

OLD-FASHIONED BIBLE THEMES

by

A. H. STEWART

Author of "Crumbs from the Master's Table;"
"Maranatha!—the Coming of Christ and Signs of the Times;"
"Bodily Healing Since Pentecost" and "All Things;"
"The Old-Fashioned Gospel;" "Amazing Grace;"
Etc., Etc.



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PREFACE

IN presenting this book, "OLD-FASHIONED BIBLE THEMES," I am deeply conscious of the fact that better exegeses of the same subjects have been written by others, but since numbers have been blessed through the spoken word in giving forth these same truths, "my heart's desire and prayer" is that our gracious God and Father will deign to use His own Truth in this printed form for the glory of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, "to whom be glory and honor, now and for evermore." In His Person and work there is infinite fulness which meets every need of man, either as a sinner or as a worshiper who worships "the Father in spirit and in truth."

Of course, we verily believe it is the infinite dignity of His glorious Person which gives value to His Word and His work. This we have sought to emphasize in every chapter, believing it is the work of Christ alone that saves, and His words which give the "much assurance" necessary to the enjoyment of "God's salvation" (Acts 28: 28), and which becomes "our salvation" (Eph. 1: 13), when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who do shall never be confounded nor put to shame.

Many have sought out new ways whereby they might climb up to God, but at last they can only be treated as "thieves and robbers," for our Lord has said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (John 10:1). The old-fashioned way is the best and only true way, yea, it is God's way, for our Lord has said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6).

Should any reader of this volume find his way through eye-gate to the Lord Jesus, or should one already "His own" find help, comfort, and cheer, the author will feel that his "labor has not been in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

—A. H. STEWART.

OLD - FASHIONED BIBLE THEMES

Election

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied” (1 Pet. 1: 2).

“Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Tim. 2: 10).

From these Scriptures we learn that both Peter and Paul were firm believers in *election*, yet both of them were ardent missionaries who found delight in telling of the grace of God and the salvation offered to all men through the finished work of Christ at Calvary. As an example of this, we read of Peter preaching to a Gentile to whom he said, “Of a truth I perceive that God is no Respecter of persons” (Acts 10: 34). Later on (verse 43) he makes plain that

“WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM

shall receive remission of sins.” Surely we

understand that the big word WHO-SO-EVER excludes no one. No, not one!

“Yes, He included me. Yes, He included me;
When my Lord said who-so-ever,
He included me.”

Without a doubt the writer of these lines was a saved man, for he continues:

“Gladly I read, whosoever may
Drink at the fountain of life to-day,
And when I read it, I always say,
Jesus included me too.”

Yes, He included me! Bless His name forever! This is a God-given conclusion. If we had the holy apostle Peter as our preacher to-day, we could not fail to understand whom he meant when he offered forgiveness of sins through the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is also true of our beloved apostle Paul. Hear him in Acts 13: 38-41: “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.”

What a proclamation! Justification offered,

and from the exact amount, "all things." This was offered to "men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and

WHOSOEVER AMONG YOU

feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent" (Acts 13: 26). None could misunderstand such plain speaking. Peter and Paul did not cast away God's truth of election, as some do to-day, because they could not reconcile it with the grace of God and man's free will. The secret of election is in the words, "according to *foreknowledge*," which no man possesses. When looking into the future the wise man, Solomon, could only say, "For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?" (Eccles. 8: 7).

No; foreknowledge belongs to God alone, and His election is always according to that wondrous attribute, which He alone possesses, hence He never makes a mistake. There is no need to attempt to reconcile election and free grace for they have never quarrelled. They are like the two rails upon which the locomotive and coaches run; they never come together, though both are necessary and both continue to the terminal.

Election is a family secret and not a hiding-place for a Christless man or woman. Those who try to hide there will find that truth a poor place indeed. "For this is good and acceptable

in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2: 3-6). After reading these words, could anyone deny that God desires his salvation and that he may *know* it? If God did not know those who would believe, then He would be without foreknowledge and like unto one of us.

I often try to explain *election* by using the story of David's anointing to be King of Israel. Read the whole of 1 Sam. 16. God had rejected Saul the people's choice, and had chosen a king from among the sons of Jesse, the Bethlehemite. Did Samuel know whom God had chosen? Did Jesse or any of his sons know? Was David aware that God had chosen him? The answer to all of these questions is NO; not one of them knew.

So all the seven sons of Jesse passed before Samuel, and had he been left to his own choice, Eliab would have been anointed that day as king, but God's word, "Neither hath the Lord chosen this," not only set Eliab aside, but all the other sons who were present. "And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will

not sit down till he come hither. And he sent and brought him" (1 Sam. 16: 11, 12).

Now while it is verily true that David did not know he was elected by God to be the king over Israel, he did know that he was called when the message of Samuel reached him,

AND HE CAME

just as he was from his occupation. Then he learned what he could not have otherwise known had he failed to answer the call, namely, that he was chosen of God. The three words, "This is he," spoken by the Lord when David appeared, settled it beyond dispute. That was all the gospel David heard at that time, but he believed the words he heard, and though he went back to the same humble toil and looked no different in the eyes of men, yet, from that moment he was, in the mind of God, and in the minds of those in communion with God, "every inch a king."

Do you see what I mean, dear reader? The *election*, or choice, was not known until after the call was heard and obeyed. If you want to know whether or not you are one of God's elect, will you come to Christ to-day? Come as you are, and you will find, as someone has said, that it is like looking into a happy home filled with the blessing of the Lord, where all are glad and gay. One might look in upon such a scene with great longing, wishing that

he too might share the joy and happiness, when suddenly to his great surprise, as his eyes rest upon the top of the doorway, he sees in bold letters,

WHOSOEVER WILL MAY ENTER

and taking a step in simple faith, that which brings him into the midst of the happy throng, he is delightfully surprised once more to read on the *inside* of the door,

“ELECT ACCORDING TO THE FOREKNOWLEDGE

of God the Father.” Those words could never be read from the *outside*; could they? So if you are still outside the happy, holy family of God, will you not accept His gracious invitation now, and step in by faith to the place of blessing where love, peace, and joy shall reign for aye?

I remember living in a certain place some years ago where we kept a cow. Having decided to move from that place to another part of the country, it was necessary to sell her. Upon hearing of it, a cattle-buyer came to see the animal and to inquire as to the price, etc. Knowing that one who dealt in cattle should know much more about them than I did, and having no desire to misrepresent my cow, I said, “I’ll tell you nothing about her. She is out in the pasture; you go and examine her, and if you want that cow, you may have her

for so much money ; if not, just leave her there, and no harm will be done.” Soon the dealer came back leading the cow, handed me the money I had asked, and she was his. Not a week afterward, I heard that the cow had died. Now my question is, “Do you think my business friend would have purchased the animal that day had he known she was going to die the following week?” “Why,” I hear you say, “no, indeed.” What was it the dealer lacked?

FOREKNOWLEDGE!

That is what every man lacks. “We know not what a day may bring forth,” but “known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (Acts 15: 18). He is too wise to err.

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

“Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

“Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
AND HE WILL MAKE IT PLAIN.”

Then why do we go about preaching, if God has *elected* some to be saved? Because, “After

that in the wisdom God, the world by wisdom knew not God,

IT PLEASED GOD

by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). It is by the proclamation of God's abundant grace that we find out who the elect are. Paul said, "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. 2:10).

Therefore, like Paul, that great missionary apostle, I too know that God is going to gather His *elect* through the preaching of the gospel, and my desire above all else is that the Lord might use me to reach some of them. Not knowing the elect, we say to one and all, "Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16), and add

"IF YE BELIEVE NOT

that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). This must be the sad lot of all who die without trusting Christ, and the Lord's solemn words, "Whither I go ye cannot come," will be the awful consequence.

Dear reader, if you are unsaved, do not try to hide behind *election*. You are a responsible being with a will of your own. "Whosoever will" and "whosoever won't" are the two classes. You are in one or the other at this

moment. Come to Christ to-day. Come as you read this. Let this message be the means of urging you to come to the blessed Saviour, saying,

“Take me as I am,
My only plea,
Christ died for me;
Oh, take me as I am.”

And He surely will, for His promise is, “Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.” So come and prove that this is true; then tell the good news to others, and know the joy of leading them to Christ.

“And when in the mansions above,
The saved all around me appear,
I want to hear somebody say,
‘It was you who invited me here.’ ”

Repentance

“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).

The word *repent* is sadly missing in much of the modern preaching to-day, and when it is used, it is often misunderstood because of being misinterpreted. It is a divine requisite, and must not be set aside by anyone, for our Lord said, while upon the earth, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). When a sinner does repent, there is joy in heaven: “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10).

But what does it mean to repent? Does it simply mean to be sorry for one’s wrong deeds? No, not that only, for one may be sorry and yet not repent. Judas repented in one way, but not for his blessing. “Then Judas, which had betrayed Him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? See thou to that. And he

cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself" (Matt. 27: 3-5). He was sorry, but it was not the godly sorrow that worketh repentance, of which Paul wrote to the Corinthians. "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7: 8-10). While in this case it was a child of God who repented, the principle is the same for the unsaved. It means a double change of mind. Many samples are given us in the Scriptures.

Let us look at Job, the Patriarch, of whom God said unto Satan, "Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?" (Job 1: 8). Though God did say there was

NONE LIKE HIM

on the earth, yet even such an one had to repent before God. One of the purposes of the Book of Job is to teach us this very lesson,

that the best man on earth, when brought into the presence of God, had to repent. Though Job thought he was all right, he had to own that he was wrong before God.

In the beginning he said, "I will hold fast to my integrity and I will not let it go," but near the end of the book, when brought face to face with the greatness and the glory of God, Job was in a far different state of mind. He cried out, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (Job 40: 4). "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore

I ABHOR MYSELF

and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42: 5,6).

What a change had taken place! He was not only thinking of what he *might have done*, but of *what he was* as well. The lesson we all must learn is that we do what we do because we are what we are. A dog barks because it is a dog; barking does not make it a dog. A sinner sins because he is a sinner, and if he imagines it is just by accident, he must change his mind. That is the first step in his repentance.

Isaiah, the prophet, learned the same lesson. In the fifth chapter of his wonderful book we read of him sending out his six "woes" upon others.

1.—“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!” (ver. 8).

2.—“Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them!” (ver. 11).

3.—“Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope: that say, Let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!” (vers. 18, 19).

4.—“Woe unto them that call evil good; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (ver. 20).

5.—“Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!” (ver. 21).

6.—“Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink; which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!” (vers. 22, 23).

But that same prophet, when in the presence of God, said, “I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I,

WOE IS ME!

for I am undone ; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips : for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:1-5). No longer did he measure himself by others, but by the glory of God. "In Thy light we see light."

Being religious, turning over a new leaf, are not substitutes for repentance; God would rather have us give up all pretensions to goodness, turn to Him, and with the prodigal say,

"I HAVE SINNED

and am no more worthy to be called thy son" (Luke 15:21). Such a confession causes joy in heaven.

Have you ever caused rejoicing in heaven by repenting? "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31). Saul of Tarsus had to do this thing himself, which he afterward commanded

ALL MEN EVERYWHERE

to do, yet so far as his life was concerned, he was head and shoulders above any. We have a list of things in which he might have gloried before men; but before God he counted them all but refuse.

“Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless” (Phil. 3: 4-6).

Notice the list:

- 1.—“*Circumcised*”: God’s outward mark upon him.
- 2.—“*Stock of Israel*”: God’s chosen people.
- 3.—“*Tribe of Benjamin*”: the royal tribe.
- 4.—“*An Hebrew of the Hebrews*”: traced back to Abram, the “friend of God.”
- 5.—“*A Pharisee*”: not like other men in word and deed; no hypocrite.
- 6.—“*Zealous*”: None ever lived like him, zealous of his fathers’ God-given religion.
- 7.—“*Blameless*”: As far as outward forms and ceremonies were concerned.

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ,” Paul adds.

Examine this remarkable man from every angle. Look at his moral and personal qual-

ties, but yet he speaks of himself as the very “chief of sinners.” Soon after beholding Christ in glory, he saw himself as God saw him, “the chief of sinners.” What a change of mind! What true “repentance toward God!”

We must not stop here, however, but go on to exercise “faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” If we think God is against us because we are vile and because we abhor ourselves, we will have to change our minds again, for He loves us, yea, “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son” to die, the “Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” What a change of mind this has been for all who have been saved! All of us, before being converted, thought that if we were good God would love us, but to find out that He loved the ungodly enough to send His Son to die for them, was all new. It was hard to believe. Yet that is exactly what His Word tells us. “But God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

“Sinner, see thy God beside thee,
In a servant’s form come near;
Sitting, walking, talking with thee,
Sinai’s mount no longer fear.

“See Him weary, yet that sought thee,
Sitting on Samaria’s well;
Or in Simon’s house, that found thee,
Snatched thee from the jaws of hell.

“Onward still to Calvary marching,
Onward still He speeds His way,
(His own Father’s will fulfilling)
LOVE TO SINNERS TO DISPLAY.”

Reader, God loves you! He loves you in all your sin and entreats you to come,

“Just as thou art, without one trace
Of love, or joy, or inward grace.”

Will you come just now ere you lay this book aside? Decide for Christ. “Repent, and believe the gospel,” and “God’s salvation” shall be *your salvation* this very moment.

In Romans 4 God gives another illustration of repentance and faith without which we never could be possessors of His salvation. He brings David and Abraham to our attention, the one (David) illustrates repentance, and the other (Abraham) faith. King David had sinned grievously against his God, but when brought face to face with the enormity of his crime, he made no excuses, but turned to God for mercy, saying, “For I acknowledge my transgression: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden parts Thou shalt make me to

know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow" (Ps. 51: 3-7).

This great penitential psalm is David's confession not only of what he had *done*, but of what he *was*. As a king he could have refused an audience with God's messenger, Nathan, the prophet, who told him of his sin. He could have punished that prophet for daring to accuse him openly, for, "Where the word of a king is there is power," and none had the right to say to David, "What doest thou?" But because he faced his sin, David became the sample man, the man "after God's own heart," not that he was a holy, sinless person, but rather because he owned his guilt. How wonderfully God has used David to teach the sons of Adam, from that day to this, to do the same if they would know joy and gladness. "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice" (Ps. 51: 8).

Abraham, on the other hand, illustrates "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

"ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD

and it was counted unto him for righteousness." The only difference, as far as we are concerned, is that Abraham believed God could give him a son and that God could raise that son from among the dead. He was looking forward by faith, while we look back and say,

“God has given His only begotten Son,
God has raised Him from the dead.”

“And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what He had promised He was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Rom. 4: 19-25).

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

“The sinner who believes is free,
Can say, ‘The Saviour died for me,’
Can point to the atoning blood,
And say, ‘This made my peace with God.’ ”

The time of ignorance of man’s true state is over. God is no longer waiting to see how man may turn out; no, “Man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Ps. 39:5). But now, “God

commands all men everywhere to REPENT and believe the gospel," God's good news to a lost world, for,

"Jesus loved me, loved me so,
Died for me, His love to show;
Suffered on the cruel tree,
That I might His glory see."

Salvation

Salvation is a word of tremendous importance. Its full meaning will never be realized until at last,

“We stand before the throne,
Dressed in beauty not our own;
Then, Lord, shall we fully know,
Not till then, how much we owe.”

We *have* received the salvation of our souls, as Peter tell us in his first epistle: “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls” (1:9). But God’s salvation does not stop there, though in the minds of many Christians it is the only meaning attached to the word.

When we enter into the purpose of God in our salvation we do not wonder at the apostle exclaiming as he does, in Romans 1:16: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God

UNTO SALVATION

to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” Yes, the gospel is the dynamite of God, and the only power used to change men from “children of wrath” to “children of God.” The salvation Paul had in mind

was not only the salvation of our souls—though that was included, thank God—but he looked on to the end of the road where he saw everyone whom God had saved “conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. 8: 29).

Here is a purpose worthy of our God, and made known to us in the Scriptures that we too may exult in it by faith, as one day we shall, when we see the finished products of all God’s ways with us. “As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (1 Cor. 15: 49).

“And is it so? I shall be like Thy Son?
Is this the grace which He for me has won?
Father of glory—thought beyond all thought!—
In glory to His own blest likeness brought!”

What a plan and purpose God has for all “His own!” But how do we receive this salvation to begin with, the first instalment of which is “the salvation of the soul?”

I am sure we agree that the word itself implies that if we *must* be saved, as Scripture affirms, then we *must* have been lost. The root of the trouble with those who preach Social Reform and Evolution as the modern methods of meeting the need of the human heart, is the fact that they deny man is lost, irrevocably lost, and that by no means in his power can he ever change his status in the sight of God. Hence their preaching is vain. “He knoweth

vain men: He seeth wickedness also; will He not then consider it? For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt" (Job 11:11, 12). The ass's colt must be redeemed. "Every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem" (Exod. 13:13).

Do not in your worldly wisdom set aside the true wisdom of God, for your wisdom will be demonstrated as folly at last. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it" (Prov. 9:12). Yes, *lost* is the word that now describes man in his alienation from God, and not *more* lost will he be when in the eternal prison of God. The only difference between now and ETERNITY will be that then all hope of ever being saved will be gone. God's "but now" on the wrong side of the "fixed gulf" will silence every quibbler in that eternal day.

"Thou livest, and must ever live,
But life is now thy foe;
Thine is the sorrow-shrivelled brow,
Thine the eternal heartache now,
Forever sets thy sun."

Ere that time comes, there is still hope.

If you know and believe that you are lost, will you not ask what the jailor at Philippi

asked: "What must I do to be saved?" If you do, the same answer of grace awaits you and every lost one on this side of the grave. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house" (Acts 16:31). There is no other way to be saved. It is God's one and only way. There is no other time given than NOW! It is God's one and only time. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:13, 14). The moment you trust in Christ, God's salvation becomes

YOUR SALVATION

and the Holy Spirit seals you as God's purchased possession. He is the earnest of all that is ours now and of all that we shall enjoy to the full, when we reach our destined home to be with our glorious Lord and Saviour.

"Jesus, we wait for Thee,
With Thee to have our part;
What can full joy and blessing be
But being where Thou art?"

We are also being saved by the life of Christ. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much

more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5: 10). "Saved by His life" does not mean His life while He was on earth, but the life He now lives at this present moment at the right hand of God. "But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7: 24, 25). Thus we are being saved from the snares of Satan and the pit-falls of sin as we journey through this desert scene.

We often hear preachers quote, "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." That was written to the Corinthian believers for a specific reason. They were carnal and reigning like kings, while the dear apostle and his contemporaries were living like the offscouring of the earth, suffering all kinds of privations and hardships. So he continues, "I would to God ye did reign, then we should reign with you," but you have "reigned without us." Evidently the apostle was reminding them of a crucified and rejected Christ, and that it was He whom they were to represent, and not a reigning Christ. Hence Paul wrote, "I am determined to know nothing among you (Corinthians) save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2: 2).

But he was otherwise minded when he wrote

to the “beloved of God” at Rome and to those at Ephesus, also to the Hebrew believers. He wanted them to know about a glorified Man at God’s right hand, One who was living for them; and having been reconciled by His *death*

“MUCH MORE”

he thundered out, “we shall be saved by His *life*.” Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

Then when He comes, for whom we wait, our salvation will be complete. “Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. 8: 23-25). Our well-meaning but ill-taught friends who claim healing in the atonement will get all they claim in that day, but not until then. They have the right idea of God’s salvation, the result of Christ’s atoning work, but the *wrong time*. They are like the Israelites of old who anticipated, as they read of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, that all would be accomplished at His first advent, but failed to see the time of waiting in between, the day of grace.

Yes, blessed be God, we too have faith and hope which shall end in fruition, when our mortal bodies shall come under the sway of

redemption's work; but until He comes, we, with all the groaning creation, "with patience

WAIT FOR IT."

"'Mid danger and fear, Lord,
I'd not weary here, Lord;
The day must be near of Thy coming again.
'Tis all sunshine there, Lord,
No sighing nor care, Lord,
But GLORY so fair, at Thy coming again."

Until that day, God's salvation is not complete, and cannot be complete, so it is useless to allow ourselves to be deceived by our own foolish hearts or by well-meaning preachers who do not know the truth. The Word of God is against any other teaching, and wise are we if we agree with the Word though contrary to all pre-conceived ideas, no matter how well-established they may be or from whence they come.

Thus SALVATION in the Word is *past*, *present*, and *future*. The *past* includes the salvation of our souls, when all our sins were blotted out forever. The *present* is our being saved by our Blessed Saviour living for us as High Priest and Advocate. The *future* looks forward to the One who shall come, the One for whom we look, the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour, "who shall change our body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working

whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3: 21).

“Some day I shall be like Him,
Some day like Him;
Changed to heavenly beauty
When His face I see;

“Some day I shall be like Him,
Some day like Him;
Hallelujah, this wonderful promise
He gave to me!”

Children of God

“Children of God, O glorious calling,
 Surely His grace will keep us from falling;
 Passing from death to life at His call,
 Christ hath redeemed us once for all.”

In these words, the poet has voiced a truth in which many exult to-day, and in which many in all ages have rejoiced as they have learned of their family relationship from the inspired Book. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2).

We need not wait until some future day to take our place in the family of God.

“NOW ARE WE”

God’s children, and it is mock humility to say or think otherwise, when we have God’s revelation in our hands. I hope none of my readers are like the old Scotchman who said, when asked as to the hope that was within him, “Well, some seem to say they ken (know), but a’ think it is best tae hae a sanctified doot (doubt).” I am a Scotchman myself, but I

have no idea what a “sanctified doubt” is, unless it is what we call a “pious fraud.”

But my purpose in writing this chapter is to show from the Scripture how we *become* children of God and how we may have the assurance that we are children of God. Hence I will confine myself to these two points.

Some vainly imagine, and even say, that they were always children of God. This is not so; for it is entirely unscriptural. If anyone believes that, he is either deluded by Satan or his own heart is deceiving him. No one is born a child of God at natural birth for, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one” (Job 14: 4). Like begets like, and “after their kind.” This rule has held good in the creation of all things from the beginning, and will until the end. “We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isa. 64: 6). Thus in the Old Testament we have our status described, and in the New it is no better.

“And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of

our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2: 1-3).

"CHILDREN OF WRATH"

is not a flattering title, but why should we turn from truth so unwelcome—for truth it is—and think that by closing our eyes and ears to God's Word we can change it?

There is a way whereby we become "children of God" in this world. We need not wait until the judgment day to find out whether or not we are in God's family. The way it takes place is described in John 1: 12, 13: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

"NOT OF BLOOD"

excludes all the sons of Adam by natural birth, be they blue-blooded royalty or the poor mendicant hobbling to the poor-house. Children of dignitaries in the professing Church have no more claim to the title "children of God" than the ragged street-urchin who has never heard the name of Jesus except in blasphemy, and who has never been inside of a church. "Not of blood" blots out all hope forever of claiming to be "children of God" except by the new birth.

“NOR OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH”

shuts out all who are trusting in baptismal regeneration, church sacraments, and forms and ceremonies of any kind, no matter how impressive they may be, how venerable those who carry them out, or how sacred the place wherein they are performed. How many there are who actually think they receive the real body and blood of the Lord Jesus when they partake of the Lord's Supper. If that were so, it would be “the will of man,” and that is ruled out forever.

“BUT OF GOD.”

No one else could ever bring you into that family, His own family.

“I know my sins are all forgiven,
I'm in the family;
I'm on my journey home to heaven,
I'm in the family.”

And how did it happen? By “being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever” (1 Pet. 1: 23). “Ye *must* be born again!” These are five words of tremendous importance for all the sons of Adam, set aside by many, understood by few, but nevertheless a divine fiat of Him who knows the need of all mankind and the necessity of being made meet for the presence of God.

“Ye children of men, attend to the word,
So solemnly uttered by Jesus the Lord;
And let not this message to you be in vain,
Ye *must* be born again.”

“How can a man be born when is old?” is the puzzle that was suggested to the mind of Nicodemus. “Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Supposing he could, would it change matters any? Would he have a different nature the second time? Certainly not. Then it is foolish to think that if we could only be brought back to our mother’s knee as little innocent, prattling babes, with all our life before us, we would never be the same sinners again. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh,” was our Lord’s reply to Nicodemus’ questions, and simply implies that that which is born of a dog is a dog; it can only act like a dog, bark like a dog, and eat the food a dog likes; the nature will manifest itself no matter how the dog is trained. By no process of training can its nature be made like unto that of a sheep. It is the nature that is all wrong. The nature comes with the life, whatever that life may be. When we are born into this world, we have natural life, and it has a sinful nature. We are born bond-slaves of sin, and it is utterly impossible to distil spirit out of flesh. Religious flesh is just flesh puffed up with pride, and is most obnoxious to God when it exalts itself, as we read of the

Pharisee doing when he said, "Thank God, I am not like other men!" God hates a proud look. Dear reader, do not try to cultivate flesh and vainly think God will ever accept it; that will never be. "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Ps. 39:5).

God's one and only way to bring us into that blessed relationship of children is by accepting His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

AS MANY

as receive Him (no more and no less), to them He *gives* the right to take that place in this world as "children of God." "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26). There is no other way! Be not deceived by your own carnal mind "which is enmity against God" (Rom. 8:7), neither by your deceitful heart (Jer. 17:9). And we add, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. 2:22).

We have gone to some length in showing how we may become members of God's family, and now we will point to some proofs of this knowledge. "Whereby shall I know?" is an old prayer of the human heart recorded twice in the first book of the Bible.

God promised Abraham a son, but he asked, "Whereby shall I know?" There was only one way of knowing, and that was by "believing

God," taking Him at His word, which Abraham did. In the New Testament that same prayer is found very early on its pages. Luke 1: 13-20: "But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee and to show thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season."

Here we find a similar scene to the one recorded in Genesis. The same prayer is prayed, "Whereby shall I know?" and as a sign unto

Zacharias, he was stricken dumb until all was fulfilled. Can you imagine God in grace sending an angel to deliver such a wonderful message, and instead of it being believed, having the question,

WHEREBY SHALL I KNOW?

No doubt the angel was surprised at the incredulous reception his message received by one so highly favored of God.

But what must it be to-day for God to still find us asking, "Whereby shall I know?" after He in grace has come into the world "manifest in flesh" to give us such wonderful messages! There is only one way of knowing we are in God's family and it is by simple faith, taking God at His word. Is that a hard thing to do? Surely not. "Without faith, it is impossible to please Him (God)" (Heb. 11: 6).

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not" (1 John 3: 1). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5: 1). What precious words upon which to rest! Do you not feel like singing:

"Not a servant at God's gateway,
But a son within His home;
To the love, the joy, the singing,
To the glory, I am come!"

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God ; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:13).

Sanctification

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied” (1 Pet. 1: 2).

You will notice in this verse that *sanctification* is spoken of before the blood of Jesus Christ. The majority of God's people think of sanctification as something which takes place after the blood of Christ has been trusted for their salvation, as did the old lady with whom I spoke one night at the close of an address. I asked her if she were saved, and she answered, “Yes, indeed I am, and sanctified too!” She was very much surprised when she heard me reply, “I am sure you are sanctified if you are saved, because you were sanctified

BEFORE YOU WERE SAVED,

by the Spirit unto obedience.” Of course she thought I had bad doctrine, as many others do, because they fail to “cut in a straight line the Word of Truth.”

The truth of *sanctification* is spoken of in many ways in Scripture. The word is a very

comprehensive one. Peter, in opening his first epistle, speaks of being

SANCTIFIED...by the Holy Spirit of God (1:2).

It stands to reason that we have no part or lot in that matter.

Then again the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that we are

SANCTIFIED...by blood (Heb. 13:12).

“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood suffered without the gate.” In this, we are totally set aside also, though we look on now “in wonder, love, and praise,” as have all God’s people from that day to this, for nineteen hundred years have passed since our Lord shed His blood.

SANCTIFIED...by faith (Acts 26: 18).

“To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.” This was true of every believer in Christ the moment he exercised faith in Christ, and can never be added to by devotion in the days which follow.

SANCTIFIED...by God before birth (Jer. 1: 5).

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb

I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jer. 1:5). This portion brooks of no argument. Jeremiah could not boast of his sanctification like some well-meaning Christians do to-day. Before he saw the light of day, God in His foreknowledge had sanctified him as a vessel for His service.

SANCTIFIED...by truth (John 17:17).

"Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy Word is truth." This is for us. Practically, day by day, as the Word of God is brought to bear on our lives, we are sanctified, but this is not a

ONCE FOR ALL

transaction. No; we wish it were so; but yesterday's sanctification will not do for to-day, so the Word of God, in the power of the Spirit, needs to be applied to us continually as long as we are in the body.

"Yet, Lord, alas, what weakness
Within myself I find;
No infant's changing pleasure
Is like my wandering mind.

"Oh, keep my soul then, Jesus,
Abiding still with Thee;
And if I wander, teach me
Soon back to Thee to flee."—J. N. D.

So great a teacher and man of God as J. N. Darby also felt his need of daily, yea, hourly sanctification. If any believe otherwise, they have a very low standard, and are only deceiving themselves; or they are Pharisees, blind leading the blind.

SANCTIFIED...by another (Job 1: 5).

“And it was so when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.” Again in the New Testament we have a similar case. “For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they holy” (1 Cor. 7: 14). No one who knows aught of God’s truth imagines for a moment that one person can make another intrinsically holy. I bring these quotations forward to show the fallacy of the notions some have in their minds when speaking about the truth of *sanctification*.

Some sanctify themselves

TO DO EVIL

“They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in

the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord" (Isa. 66:17). This passage does not seem to be in many Christians' Bibles, so I am inserting it in full.

GOD SANCTIFIED...a day.

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made" (Gen. 2: 3). That day is not our Lord's Day, the first day of the week, but the Sabbath which the Jew still keeps (in form at least), and also some ill-taught people called Seventh-day Adventists. The body of our Lord Jesus Christ lay in the grave on the Sabbath day, but on the first day of the week He arose, and we honor His resurrection day because of the glorious facts concerning a *Risen* Saviour and an *empty* tomb.

GOD SANCTIFIED...His creature (1 Tim. 4: 5).

"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

Many other quotations might be taken from the Word of God, but I believe we have enough to convince us that sanctification does not mean, in all cases, to make holy or holier. How could we make God holier than He is? Impossible!

Yet in Isaiah 8:13 we read, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself." When we learn that the meaning of the word is simply

TO SET APART

everything is settled for the child of God.

Thus we understand what Peter teaches in that marvelous verse, where the whole God-head are in action for our blessing:

CHOSEN.....by God, the Father

SANCTIFIED.....by God, the Holy Spirit

SPRINKLEDby the blood of God, the Son

Yes, in eternity we were chosen or elected; in time the Spirit set us apart unto obedience; then we trusted that precious blood which screens from the wrath we rightly deserve.

"The wrath of God that was our due,
Upon the Lamb was laid;
And by the shedding of His blood,
The debt for us was paid.

"It is His Word, God's precious Word,
It stands forever true;
'When I, the Lord, shall see the blood,
I will pass over you.'

It is now our happy privilege as well as our responsibility to yield ourselves to God, a living sacrifice, seeing we have been set apart by the Holy Spirit and the blood of Christ to be to the praise of the glory of His grace. Only as we do this in a practical way day by day do we

meet the desire of the Lord Jesus which He expressed in John 17: 17: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth."

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians we learn that the saints at Corinth were all sanctified. "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (6:11). We notice here that the word *sanctify* comes before *justify*. The Corinthians were anything but a spiritual company of God's people; indeed, they were the most carnal of any of whom we read in the New Testament. The apostle said of them: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ" (1 Cor. 3:1). Yet

THEY WERE SANCTIFIED,

but not in the practical way, so the apostle had to bring God's Word to bear upon them that they might be sanctified not only *positionally*, but *practically*, and thus set apart from the pollutions of the world. How this can be accomplished is best described in Romans 12: 1, 2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may

prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." May these words find their fulfilment in the life of each one who reads this message.

"Yes, though we've strayed like saints of old,
Grace has restored us to the fold
As captives in its chains;
Thus, saved by grace, we'd gladly sing,
Till all the earth and heavens ring
While *Grace triumphant reigns!*

"Grace still—till all redeemed by blood
Are taught to know themselves and God—
Its empire shall maintain;
To spoil the mighty of its prey,
To set the captive exile free,
Shall *Grace triumphant reign.*"

Justification

In the book of Job (believed to be the oldest book in the Bible), he asks, "But how should man be just with God?" (Job 9:2). How to be just or justified by *man* and before *man* was not a puzzle to Job, but as he thought of God and His holiness, it was a different problem. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse" (Job 9:20).

In the New Testament we see this carried to its conclusion in Luke 18:9-14. "He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased;

and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Here we find the

"I TELL YOU"

of Him who spake as never man spake, telling us of those whom He would justify. The Lord does not justify the man who justifies himself, but rather the opposite. Listen to the withering prayer of the Pharisee! It is not a real prayer at all, but like a cat crouching ere springing on its victim, this proud son of Adam dares to assume the lowly guise of prayer to parade his supposed good works before men and God.

He neither petitioned God for mercy nor gave thanks for mercies received. His words were just like a fog rising off a bog, blotting out the light of the sun for the time being. Home he went, bloated with pride, justified by his own words, but condemned by the "Judge of all the earth who shall do right."

Justified is a very comprehensive word, and goes far beyond forgiveness. I may forgive a man who has stolen my goods, if he confesses it, but I cannot justify him. I think the word explains itself in its primary meaning better than I could. If we divide it up like this,

JUST-AS-IF-I'D

and then add

NEVER SINNED

we have the true meaning. Yes, “counted clear” by God Himself, and — wondrous fact! — He justifies the ungodly! “But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:5).

Justification by God must be consistent with His holy and righteous throne, so our God must have a righteous basis for it, one which will first of all satisfy His holy throne, then silence devils, men, and all enemies forever. This basis has been laid at Calvary. Calvary declares with no uncertain sound that “God is just” as well as “the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”

“Peace with God is Christ in glory,
God is just and God is love;
Jesus died to tell the story,
Foes to bring to God above.”

Thus we learn that it is God alone who justifies righteously; no one else ever could. If men justify themselves now, it shall prove to be only folly at last, for as Job says, “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me” (Job 9:30, 31).

Next we read:

“JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD”

“Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through

Him" (Rom. 5:9). The love of God is righteous love, proven in the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Love *has* found a way! Man never could have found out how to justify a guilty person. You may have read the story of the ex-convict who tried to sell a watch, and the pawnbroker, knowing with whom he had to deal, sent for a policeman. The ex-prisoner affirmed he had bought the watch, but being in real need of money had decided to sell it. Of course the officer of the law only smiled, saying, "Tell it to the judge." The day arrived when the case was tried, and all seemed to go against the prisoner until another officer asking to be a witness in the case, said, "I have something to add that is of importance in this case." The poor prisoner trembled as the new witness stepped into the witness-box, thinking his doom was sealed, for he believed all policemen were in league with each other and against any they knew to have been thieves in days gone by. But as that officer bore witness to what he heard on the day he took two men to prison, how one told the other about the goodly sum of money he had received by selling a watch to the prisoner at the bar, when it was worth so little, the tide turned. The law acclaimed his innocence and the judge *justified* the prisoner.

But this is my query: Could the judge have righteously justified him if he had been guilty? No, indeed! That was the problem God had to

solve, and blessed be His glorious Name forever, He did solve it at *Calvary*.

“Oh the love that drew salvation’s plan,
Oh the grace that brought it down to man,
Oh the *mighty gulf* that God did span
At CALVARY.”

So we learn that it is God who justifies. “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, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8: 33, 34).

“What though the accuser roar
Of ills that I have done!
I know them well and thousands more;
Jehovah findeth none.”

It is all of grace, and this “royal proclamation” is still being sent to “children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, *to you* is the word of this salvation sent” (Acts 13: 26). “Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers,

and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts 13: 38-41).

ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED

from all things, by the One against whom we have sinned, even our Lord Jesus Christ.

Believe it, dear reader, at this moment! This is good news for you "by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." Notice, too, it does not read, "All who *have happy feelings* are justified," as some vainly imagine. It simply and emphatically reads, "*All that believe.*" On the principle of faith we receive this blessing the moment we believe the Lord Jesus Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." That moment we have peace with God. "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God" (Rom. 4:25; 5:1). While it is true it is all of God, all of grace, all through the merits of Christ's shed blood, and for all men everywhere, yet only those who exercise faith in Christ and His finished work will receive that peace.

Supposing I should tell you that there is plenty of water in the lake, plenty in the main pipe-line leading to your home, but that you must turn a faucet if you would have some of that water. Believing this, you turn the faucet and the water flows freely. That is faith. Put

out your empty hand of faith to-day and turn the faucet, as it were, and being

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

you will have peace with God.

“Oh, joy of the justified, joy of the free,
I’ll sing of my Saviour who died on the tree;
Through Christ, my Redeemer, rejoicing I stand,
Being saved by His grace and secure in His hand.”

Then again, *justification* is attributed to the

“SPIRIT OF OUR GOD,”

as we read in 1 Corinthians 6:11. “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” Thus we have all the Godhead justifying the believing sinner.

JUSTIFIED BY GOD (Rom. 8:33).

JUSTIFIED BY THE SON (Luke 18:14)

JUSTIFIED BY THE SPIRIT (1 Cor. 6:11).

Surely we ought to rejoice to be counted clear by the Trinity! Let man and Satan bring all their accusations against the people of God, and they shall find,

“Every charge our God refuses,
Christ has answered with His blood.”

A portion of the epistle of James seems to contradict this. I use the word “seems” ad-

visedly, for nowhere in God's Word do we find one portion of Scripture contradicting another; if it appears to be a contradiction, it is because we fail to understand it correctly. James wrote about justification

BEFORE MEN,

and the key to the book is found in the words, "A man may say."

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful for the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness:

and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2: 14-26).

Notice the words, "A man may say." No one person is able to see within another's heart, or to know that what he says is true, so James rightly demanded proofs of faith, and he deduced two cases from the Old Testament to prove his argument. "By their fruits ye shall know them," are the words of our Lord; not by their clothes, the way they wear their collars, or by going to church and saying prayers. No,

BY THEIR FRUITS

are they known. This is what James declares necessary to be justified before men, but God does not require a proof to distinguish between the real and the false, because "the Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2: 19). "The Lord knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum 1: 7).

Do you trust Him, dear reader? If you do, He knows you, and as one of His sheep He calls you by name. He knew Saul of Tarsus, what he was doing, and where he was staying (Acts

9:11). He knew Mary Magdalene on the resurrection morn (John 20:27). He knew Thomas and all that he had said the week previous to His appearing in the upper room. Trust Him now and forever join the singing:

“I am Thine, O Lord,
I have heard Thy voice;
And it told Thy love to me;
But I long to rise in the arms of faith,
And be closer drawn to Thee.”

Punishment

“The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Ps. 9:16, 17).

Let others hold their peace on this subject if they will, thinking that by doing so they are big-hearted and real friends to those to whom God has given the privilege of proclaiming His Word. I am convinced that this is not the case, so would turn your thoughts to the very words of “God manifest in the flesh.” Though I have read and studied the Word of God for nearly a quarter of a century I have yet to find any hope for a Christless soul, a Christ-rejecter, or a neglecter of God’s salvation. Neither can we find any hope beyond the tomb. “After this (death)

THE JUDGMENT”

banishes such a thought for every devout, pious soul.

**“There are no pardons beyond the grave,
And brief is mercy’s day.”**

Conflicting voices are heard all around us, saying, “Lo, here! Lo, there!” and the perplexed soul can only ask, “How may I find the

way?" Above the din and the strife the voice of God is heard through His Word,

"AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT!"

This gives the lie to those who advocate "Sleep of the Soul," "Transmigration of the Soul," "Flames of Purgatory," "Return to dust," etc.

"Dust thou art; to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul."

No, indeed; but of the body only.

Did you notice the words in the psalm from which we have quoted: "The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth?" Yes, known by His judgment. If you desire proof of this, read the sixth and seventh chapters of Genesis, the story of the deluge in the days of Noah. God was made known in that day as a God who kept His word of judgment. Eight souls were saved by water, while all the rest perished in the flood. The unbelievers might have reasoned and argued in those days, saying, "God is too good!" But when the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the great deep were broken up, when the lightning-flashes were seen, the thunder-peals heard, when the waters prevailed forty days and forty nights until every high hill was covered and everything perished that had breath in its nostrils, unbelief was changed.

Not an unbeliever was left in that day. "The Lord is known by the judgment which He executeth." Yes, known; but, alas, when it was too late for salvation to be found.

The history of that judgment is of special profit to us, because of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in Luke 17: 26, 27: "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." Notice the two little monosyllables, "as" and "so."

"AS IT WAS...SO SHALL IT BE."

Let us think also of the cities of the plain, when Sodom was rained upon from heaven, not the rain that brings to fruition, but instead, "fire and brimstone, which destroyed them all." "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17: 28, 29).

Before God judges, He always sends a message of warning, but if unbelief causes that message to be rejected or neglected, it can never make the "truth of God of none effect." "The Lord is known by the judgment which

He executeth." God had sent His holy angels to Sodom warning of the judgment which was about to fall. But, alas, instead of believing and receiving their message, the inhabitants would have ill-treated the heavenly messengers, had they not protected themselves by miraculous power. The next morning when the "sun had risen upon the earth," no doubt all the business was resumed for the day, beginning with "eating and drinking," much the same as we do; then the "buying and selling," the "planting and building," all showing they were looking ahead.

If we put Noah's day and their's together, as our Lord has done, we have the Christ-rejecting world of any day. Marrying and giving in marriage, followed by the other things which we have enumerated, plainly indicate that they were then, and are now, getting ready to live instead of getting ready to die. But though the "sun had risen," though the birds may have been singing their morning carols, and the busy men thronging the streets, the message of God was about to be fulfilled, and fire and brimstone from heaven blackened all the plain that same day. Yes, the Lord was known by the judgment which He executed. Reader, God is just the same to-day.

Our God is not One who is popular with men. Men want a God who will obey them, give as they desire and demand; a God who will make

them well when sick, send rain when drought prevails, wealth instead of poverty, and then pass by their sin at the end of life because *He is so good*. But God, the Living and the True God, is not a clay or a putty God who may be moulded to suit human wishes. He is the God of the Bible, of history and prophecy, and “is known by the judgment which He executeth.” Reader, if you have any other God in your mind than He whom Scripture reveals to us, it is a false god, and not the God *you* will meet in a coming day. So why not “Acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace?”

The fullest demonstration of God’s holiness and hatred of sin, proving that He must punish sin, no matter where it be found, whether in angels, men, or devils, or even on

HIS WELL BELOVED SON,

is given at the Cross of Christ. Look away to Calvary for this full and unmistakable expression of God’s holy judgment of sin, whereby “He has made Himself known.” “He spared not His own Son” (Rom. 8: 32). Why? Because He was the Bearer of sin—my sin, the sins of all who believe; yea, your sins, reader, if you will only trust Him right now, as you are, and where you are. Learn the lesson once for all that Calvary teaches: “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1: 13). The Cross of Christ

teaches this lesson in a more forcible way than if God were to sink a ruined race, without exception, into the lake of fire.

HE SPARED NOT HIS OWN SON,

when He, in His amazing grace, became the Sin-bearer. It was then that God poured out all His wrath against the Son of His love. So how could He — yes, let me repeat it — *How could God ever pass your sin by*, when He would not, could not, and did not, allow sin to go unpunished, though the Bearer were to be His own beloved Son?

The old story has often been told of the Roman Governor who made a law, the breaking of which entailed the penalty of death. Many of the ministers of justice thought the penalty too severe and did not expect the Governor to carry it out. The first one to break the law was the Governor's own son, and the judge was the father. The boy whom he loved, had educated, and hoped some day would sit in his place, was proven guilty, and it remained to be seen whether the father would really carry out the extreme penalty of the law. Anyone who has a father's heart can imagine the judge's feelings. He would remember how he had dangled him on his knee, had led him by the hand as a prattling tot, and now his heart was torn with love and righteousness; what was he to do? The law was plain enough, the sentence was passed, and the

SON MUST DIE!

Do you think anyone else could violate that law and dream of escaping its dread penalty of death? Impossible! If that father spared not his own son, we are positive no other Roman could have hoped to escape if guilty of breaking the same law.

This is exactly what we see revealed in all its fulness at Calvary.

1. God spared not His own Son.
2. God spared not in the days of Noah.
3. God spared not the inhabitants of Sodom.
4. God spared not angels that sinned (Jude 6).

And all because of sin! Sin is a hateful thing to God. It caused the holy angels' revolt. It made Lucifer, the star of the morning, a devil. It drove our first parents from a garden of delights, and flooded this world with tears, pain, misery, disease, and death. Sin caused the flood; sin caused the fire and brimstone to be necessary in the days of Lot. But in order that that sin might be justly dealt with and finally put away from before God forever, our Holy Saviour had to leave His home of light and love, where all the heavenly beings delighted to do His will, and come to this sin-cursed earth by way of Bethlehem's manger, and leave it by way of the cruel Cross of Calvary.

“Behold the Lamb! ‘Tis He who bore
My sins upon the tree;
And paid in death the dreadful score—
The guilt that lay on me.”

Reader, you must learn the holiness of God at Calvary, where it pleased Him to bruise His well-beloved Son, or you will learn it “where the worm dieth not, and the fire never shall be quenched,” but learn that lesson you must. God, in His love, has provided a way whereby all may escape the awful judgment in the “lake of fire,” but if you refuse and rebel, “how shall you escape?”

I remember an incident in my own life, which I have told many times. Two old men lived in the Province of Quebec, one a French-Canadian, and the other a Scotch-Canadian. The Frenchman was a devout believer in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His Word, while the old Scotchman would say, “God is too good to put anyone in the lake of fire.” Time passed, and finally the old Scotchman lay upon his death-bed. He sent for his old friend and companion, the Frenchman, and they talked together of days gone by, and then of the future, which is beyond the greatest intellect of mortal man. The old Scotchman said to his old friend, “Willie, we have been boys together, men together, and now it seems I am going the way of all the earth. We have always agreed about things in general, but I never could agree with you

about God putting any of His creatures in the lake of fire. Supposing I were your worst enemy and I was sinking in the bay out there (Baie de Chaleur was close to the door), would you not throw out a life-line to me?" "Why, you know I would," replied the Frenchman; "but, supposing (to use your own figure), you were sinking out in the bay and I, seeing your danger, threw out a life-line which fell within your reach, but to my astonishment you would turn your back on it and drown; whose fault would it be?" "Oh, it would be my fault, of course," replied the Scotchman.

Dear reader, see your own picture! We throw out the life-line to you once more ere we close. Will you not lay hold of the hope set before you, which is Christ Himself?

"By faith I see the Saviour dying
 On the tree;
To ruined sinners He is crying,
 'Look to Me!'
He bids the guilty now draw near,
Hark! Hark! His precious words I hear—
So soft, so sweet, they banish fear—
 'Mercy's free!'"

You need never perish since Christ has died. But if you refuse God's salvation through faith in Christ and His shed blood, there remaineth nothing "but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb.10:27). May this

never be your unhappy lot, but should you neglect God's offer of salvation, then, to your eternal regret, will you realize that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb. 10: 31).

"To lose your *wealth* is much,
To lose your *health* is more;
To lose your *soul* is such a loss,
That no man can restore."

Ere you close this book, dear reader, will you not (if you never have before), close in with the offer of God's mercy? You may be saved in the twinkling of an eye just where you are, without moving hand or foot, because,

"Jesus paid it all,
All to Him I owe;
Sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow."

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3: 16). But it is just as true, because it is God's own Word : "And *whosoever* was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20: 15).

Death

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. And dost Thou open Thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with Thee? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with Thee. Thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass; turn from him, that he may rest, till he shall accomplish, as an hireling, his day. For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up: so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. Oh, that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that Thou wouldest keep me secret, until Thy wrath be past, that Thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come” (Job 14:1-14).

The mystery of death and afterwards not only puzzled the mind of the Patriarch Job, but that of men in all ages. As the shadows of their lives began to lengthen, where they were to go after death was a real problem.

“That undiscovered country from whose bourne
No traveller returns—puzzles the will,”

as Shakespeare said, and none by searching could ever find out where it was.

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, was baffled, for he saw no preeminence given to “man above a beast, the spirit of the one going up, the other going down,” but none returning; and whether man or beast, neither had power in the day of death to retain the spirit.

Job observed that there was hope of a tree, if cut down, to sprout again and bring forth boughs like a plant. “But man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost and

WHERE IS HE?”

One might be cut down in the full vigor of youth, another in decrepit old age; it matters not; those whom death claims the grave holds, and “there is no discharge in this war.”

The great question of such tremendous importance was never answered in the Old Testament Scriptures, and any who teach the final destiny of man from that portion of God’s Word are deceivers. For instance, the book of Ecclesiastes is a favorite with those who deny eternal punishment for the finally impenitent. One of the great reasons why we have that book in the Bible is to show us that the wisest man that ever lived, concerning things

under the sun, *knew nothing* about the world to come, because he did not have

A REVELATION

from God.

Oh, what a dark world this would still be if our Lord Jesus Christ had not come “that men should not longer abide in darkness but have the light of life!” But since Christ has come, has died, and has risen again, we may sing with the spirit and the understanding also:

“Death and judgment are behind me,
Grace and glory on before;
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,
There they spent their utmost power.”

A greater than Solomon has been here, to whom “that undiscovered country” of Job, of Solomon, and of Shakespeare is a well-known place, because “He is the Second Man, the Lord from heaven” (1 Cor. 15: 47).

The first answer to Job’s question in regard to those who have died, is found in Luke 23: 39-43: “And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this Man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." What an answer for a troubled soul and from such an authority as the future Judge of all! "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22). If we

DIE IN FAITH

as the malefactor did, confessing Jesus as Lord, believing God has raised Him from the dead, the future is bright because of the power of Him who cannot lie, for He said, "*To-day shalt thou be with Me*

IN PARADISE"

The "WITH ME" of the Lord Jesus Christ forever settled the question for every saved soul, and banishes the teachings of all false cults, no matter by what name they call themselves.

"Away with doubts, away with fears,
When this by faith, I know;
God's Word shall stand forevermore,
My Saviour tells me so."

"TO-DAY! WITH CHRIST! IN PARADISE!"

No wonder the Church of God can lift their voices in praise!

"Sing them over again to me,
Wonderful words of life!
Let me more of their beauty see,
Wonderful words of life!"

What a contrast to the guesses and reasonings of the darkened brains of men who "know not what a day may bring forth." The light of reason can only teach "Sleep of the Soul," "Flames of Purgatory," "Extinction of Being," "Transmigration of Soul," etc.; but with the light of revelation, the Word of God, in our hands, we would thunder out at the funeral of a real Christian,

"TO-DAY!.. WITH CHRIST!.. IN PARADISE!"

I would say just here that the word *paradise* is translated "third heaven" in 2nd Cor. 12, and means the immediate presence of God. This may be verified by a Greek Concordance, so do not let any juggler of Greek words deceive you. If we leave out the words "in paradise," we notice how plain the truth is: "To-day shalt thou be *with Me*." Our Lord Jesus "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," so to be with Him means to be where He is, and He ascended *into heaven*!

In the seventh chapter of the book of Acts, the Spirit of God gives us the history of Israel through Stephen, and though history never affords very pleasant reading, be it the history of a nation or an individual, the Jews will have to face their rejection of Stephen's message either here or in eternity. Instead of bowing in true repentance before God as three thousand did on the Day of Pentecost, "they gnashed

on him (Stephen) with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Then in the following chapter we read that "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."

In this portion, we see plainly the separation of body and spirit. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," shows where Stephen's spirit went, and devout men carried Stephen to his burial, telling in unmistakable words that it is only the body that goes to the grave. I liken it to taking a letter out of an envelope; the letter is the important part. So is the spirit which is in our mortal bodies. How comforting this should be to us, especially when we stand around an open grave and see the body of a loved one lowered and then finally covered over with earth. Even in such a time we can say that the letter (spirit) has gone to the Lord Jesus

Christ, and it is only the envelope (the body) that is buried in the tomb.

I do not mean to infer that the body is not precious to God. Oh, no! For “whether we wake or sleep we are the Lord’s,” and “your brother shall rise again,” as was true in the case of Lazarus, and will be true for all “His own” when He comes back again. In 2 Cor. 5 we are further instructed on this wonderful theme: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight): we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord” (1-8).

Notice the words,

“**THEREFORE WE ARE ALWAYS CONFIDENT**”

This confidence is ours because we have the knowledge that "whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;" but we are also assured that if saved by believing the gospel of the grace of God, as the Corinthians did, "to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord," may be our blessed portion.

Recently, while in a certain city, a dear sister in Christ was called home to glory and I was requested to speak at her funeral services. As I looked at the body in the casket, my mind went back to the last time I saw her in the flesh, when she was "at home in the body and absent from the Lord." But on that day she was absent from the body and

PRESENT WITH THE LORD

So while we are

"Here in the body pent,
Absent from Him we roam;
Yet nightly pitch our moving tent
A day's march nearer home."

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil. 1:21, 23). Here we have the testimony of one who had been caught up to the very "Paradise of God," into the "third heaven," where he saw and heard things

that no human language could ever make known, and assured us that to die

IS GAIN,

and "far better" than anything we have ever known or enjoyed down here.

How often we have heard the thoughtless and ignorant say glibly, "No one has ever come back to tell us!" That is exactly what did come to pass with the apostle Paul. He was up there, whether in the body or out of the body, he did not know (when we are in the presence of God we are not occupied with our bodies), but after seeing and hearing what he could not explain after he returned, he had "a desire to depart and be with Christ" which he knew was

"FAR BETTER."

I think we have very completely answered Job's puzzling question, i.e., "Man dieth and wasteth away; yes, man giveth up the ghost and where is he?" Summing up from the revelation God has given us, we learn that if a *saved person, a born again one, a child of God,* dies, he is

"IN PARADISE," "PRESENT WITH THE LORD,"
"FAR BETTER"

and death is *gain* to him.

"Forever with the Lord,
Amen, so let it be;
Life from the dead is in the word,
'Tis immortality."

But what about the Christless, the unsaved? Let no reader of these lines who has not yet trusted in Christ and His blood, imagine that anything we have written thus far concerning the departed children of God applies to him. No, it is just the opposite for the unsaved person. Instead of being "gain" to die and "far better," it will be *loss, loss, eternal loss!* Only one scene has been depicted for us of a lost soul, in the Word of God, and that by our Lord Himself. We shall quote it in full, for no words we might write could ever equal those of our Lord in value and plainness.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: and there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst

thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16: 19-31).

Do not set aside words such as these, and think for a moment that you are wise. Some say, in explaining this passage, that it is just a parable. No, reader; it does not say, "The Lord spake a parable." Instead, we read, "*There was a certain rich man!*" You will be that man in eternity if you do not flee to Christ for refuge ere it is too late. Read them over again and again. They are the very words of a lost soul: "I am tormented in this flame!" *Tormented or comforted*—which shall it be for all eternity? You are still living in the *now* when salvation may be yours, but another *now*

will come for one and all, and that will be the *now* of an endless duration. Either “comforted” or “tormented” we must ever be, world without end.

“Oh soul, thine awful future face,
If thou neglect God’s saving grace,
Tormented! thou shalt ever be;
Tormented! through eternity.”

Thus Job’s question is answered for all mankind, not by brain power, by foolish guesses, or by any power of wisdom, but by the revelation of God. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away.”

“Here we have a firm foundation,
Here’s the refuge of the lost;
Christ’s the Rock of our salvation,
His the Name of which we boast.”

“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Flee to Christ at once lest you be forever too late.

“There is a line by us unseen,
Which crosses every path;
A hidden boundary between
God’s mercy and God’s wrath.

“There is a time, we know not when,
A place we know not where;
Which marks the destiny of men
FOR GLORY OR DESPAIR.”

Members of His Body

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular” (1 Cor. 12: 27).

“For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones” (Eph. 5: 30).

This is the only true church-membership. Joining a church or subscribing to a creed, however correct it may be, is valueless, and in many cases deceives those who know not the truth of God. Let us go through the Scriptures together and find what is written for our learning, for our instruction, and thus finding the truth be set free.

There was no Church in the days of our Lord. As a boy and as a man, He went to the synagogue and temple where “Moses and the prophets were read every Sabbath day,” but the Church had not yet come into existence. Our Lord spoke of building a Church, but He did not make a move toward doing so in the days of His flesh. “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

“I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH”

proves it was to be future, and that our Lord Himself was to be the Builder. Against that

Church all the combined forces of evil have no power.

“The winds of hell have blown,
The world its hate hath shown;
Yet it is not overthrown!
Hallelujah for the cross!”

This is also true of the Church of the Living God to which you belong if you are a true Christian. When I say a “true Christian,” I mean one who has been born of the Spirit and by the Word of God.

The birthday of the Church of which Christ our Lord is Builder and Head, was the Day of Pentecost. The second chapter of the book of Acts gives us the interesting facts of this wonderful event. That day, one hundred and twenty believers on Christ were all “baptized by the one Spirit into one Body;” the signing of their names on a church-roll was not necessary. Those believers had the promise of the Lord in their hearts and in their minds. “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1: 5). Exactly ten days later, that wondrous prophecy became history, for the Church was formed, not into an organization but into an organism. The Lord was the Builder of His Church as He said He would be, and that position has never been given up by Him to any of the sons of Adam, and it never will be.

On that same memorable day when Peter preached in the power of the Holy Spirit, three thousand believed in a risen and exalted Christ as well as a crucified Christ, and

“THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH

daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2: 47).

“See the vast building, view it rise!
The work how grand, the plan how wise;
Oh wondrous fabric, power unknown,
That rears it on the Living Stone.”

It was thus that members were added to the Church in those early days, and we know it has so continued to this day. Neither forms nor ceremonies were required, but a living faith in a living Saviour was essential, and only such as had that faith were church-members.

In chapter five of the book of Acts, we read : “And 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 to them : but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”

“DURST NO MAN JOIN HIMSELF TO THEM”

but “believers were the more added to the Lord,” multitudes of them, but it was *to the Lord* they were added. Surely we must agree that no one could do this but the Holy Spirit of God.

Again we read in 1 Cor. 12: 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This epistle was written to the "Church at Corinth, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's" (1 Cor. 1: 2). Though written long ago, we see clearly that if we are among those who call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are included, no matter where we dwell. Strange to say, though we have such plain teaching regarding the baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ, still we find well-meaning, but unintelligent Christians still waiting for the "baptism" in what they term "tarrying meetings."

Let me ask you one question: Are you a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ? If you answer in the affirmative, I assure you on the authority of God's own Word that you are a member of the only Church that will ever be in heaven, the Church to which every born again person belongs. That Church our Lord and Saviour calls,

"MY CHURCH."

When joined to it by the Holy Spirit Himself,

we are joined permanently because "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever."

This, of course, does not touch the question of local fellowship with God's people in any given community. The local churches or assemblies are simply companies of believers seeking to obey the Word of God—"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." Individuals coming into such fellowship, or, as some people express it, joining the church, do not thereby become members of the Church, the Body of Christ. In considering the question of joining one's self to such a company it is well to test everything by the Word of God, and thus to be united with believers who will seek to "hold fast the faithful Word" and to "hold forth the Word of Life."

The Head of Christ's Church is our Saviour Himself. God "hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23). In Eph. 2:19-22 we are designated as a temple, built upon the foundation God has laid.

God is building day by day,
As the moments pass away,
A temple that the world cannot see;
Every sinner saved by grace
Is added to his place
In that building for ETERNITY.

Just as Solomon erected the temple after he ascended to the throne of his father David, without the sound of a hammer or any other tool being heard, so our Lord, when He ascended to His Father's throne, began to build a temple with "living stones, great and costly." David provided all the material for the temple *ere he died*, but he was not permitted of God to build it because he was a "man of blood." Our Lord Jesus provided all the material for His Temple *when He died*, through the shedding of "His own blood." The great cost of Solomon's temple has been computed in silver and gold, but no computing machine has ever been invented that could count the cost of the material for the living temple of the Living God.

"We are by Christ redeemed,
The cost, His precious blood."

The value of that precious, holy blood will never be known except to God and to the Lamb.

Then again, the Church is viewed as a Bride beloved by the Lord. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water

by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; for we are members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church" (Eph. 5:23-32). In this portion of God's Word, we see the *past, present, and future* of the Church.

IN THE PAST

"Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it."

IN THE PRESENT

He is "sanctifying and cleansing it by the Word."

IN THE FUTURE

"He shall present it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," which event will take place at the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto Him.

“Head of the Church! Thou sittest there,
Thy members all the blessing share—
Thy blessing, Lord, is ours;
Our life Thou art—Thy grace sustains,
Thy strength in us each victory gains
O'er sin and Satan's powers.

“And soon the day of glory come,
Thy bride shall reach her destined home,
And all Thy beauty see;
How great our joy to see Thee shine,
To hear Thee own us, Lord, as Thine,
And ever dwell with Thee.”

Blessed portion which we shall ever enjoy!

Then when one thousand years are past, wondering worlds will see the “exceeding riches of God's grace” when the prophecy of Rev. 21: 9, 10, 11 is fulfilled. “There came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

HAVING THE GLORY OF GOD.”

The Church shall be seen at last, still “as a bride adorned for her husband.” No decay, no wrinkles, no blemishes, nor any such thing, but ever as a bride through the countless ages of eternity. This is the Church Triumphant!

But in the meantime, we are in the Church Militant, serving the living and true God while waiting for His Son from heaven.

Dear reader, do you belong to this Church? I do not ask where you go to worship or where you serve, but it is very important to know that you are a member of Christ's Church. Do not say, "I joined the church years ago," and mean that you wrote your name with pen and ink, subscribing to a creed, a form of government, or any such thing. That may all be done by an unregenerate person and bring only judgment at the end. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Then the Lord will add you to His Church, write your name "in the Lamb's Book of Life," from which neither men nor devils can ever erase it.

"On Christ salvation rests secure,
The Rock of Ages must endure;
Nor can that faith be overthrown
Which rests upon the 'Living Stone.'

"No other hope shall intervene,
To Him we look, on Him we lean;
Other foundation we disown,
And build on Christ, the 'Living Stone.'

"In Him it is ordained to raise
A temple to Jehovah's praise,
Composed of all the saints who own
No Saviour but the 'Living Stone.'"

Adoption

The Word of God maintains a distinction between the words, "children," by *birth*, and "sons," by *adoption*. Thus far in my Christian experience, I have heard only one address given on the theme of Adoption, and, I am sorry to say, when the preacher had finished I was more puzzled than when he started. My purpose in dealing with this theme is to try to make plain what I have since learned, as no doubt my readers have occasionally come across the word *adoption* in reading the New Testament.

To begin with, let me say that we could never have gotten into God's family by adoption. That much is very plain. John tells us how we obtained that right or privilege. "As many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (John 1: 12). The word "sons" in this verse in our Authorized Version is not correct, but should be rendered "children." In Galatians 3: 26 the translators have it "children" where it should be "sons." "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." See New Translation and Revised Version.

The word *adoption* as we find it in Romans,

Galatians, and Ephesians has to do, not with our relationship, but with

OUR LEGAL STANDING

before God. The idea conveyed by our English word is not that of the Scripture at all. The English word signifies *position* but *without relationship*. It is very possible to adopt a child into a family, and by so doing that child would become yours legally, but the law would never make you the child's father. But no son of God can ever look up into God's face and say, "You are not my Father." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8: 14-17).

"Abba Father, thus we call Thee
(Hallowed name!) from day to day;
'Tis the children's right to know Thee,
None but children 'Abba' say.
This high honor we inherit,
Thy free gift through Jesu's blood;
God the Spirit, with our spirit,
Witnesseth we're sons of God."

Yes, indeed! All His people may in grace say, "God is my Father." The following verses give us that assurance: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Pet. 1: 3). "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1: 18). "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and everyone that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him" (1 John 5: 1). These Scriptures show us that we have been *begotten* and *born* of God.

Thus we see that we are children by birth but sons by *adoption*, and have the legal standing, the place before God of full-grown sons, the precise scriptural meaning of *adoption*, or placing in the estate of a son one who is already a child, giving him the formal recognition of his legal standing as a son and heir.

So, beloved reader, if you are a child of God by being born again, in this day and age you are adopted also, and have the place and privilege, in God's sight, of one who has attained his majority, not the child's place only, but a son's.

"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; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1: 4, 5). Whatever else this Scripture teaches, it certainly does *not* teach that sinners are predestinated to salvation, for those who were thus addressed had already received salvation, as vers. 13, 14 of the same chapter show us. But they were

PREDESTINATED TO SONSHIP

and that is what *adoption* is. Thanks be to God, we have received that wonderful place and privilege through faith, and by God's sovereign grace.

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son: and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. 4: 7).

"Abba, Father, we adore Thee,
While the hosts in heaven above,
E'en in us now learn the wonders
Of Thy wisdom, grace, and love.
Soon before Thy throne assembled,
All Thy children shall proclaim
Abba's love as shown in Jesus,
And how full is Abba's name!"

The work of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary and His wonderful resurrection and ascension to glory have forever removed believers from the place of being under tutors and governors, and has given us the *son* place.

But, alas, how many have never entered into aught of it, and their lives are lives of service, of hire, while hoping to become sons at the end of the way. Others are legalists, shutting themselves up under law (which was never intended for them), as did the "foolish Galatians," bewitched by the tempter and deceived by their own foolish hearts. Instead of "standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free," they were under the galling yoke of bondage and the curse.

Such is not the desire of God's heart for us, if we believe on Him "whom God raised from the dead." Nay, our Lord "was made a curse for us" when He hung on Calvary's leafless tree.

"And now we draw near to the throne of grace,
For His blood and the Priest are there;
And we joyfully seek God's holy face,
With our censer of praise and prayer.
The burning mount and the mystic veil,
With our terrors and guilt are gone;
Our conscience has peace that can never fail,
'Tis the Lamb on high on the throne."

But then there is a way in which we still wait for the *adoption*, as we find in Romans 8: 21-25: "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not

only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves also, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

Here we learn that we only have the

FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ will bring all to fruition, so we wait in hope and glad expectancy. There are many well-meaning people who are deluded as to this, and vainly imagine that the power of Christ will be put forth in healing their bodies, if they but claim healing by faith now. They contend it is in the atonement, and I agree with them, but let me explain what I mean when I say I agree with them.

The trees shall clap their
handsbecause of the atonement.
The lion shall eat straw
like the oxbecause of the atonement.
The child shall play on a
cockatrice' denbecause of the atonement.
The desert shall blossom
like the rosebecause of the atonement.
The wolf also shall dwell
with the lambbecause of the atonement.

The leopard shall lie down
with the kid.....because of the atonement.
The calf and the young lion
and the fatling together.because of the atonement.
And a little child shall
lead them.....because of the atonement.
Every child of God shall
have a new body.....because of the atonement.

BUT NOT NOW!

That is where these poor deluded folk make a serious error. We wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies, but, thank God, because of the atoning work of our Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, all things will one day come under His beneficent sway, and everything that has breath shall praise the Lord.

“We wait for Thee, O Son of God!
And long for Thine appearing;
'A little while,' Thou'lt come, O Lord,
Thy waiting people cheering.
Thus hast Thou said: we lift the head
In joyful expectation,
For Thou wilt bring salvation.

“We wait for Thee—Thou wilt arise
Whilst hope her watch is keeping;
Forgotten then in glad surprise
Shall be our years of weeping;
Our hearts beat high, the dawn is nigh
That ends our pilgrim story
In Thine eternal glory.”

The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow was the theme of the prophets

of old, but Israel never seemed to read the suffering part aright, hence they rejected Him who came in lowly grace and "gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." It is similar to-day, for the masses fail to see this, the day of grace, is the day of the rejection of Christ, and with it the holding back of all the glories He will bring in when He comes back again to reign. For this

ALL CREATION WAITS.

With this groaning creation are the groaning people of God. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor. 5: 1-5).

What an *adoption* that will be! We shall then be put in the true place that belongs to us, because we belong to Christ. More wonderful words could not be found than those God has given us in 1 John 3: 1-3, with which

we close our meditation. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons (children) of God. Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons (children) of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

"And shall we see Thy face,
And hear Thy heavenly voice?
Well known to us in present grace,
Well may our hearts rejoice.

"Close to Thy trusted side
In fellowship divine;
No cloud, no distance e'er shall hide
Glories that then shall shine.

"Yet still we wait for Thee,
To see Thee as Thou art;
Be with Thee, like Thee, Lord, and free
To love with all our heart."

Coming !

Who is coming? "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" (Acts 1: 11).

Jesus shall come, this I know,
 He Himself hath told me so,
 John fourteen and one to three,
 Read yourself and there you'll see.

Yes! He is coming,
 Jesus is coming,
 Yes! He is coming,
 The Bible tells me so.

Angels too have come to earth,
 To make known this precious truth;
 Ascended now to God's right hand,
 HE HIMSELF shall come again.*

Every Christian who has partaken of the Lord's Supper has announced the death of the Lord

TILL HE COME.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11: 26). Regardless of these plain words, we find some professing Christians to-day who say that this coming of our

* To the Tune of "Jesus Loves Me, this I Know."

Lord Jesus Christ is a new teaching, and the product of a certain evangelical school with its own interpretation. Unless the precious truths of Holy Writ are rejected altogether, the following verses are plain without any need of interpretation. Let us read them together and see if we could possibly come to any other conclusion.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also” (John 14: 1-3).

“And when He had spoken these words, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? 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” (Acts 1: 9-11).

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if ye believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in

Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book...Behold, I come quickly: and My reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:7, 12, 20).

The above are but samples of many more scriptures which might be included, but if these are not believed, surely it would be useless to add more. Nearly nineteen centuries ago the saints at Corinth were "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7). The Thessalonian Christians were in the same attitude of soul as they "served the living and the true God, awaiting His Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:9, 10). They were taught by the holy apostles that Jesus would come back again, and

lived in the expectation that that sure word of prophecy would be fulfilled. Were they deceived by false teachers, or did they know "Whom they had believed?"

In this short article we have no thought of arguing out this truth, but we have presented for your acceptance the words of the Holy Saviour Himself, as recorded in John 14: 1-3; we have presented the words of heavenly messengers from Acts 1: 11; and those of the Apostle Paul from 1 Thess. 1: 9, 10. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established," declare the Sacred Writings, and we have quoted them for the confidence of faith.

When is Christ coming? "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13: 32). And again, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power" (Acts 1: 7). How many foolish speculations would never have been propagated had these Scriptures been known, believed, and heeded. Judge Rutherford's ridiculous slogan, "Millions now living will never die" (if living until 1925) would never have been uttered or placarded over the country. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord" (Jer. 23: 28). If anyone has a dream

or a vision in the night, let him tell it *as a dream*, but let him beware of attaching God's Name to it, thinking that would make it valid. Many who were alive in 1925 have gone the way of all flesh, and false prophets have had their folly made manifest even in this scene of time.

We cannot tell you

WHEN CHRIST SHALL COME,

but He will *surely* come again.

"It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,
 When sunlight through darkness and shadow is breaking,
 That Jesus will come in the fulness of glory,
 To receive from the world His own.

"It may be at midday, it may be at twilight,
 It may be perchance that the blackness of midnight
 Will burst into light in the blaze of His glory,
 When Jesus receives His own.

"Oh, joy! oh, delight! should we go without dying,
 No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying;
 Caught up through the clouds with the Lord into glory,
 When Jesus receives His own."

So "ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10: 36, 37).

I only know of one scriptural reason why our Lord stays the wheels of His chariot, why He

tarries so long. Let us read it. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3: 3-9).

NOT WILLING THAT ANY SHOULD PERISH

He is waiting in patient grace. Blessed Lord! Blessed Saviour! I am so thankful Thou didst wait for even me!

"Tenderly He woos thee,
Oh, receive Him now;
Can't thou still reject Him?
None so kind as He.

Come to Him believing,
Come to Him just now;
He has waited all thy days,
Why waitest thou?"

What will happen when the Lord does come back? We find the answer in the Bible itself, and it cannot be gainsaid. "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15: 51-57).

The first resurrection will take place when the Lord returns, and all raised then will be among the happy and holy throng that will reign with Christ for one thousand years. "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is

he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20: 4, 5, 6).

Yes, a new body shall be given. "For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. 3:20, 21).

"Sunrise will chase all the darkness away,
Night will be changed to ineffable day;
Sleeping ones raised in a moment of time,
Living ones changed to His image sublime."

Oh, what a change! Oh, what a change when I shall see His face!

Then what about the unsaved? "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now letteth will let, until He be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love

of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:7-12). Let this suffice for the answer. Surely it is solemn enough!

May it never be your portion, dear reader. Turn to Christ just now. Make not a moment's delay, lest you be among those whose fate is described by the Spirit of God in the words, "That they all might be damned" because "they received not the love of the truth that they

MIGHT BE SAVED."

Jesus is coming again! Are you ready? Would you be glad or sad if He were to come to-day? As truly as He fulfilled the Scriptures in coming the first time in lowly grace to Bethlehem's manger as the Virgin's Son; just so surely will He fulfil all the prophecies concerning His coming in power and great glory to reign over the earth.

"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7).

Christian reader, rejoice! Rejoice! "The coming of the Lord has drawn nigh." "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22: 12).

Unsaved reader, awake! Awake, ere the trumpet, the shout, and the voice be heard. For then your last opportunity will be gone forever, *you* with *many* will be standing outside a closed door knocking, only to hear the dread answer, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." Sad, sad fate!

"He is coming, hope sublime!

Short is now the waiting time!

From mine eyes the tears of adoration start,

As I think that any day

I may soar from earth away;

He is coming! and 'tis music to my heart."

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