, "the Holy One of Israel."

The line of thought before my mind would lead me more to consider the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and the present ministry of Christ as the Great High Priest.

But we cannot pass over His life on earth without seeking to glean what help we can to enable us to become better acquainted with that God "with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13).

The Lord Jesus Christ was "God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). He was "the brightness of Jehovah's glory, and the express image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3). When Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," the Lord replied, "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known ME, Philip; he that hath seen ME hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 8-9). From the Garden of Eden all down through the ages the secret of the Devil's power has chiefly been in getting the human soul to have wrong thoughts of God. And there is no better way of getting these wrong thoughts corrected than by pondering over the character and ways of the Son of God, as seen in His life as it is recorded in the four gospels.

In connection with our subject one thing evident in the Lord's life on earth is that He was essentially a

MAN OF FELLOWSHIP.

There was nothing of the "*recluse*" about His life. If He retired from the company of His disciples it was to commune with His Father. When He came down from the Mount of Communion He is immediately seen in the society of man, either His disciples or "the multitude. As a Man He also had His *special fellowships*." He took Peter, James, and John with Him on several occasions, and left the rest behind. Inside that little circle there was one for whom He had a special affection. That one seems to delight to call himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7-20). The same inspired writer tells us that "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus" (John xi. 5). And when Lazarus fell sick his sisters sent a message, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom Thou lovest (fondly lovest) is sick" (verse 3). He loves all His disciples, as He Himself is loved of the Father (chap. xv. 9), but there are some of them with whom His holy, loving heart is "more at home" than with others. Might the reason of this not be that such favoured ones are more at home with Him?

They know Him better, and draw more on His love and grace. It is the unholy, *suspicious* thoughts which human nature has of the blessed God which keep so many of us living at a distance from Him; and when He in His love to us would draw near to seek our fellowship, we do as Adam and Eve did—we run away and hide ourselves; and in too many cases it is for the same reason. Conscience tells us we are not living as we ought, but even then faith can say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life" (John vi. 68).

In the Lord's intercourse with the Bethany family there is much which we might profitably consider did space permit, but one thing I must notice—that is, when the Son of God would show forth His glory (verse 4), it was that family He so fondly loved which He chose to put through a deep trial and sorrow "for the glory of God."

This has often been His way since then. There are sorrows which we bring upon ourselves. There are sufferings which we may have to endure at the Lord's hand on account of sin. But there is also the *special culture* which the fruit-bearing branch gets from the Heavenly Husbandman. This is often painful to endure, but in the end "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. xii. 11).

Besides these instances of special love on the part of the Saviour there are other incidents in His life which reveal how the Lord of glory craved the fellowship of His disciples. The first of these I would notice is the scene in the Garden. When He came to the place called Gethsemane He did not enter it alone. He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. And His charge to them was, "Tarry ye here and *watch with me*." When He came back from that mysterious conflict and found them asleep. He said unto Peter, "What! could ye not watch with Me one hour?"

There is a peculiar pathos in these two words

"WITH ME."

They reveal the longing of the heart of the suffering Saviour for human fellowship. And He has the same longing to-day. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever"

(Heb. xiii. 8). His injunction to us is the same as to the sorrowing disciples: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." And when we are overcome through weakness His tender consideration for us is just the same. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It is also the same sweet expression: "*Watch with Me*." Watch against your spiritual enemies, and watch with Me for the coming morning.

On another occasion He said to His disciples: "Ye are they which have continued *with Me* in My temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me" (Luke xxii. 28, 29). His temptations long ago were ended, but it is still the *day of His rejection*. Shall we have the joy and honour of being owned by Him on the "crowning day," as those who have *continued with Him* in His rejection? Shall our loyalty of heart to Him in His rejection now secure for us a place near Himself in the coming kingdom?

Again He says, "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth" (Luke xi. 23). Here is fellowship again, and a fellowship which, if apprehended and enjoyed, would settle once for all the vexed and much disputed question of "*reception*." In this one expression lies the secret of it all. Gathering

WITH HIM.

The under shepherd walking and working in heart communion with the "Great Shepherd of the sheep." It is blessed work to be so drawn into fellowship with Himself. But what havoc has been made by gathering whilst the gatherer has been out of communion with Him "who died that He might gather together into one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (John xi. 52). Verily, such unholy gatherings when leading men have been out of communion with the Lord Himself have proved to be indeed a scattering of the flock.

These words, "with Me," which denote fellowship, we find in another connection. When the Lord was washing His disciples' feet, and when He came to Peter he said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I wash thee not thou hast no part WITH ME" (John xiii. 8). This is a

deeply solemn truth. Peter was a born-again man. He had been washed (bathed) in the laver of regeneration, and that washing never needed to be repeated. That once-for-all washing secured for him a place in the "Father's house," because it introduced him into the family. But whilst as a child of God he was sure of a place in heaven, yet unless he allowed the Lord to keep his feet clean the Lord and Peter could not walk in company on the way to heaven. The scene in the Garden which we noticed tells of the grace of the Son of God. This scene tells of His holiness. However much delight He may take to Himself in the society of His redeemed people He cannot walk

WITH THEM

in their path down here, nor can they be allowed to "draw near" into the "holiest," where He has gone, unless there is frequent intercourse with Him about the daily defilement we contract as we walk through or serve Him in this defiled scene. It is here where so many of us come short. We can take the *big foxes*, or those sins which appear in the life, but the risings of nature within us and the unholiness of the scene without us costs us so little exercise of soul before the Lord; and as a consequence there is often little scriptural groaning to be away from it all to a scene where sin shall never enter. It is the *happiness* of heaven which attracts the carnally-minded believer, but it is the *holiness* of heaven which is its chief attraction to the godly Christian. And as we grow in grace we become more and more conscious of how much we need to beware of the "little foxes" which spoil the vines of fellowship. If these are allowed to run at large they will not only blight our own spiritual life, but they will rob our Lord and Saviour of that which He has so dearly bought, of that which He so justly claims, and that which He so highly values. "How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine! And the smell of thine ointments than all spices."

"ALL SAINTS."

THREE TIMES IN EPHESIANS.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---------|
| I. Love to all saints, | - | - | i. 15 |
| II. Comprehend <i>with</i> all saints, | - | - | iii. 18 |
| III. Supplication <i>for</i> all saints,- | - | - | vi. 18 |

"YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND FOR- EVER."

By COL. A. O. MOLESWORTH.*

Hebrews xiii. 7-14.

VERSE 7.—Remember, preserve in mind the instruction given by those who were your guides and instructors in the faith, considering, *i.e.*, carefully contemplating and weighing the end or object (or perhaps more definitely, the result of) their tenor of life, how blessed it was in every way. Remember how they spoke unto you the Word of God, enforcing it by their own example. Whose faith follow—imitate.

Verse 8.—For Jesus Christ, who was their object, and whose life-example of *faith* they insisted on, who created and sustained *their* faith, is the same for you "to-day" as he was "yesterday" to them (and to all believers before them), and He is the same unto all generations, unchanging in grace and power.

Verse 9.—Therefore "be not carried about with divers and strange or foreign doctrines," seeing you have learned the only true mode of salvation, *i.e.*, *by faith in Jesus Christ*. It is a good thing that the heart be established firmly in grace, *i.e.*, in *the grace* of God, as fully providing salvation; not with meats, *i.e.*, with carnal ordinances, such as meats and drinks, and the ceremonial services prescribed under the Mosaic covenant—in the tabernacle service—which things were but a *shadow* of the good things which were to come, and which have not profited or brought any true benefit to them which have been occupied therein.

Verse 10.—"We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat, no power or liberty to eat, who serve in the tabernacle" (for clear understanding of this sentence compare 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14; 1 Cor. x. 18, where evidently the metaphorical sense is meant). "We have—and this you, as Hebrews, know perfectly well about, *we have a sacrifice offered on the altar*, a certain special, well-known sacrifice, viz., the sin offering (Lev. xvi), of which nobody serving in the tabernacle ever ate; its benefits came by *the grace of God*, accepting it on Israel's account, and not by its being eaten of.

Verse 11.—"For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by

* Author of "The Ministry of Women."

the high priest, for or on account of sin, *i.e.*, as sin offerings are *burned wholly* without the camp." No priest, no one, ate aught of them, yet their benefit was, of God's grace, for all.

Verse 12.—"Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered, as a sin offering, as an atoning victim, without the gate" of Jerusalem. Now, it is on His sacrifice your eternal life depends. He, by the grace of God, has been made sin for us.

Verse 13.—"Let us go forth, therefore, unto Him, not ashamed of but openly avowing our sole faith in His sacrifice—without the camp—bearing His reproach. It will necessitate our turning away from our national religion and the earthly temple, once accredited and honoured of God, but now no longer anything for us to trust in or boast in, for Jesus Christ has come and died and risen again, and we are His, and glory in being so. Our earthly Jerusalem continues not; we seek a city out of sight—but which is to come—of which the builder and maker is God.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

By MAX ISAAC REICH.

IF there be a Man in heaven—an entirely new thing—there is the blessed companion truth, a *divine Person on the earth*. The one depends on the other. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you" (John xvi. 7). And "the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 39). Humanity in the Person of the Son has been carried up to the throne. When the Son of Man was morally glorified in His obedience on the cross, God was glorified in Him in the vindication of His character before the whole universe, seemingly compromised through the allowance of sin, so that God could now "declare His righteousness" (Rom. iii.). The only suitable answer to that was that God should glorify Him in Himself, and that straightway, not waiting till millennial days (John xiii. 32). He was "raised from the dead by the glory of the Father" (Rom. vi.).

But what about earth? Earth which has cast Him out and denied Him a place, as the eunuch of Ethiopia noted: "His life is taken from the earth!" Solemn thought! Ah!

into this scene, where Satan is now "the prince," his title in connection with the crucifixion of "the Prince of glory," the Spirit has come to dwell, representing, and in the lives of the saints reproducing, the One refused. "When He the Spirit of Truth is come, He shall glorify Me" (John xvi. 13, 14), "the Comforter shall testify of Me" (John xv. 26).

Always acting on the earth, He is now on earth in a new way, dwelling there. This could only be on the ground of redemption. So in the type: "I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt that I may dwell among them" (Ex. xxix. 46). "I will prepare Him an habitation," is one of the notes in that song which celebrates the first type of redemption Scripture presents" (Ex. xv). As it has been often said God could visit Adam in Eden, or the patriarchs, but returned again to His own heaven. He had no dwelling-place on earth until after a people had been typically redeemed and brought to Himself. This is now a blessed reality in the Spirit, as we have it. "Know ye not that ye are the temple in God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth of you" (1 Cor. iii. 16). "Know ye not that *your body* is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you" (1 Cor. vi. 19).

Now it is important to distinguish new birth from the sealing with the Spirit. I mean as to the nature of the blessings. As dead in sins, quickening is known. As forgiven, the Spirit is imparted.

The gift of the Spirit, as distinct from divine life in the soul (Himself the power as well as the impartor of that life) is, in the preaching of the apostles, connected with remission of sins (Acts ii. 38; x. 43, 44). It is the crowning gift of the Gospel (Eph. i. 13). New birth was always known. There never was a saint who had it not. It lies at the back of everything pleasant to God in man ever since "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" began to be true. But the *work* and *operation* of the Spirit is one thing; the personal *indwelling* and *seal* is quite another. The latter is a strictly Christian blessing, and implies deliverance from the law, as Galatians iii. and iv. prove. "Children" they were, but dispensationally in the position and experience of "sons," only since "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that

we might receive the adoption of sons, and because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 4-6). "Child" implies life, "son" speaks of dignity and liberty. "The Spirit *giveth* life," but "where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there is liberty" (2 Cor. iii). Blessed be God, believers in the Gospel of their salvation have both now.

There is no Christianity without the Spirit. There may be the preparatory workings of the Spirit, but no man is a Christian until it can be said to him: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you" (Rom. ix. 9). This is the only true Christian state before God, the blessed result of Christ's death and resurrection. One is not even a "babe" without "the unction from the Holy One" (1 John ii. 20). The Spirit is not imparted because of some supposed "second blessing," some deep inward experience, etc., but, as in the type of Lev. xiv., follows upon the blood, shedding the love of God abroad in the heart of everyone who is "justified by faith" (Rom. v). As the seal He assures me that I belong to glory: as the earnest, that glory belongs to me: as the unction from the Holy One, He would ever teach my soul to contemplate the wonders and beauties of His person. In Eph. i. these three aspects of the Spirit are grouped together.

Christendom has largely lost the truth concerning the Spirit. The creeds hardly confess it. His Godhead may be maintained, but His presence is practically ignored. "There is one body and one Spirit" (Eph. iv.). The multiplicity of organisations, and the various forms of machinery to keep them in motion, have made this verse a dead letter. One special feature, I believe, of the Holy Spirit's action at this time is the recovery of saints from traditional systems to walk in keeping with the truth of His presence in the Church as the body of Christ and the House of God. We are exhorted to "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The sad failure of corporate ecclesiastical testimony has not baffled the Spirit in His deep joy to present a witness to Christ agreeable to His heart. So that we find, though "the candlestick" is set aside in the beginning of Revelation, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come!" in the close. He thus remains with the bride to the

end, seeking to present that costly "pearl," won out of the depths of the Gentile sea, to Him who has loved her, and washed her from her sins in His own blood.

This is the last figure of the Church the Word presents, and it describes truly the attitude towards Christ which the Spirit would produce among saints in the light of His return.

As "the body," the Church derives her existence *from* Christ: as "the bride," the Church is watching *for* Christ. The Spirit's presence forms the one, the Spirit's energy, even in the darkest day, produces the other.

The Lord grant that, till we see His blessed face, we may be found in the peaceful current of the Spirit, which ever flows apart from that which the wisdom and pride of man would set up.

Leaves from an Evangelist's Note Book.—No. III.

STEEPING THE SEED.

A NUMBER of years ago two servants of Christ met and had an interesting and profitable conversation regarding the Lord's work. One of them had been richly and abundantly blessed in his labours, whilst the other had seen but little results as the fruit of his toil. The one was a happy, hearty, hopeful worker, and the other was a discouraged and disheartened one.

"I cannot understand how it is that you have had so much blessing and I have had so little," said the downcast labourer. Continuing, he said: "I have sought to scatter the seed diligently. The seed is the same, for it is the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, and the soil is the same, for we work alongside of each other in the same town. Your seed seems to spring up immediately on your sowing it, whereas I only see an occasional blade." They compared notes and talked together until it was getting late, when the successful worker said: "I must go now and steep my seed." "Steep your seed!" exclaimed the other in astonishment. "Yes," was the reply, "I always steep my seed before I sow it. I steep it until it begins to swell and germinate, and I can almost see a green blade springing from it; and then, you know, it speedily grows after it is sown." "And how do you steep your seed, and in what mysterious mixture?"

"Brother," said he, "it is a composition made of one part of the tears of agony for the

souls of men, and the other part of the drops of the cordial of confidence in God as the hearer and answerer of prayer. This mixture, if you drop your seed in it, hath a transcendent efficacy to quicken the growth of every grain, so that none of it is lost."

That evening's conversation was not soon forgotten by the despondent sower, and he too began to steep his seed in the same "wondrous composition," and it was not long ere he saw a harvest of blessing. Fellow-sowers, let us steep the seed ere we sow it. Discouraged toiler in some hard corner of the harvest-field, don't forget the Master's words: "Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9). You may have been thinking of giving up in despair, on account of seeing so little results from your efforts. Be not weary! "*Ye shall reap IF YE FAINT NOT.*" See, however, that the seed is steeped ere it is sown. "*They that sow in tears shall reap in joy*" (Psa. cxxvi. 5). This is surely an encouraging word for you. "*Shall reap in joy.*" "*He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him*" (Psa. cxxvi. 6). Have faith in God's willingness and ability to save. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel xxxiii. 11). It is His desire that *all men* should be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4). The proof of this is seen in the fact that the Lord Jesus "gave Himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6). Go forth, then, even though you are discouraged, and sow beside all waters. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecc. xi. 1).

"Watch not the clouds above thee,
Let the whirlwind round thee sweep;
God may the seed-time give thee,
But another's hand may reap.
Have faith, though ne'er beholding
The seed burst from its tomb;
Thou knowest not which may prosper,
Or whether all shall bloom."

"He that observeth the winds shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap" (Eccl. xi. 4). In summer or winter, in rain or in sunshine, in times of prosperity or adversity, let us scatter the Gospel seed, and let us steep it ere it is sown. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Eccl. xi. 6).

MR. HENRY DYER.

[It is with unfeigned sorrow that we announce the departure of our much-valued friend and fellow-servant, Mr. Henry Dyer. He died at Exeter on 15th November, and the funeral, which was largely attended, took place there on the 19th. We commend to the sympathy and prayers of the saints his sorely-stricken widow. We are glad and thankful to be able to give the following account of Mr. Dyer's life, labours, and last days, written, at our request, by our esteemed friend, Mr. W. H. Bennet.]

MR. HENRY DYER was brought to the Lord at an early age, and first met with Christians assembling only in the Lord's name in London about fifty years ago. Soon after he spent some years at Wellington, Somerset, and at Weymouth, in the family of the late Mr. Deck (whose hymns have so greatly helped the worship of many believers), and then was for a time at Sherborne, in Dorset.

His brother, Mr. William B. Dyer, a man of exceptional gift as a preacher of the Word, had gone to Yeovil about the year 1848, and was much used of God there and in the neighbourhood. Mr. Henry Dyer, who was *considerably younger, frequently visited him*, and took up his abode in Yeovil about 1860, after his brother went to Kendal.

With the feeling that the occasional assembling of servants of Christ for united prayer and conference over the Scriptures was calculated to help them in their service, Mr. Dyer began a meeting for this purpose in Yeovil, when such conferences were rare, and though comparatively small, it was very much valued. This meeting was held quarterly, and was the precursor of the present larger and more extended annual meetings in that town. His faithful and loving service of those days is gratefully remembered both in Yeovil itself and in neighbouring towns and villages, and he loved at times to speak of one and another who were brought to God through his reading the Scriptures and speaking at street corners—a work in which he was very diligent as long as he was able to continue it.

Where he remained in any locality he was pre-eminently a *pastor*. His tenderness in visiting the suffering and the sorrowful was very marked, and his earnestness in seeking the wandering showed how truly he watched for souls, while his readiness—at any cost to himself—to contribute to the breaking down of barriers between the Lord's people, gave evi-

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dence of his possession of the mind of Christ in no ordinary measure.

During the last months of his brother's illness he lovingly ministered to him, and after his departure to be with Christ, in June, 1865, he remained for some time in Kendal, where he was followed in service by Mr. Henry Groves. After this he spent some years at Exeter, Bath, and Malvern. But, while many assemblies profited much by his visits, his specially fruitful service for the past five-and-twenty years was connected with the conferences which have now become so much more general. From the beginning of the Leominster conferences "the three Henry's," as they were sometimes called—of whom only Mr. Heath now remains with us—gave themselves in true fellowship to the sustaining of these meetings. In other special meetings of children of God, held annually or half-yearly at Dublin, Belfast, Glasgow, and many places, our departed brother's powerful exposition and application of Scripture caused his presence to be much desired and valued.

A few years back, on account of weakness in his chest and throat, Mr. Dyer was advised to spend the winter in a more suitable climate than the British Isles, and this was doubtless God's way of leading His servant to many countries in the four quarters of the globe, in which scattered and solitary servants of Christ were much refreshed and encouraged by the visits of himself and Mrs. Dyer. He had long done his utmost to help forward efforts for spreading the gospel in Romish and heathen countries, and these visits enabled him to speak still more forcibly of their deep need, and to exhort Christians of these favoured lands to take their share in this great work.

His last long journey was to South Africa, which he reached in February, 1895. There, besides spending a good deal of time in Cape-town, Durban, and Johannesburg, he and Mrs. Dyer took long and wearisome journeys to visit believers in out-of-the-way places. In Johannesburg they were shut up during the grave troubles in the early days of this year, when it seemed probable that the city would be the scene of warfare, and our dear brother's ministry and example greatly strengthened the faith of many there at the time. But, while doubtless the climate helped him in some ways, the strain of all this told

upon him and Mrs. Dyer also, and when they reached England in May, he was very feeble, and Mrs. Dyer was far from well.

After the conference at Leominster last June they visited Malvern, where he was taken very ill, and they then went to Bourne-mouth. In July he suffered much from sleeplessness, and, a further change being advised, they were for some time the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Churchill, at Wimbledon. In August they left for Barnstaple, stopping *en route* for a little while (as they thought) at Exeter. Mr. Knill—a brother in the Lord, who was mourning the recent loss of his wife—gladly received them, as he and Mrs. Knill had often done, and, on learning from a medical man, whose aid had to be sought, that there was little prospect of Mr. Dyer ever being able to leave his house, he thankfully accepted the service of ministering to him in his closing days, and with the willing aid of his house-keeper carried it out most devotedly.

When Mr. Dyer began to realise that his very active service was over he was depressed in mind, but God graciously soon raised him above this, and gave him full peace and quiet rest in Himself and His will, and meditation and prayer characterised his last days. After the end had been expected almost hourly for a week, he peacefully fell asleep at 8-30 on the evening of November 15, in the 75th year of his age.

Mr. Dyer was in great measure dependent upon God for the supply of his need in his much journeying, and His hand in guiding him to the house of a friend, where every care was bestowed upon him, may well be marked for the strengthening of our faith.

Our departed brother was well known as "a ready scribe" or teacher of the Word of God, the secret being that, like Ezra, who is thus described, he "prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do and to teach it." It would of necessity be known only to a smaller circle that, if possible, a more marked characteristic was his intense *sympathy*, the exercise of which was aided by a remarkable *memory*. His letters were often very helpful, and he was a most diligent correspondent, but he was also a man of prayer, and, rising early, he habitually sought to remember many at the mercy-seat.

On the 19th of November his well-worn body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Exeter to await the first resurrection. A large company,

some of whom came long distances, showed their affection for him by assembling together, and words for profit, mingled with thanksgiving and prayer, were uttered by many voices. A larger number who could not be present on that occasion will, we are sure, add their thanksgivings for the long and faithful labours of him who now rests from them, and their prayers for his dear widow, whose devotion to her husband and interest in all his service must make her feel her loss the more intensely. We need not pray for the repose of *his* soul, as some in their blindness are teaching, but for the true and continuous rest of *her* spirit in her all-sufficient God it is our privilege to make earnest supplication, and may the Lord enable us to carry out the exhortation, "*Whose faith follow.*"

In Memoriam: Mr. B. Dyer.

"GOD TOOK HIM," NOV. 15, 1896.

O RAPTURED worshipper!

Our hearts would follow thee within the veil,
As, wrapped in wonder, first thine eyes beheld,
Without a cloud between, thy glorious Lord!
What were thy feelings then? Say, did thy speech
(On earth so ready) find a fitting word
To make thy heart's full adoration known?
Or, low in solemn silence didst thou bow—
Silence more eloquent than ora speech—
Before the LAMB once slain on Calvary?

Well we remember with what rev'rence thou
On earth didst worship at His sacred feet,
And with what mingled feelings—joy and grief—
Thy spirit contemplated Calvary's woe!
But who shall tell what that glad moment wrought
Within thy breast, when thou didst see His face,
And on thine ears Heaven's sacred *Hallel* fell!
That song had oft on earth entranced thy soul,
But with what holy rapture thou wouldst haste
To join the anthem and to swell His praise!

While in the body pent *our* spirits are,
Mem'ry will oft recall the sacred hour
When round the hallowed table of our Lord,
In sweet communion, thou didst lead our souls
In worship low to bow before His throne.

Brother below'd and longed for, we shall miss
Thy saintly service in the church below!
Vig'rous in mind and strong in soul wast thou—
Like fiery steeds which Pharaoh's chariots drew,
So were they as compared to thy frail flesh.

Thy sacrifice of self, thy zealous love
Endeared thee to our hearts in either sphere.
Yet not one moment would we bring thee back:
With patient expectation we would watch,
And wait the mighty Voice which soon shall call
To *union everlasting* with our GOD. M. M. D.

Leominster, Nov. 19, 1896.

Questions and Answers.

Replies to appear in the next number require to be sent in not later than 15th of present month, and so on; the 15th of the month being always the latest to which we can defer making up for press.

REPLIES ARE INVITED TO THE FOLLOWING:—

John xii. 25. What is the meaning of "loving," "hating," "losing," "keeping" the life?

Is it according to Scripture principles for a servant of the Lord to write and ask a meeting if he may come and preach? In a large city meeting four evangelists enquired *at one time* if the way was open for meetings. Light from example or teaching of the Word will be valued.

In Solomon's prayer, as recorded in Kings and Chronicles, the words differ considerably, though the sense is nearly the same. Are we to understand that the actual words used are not recorded in either case? This question would apply to many other passages, as for instance Matt. xix. 18, 19, and Mark x. 19.

Explain Rev. i. 10. Is it the first day of the week or the day of the Lord?

ONE-MAN MINISTRY.—Does Galatians vi. 6 teach one-man ministry? If not, what is the correct teaching thereof?

MULTIPLIED WITHOUT JOY.—Please explain Isaiah ix. 3, "Thou hast multiplied the nation and *not* increased the joy; they joy before Thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil."

OUTSIDE THE CAMP.—The expression, "without the camp," is frequently used; please explain whether Hebrews xiii. 11 or Exodus xxxiii. 7 is to guide us in carrying out the exhortation.

UNITY.—Is it true that there is no word for "unity" in Psalm cxxxiii. as far as the original is concerned? Being simply "dwell together," or, more literally, "sit together."

EVERLASTING LIFE.—Is there any Scripture to warrant the thought that believers now have not everlasting life, only the assurance of having it in the future state?

THE SLEEPING DISCIPLES.

QUESTION 534.—Explain Matthew xxvi. 45, 46. "Sleep on now and take your rest." "Rise, let us be going."

Answer A.—To say that Jesus did not know that Judas was coming would be to deny His divinity. Most probably a short time elapsed between verses 45 and 46. Christ told His tired followers to "sleep on *now*" because Judas and his company would soon come up and they would not be allowed to sleep. W. H.

Answer B.—Is not the explanation of these verses very simple? For the third time the

disciples awake at their Master's call. Ashamed and penitent, they are about to arise to watch and pray, but they hear words that must have been sadly spoken, telling them that the opportunity to watch with their Lord is past for ever. They have slept away the precious time, and now that they would watch, it is *too late*. They may sleep on as far as that is concerned.

As the Lord finished speaking the betrayer and his followers enter the garden. The Saviour calls upon His disciples to go with Him towards the multitude. It is for ever too late to watch with Him, but here is an opportunity offered to stand by Him in the awful hour of arrest and shame. Verse 56 shows that the failure in this was as great as in the lack of watchfulness and prayer. "Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled." What a word is there here for each redeemed soul! May we so learn by the sad failures recorded, that the experience may never be ours. W. H. S.

Answer C.—Peter, and James, and John had been invited by the Lord to be present with Him, and being told by Him that His soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, they were invited to the unique privilege—to watch with Him. They entirely failed to watch with Him during that terrible one hour in Gethsemane. The opportunity, the privilege, was for ever lost; it never would, or could, come again, so that was all over. So far as fellowship with Him in His Gethsemane sorrow was concerned, they might sleep on now. There was yet something for them to see and to do in the immediate future, therefore, "Arise, let us be going." Thus many of the Lord's disciples since then have

missed splendid opportunities and precious privileges which never more returned. Yet to the awakened heart and conscience He will say, "Arise, let us be going." In company with Him some other privilege may be offered, some other opportunity may arise. Arise, let us be going. J. S.

Editor's Note.—This passage has been eloquently described as "the irrevocable past and the available future." The answers given indicate the same line of thought. But it does not seem to us to be doing violence to the narrative to allow of a short interval of rest between verses 45 and 46.

"NO MAN HATH ASCENDED UP."

QUESTION 535.—In what sense had "no man ascended up to heaven" (John iii. 18), seeing Elijah, Enoch, and others had gone up ere this time?

Answer A.—The Lord is here showing his claim to teach the things of God. He asserts that no man had ever yet ascended into heaven and learned heavenly things, and then returned to teach them. But He, the Son of Man, who came from heaven, and was ever in the bosom of the Father, had come for this very purpose, to show men "heavenly things," and to reveal the all-embracing love of God. A. O. M.

Editor's Note.—The connection shows that the Lord's meaning is, no man now on earth as a witness for God ever ascended to heaven. Not having done so, no man could tell of heavenly things. The Lord Jesus could, having come from heaven, and being in the bosom of the Father.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF "THE WITNESS."

IN continuing the issue of *The Witness* for next year, we purpose (p.v.) adhering to the object for which it was commenced twenty-seven years ago, viz.: "To present the Truth in its variety and breadth, with definiteness and moderation, keeping back nothing that we deem to be profitable, yet seeking to present it in such a spirit as to give no unnecessary offence to anyone."

We would record our gratitude to God for help vouchsafed in the past, and for blessing given through the truth ministered in *The Witness*, of which not a few in many lands have borne testimony, to our joy and encouragement.

For 1897 we hope to have:—

A series of Papers on CHRIST AS PRESENTED IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS; as well as original articles by the Editor.

Original Notes on THE PARABLES OF THE LORD JESUS by Thomas Newberry, Editor of *The Englishman's Bible*.

SHORTHAND NOTES of Addresses by Dr. Neatby, Robert C. Chapman, George Müller, J. R. Caldwell, J. G. M'Vicker, and others.

Articles on VARIOUS SUBJECTS of interest by Messrs. W. H. Bennet, Geo. Adam, Wm. Shaw, George F. Trench, J. Hixon Irving, Max Isaac Reich, Colonel Molesworth, and others.

As well as REVIEWS of profitable books by Alex. Marshall; POEMS by A. W. P. Strong, Douglas Russell, &c.; ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS on a variety of Subjects; INTELLIGENCE from many lands; Missionary Reports, Correspondence, Bible Notes, &c.

We shall be thankful for the prayers of all who love the Lord Jesus, for wisdom and grace to continue this service, and for increased blessing thereon.

J. R. C.