

# BIBLE SUBJECTS FOR THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH VOLUME

by Unknown

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*A collection of articles and writings from Bible Subjects for the Household of Faith Volume, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

24 Chapters

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## **Bible Subjects for the Household of Faith Volume**

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## The Altar of Abram

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We are going to examine the various circumstances which furnished Abram occasion to offer his worship to God. We will also consider his walk and the character of his worship, and how he was led by faith to present this worship to God.

It is very precious to find in Genesis the elements and the broad principles of the relations of God with man in all their freshness, from the creation, sin, and the announcement of the second Adam. We also see how the government of God was exercised; in what manner man fell; the judgment of the deluge, which put an end to the old world; the promises made to Sarai and Hagar; the relations of God with the Jews in the beautiful typical history of Joseph. In a word, we find in Genesis, not only a history, but the grand bases of God's relations with man. Abram in this respect holds a chief place as the depository of the promises. We may understand that by what the apostle Paul says to the Galatians (3: 13, 14.) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

We see by this word, "the blessing of Abraham," the importance of that which is attributed to him. In considering it we shall see the position God has made for us, in his grace, as to the accomplishment of the promises; even in looking at it as a principle, we shall understand the glory of Christ, heir of all the promises of God. It is true that the relations of Christ with the Church were yet hidden, having been revealed only after his death, save at least in type; nevertheless, the various aspects of the relations of God with man, in all their freshness, and the various cases in which they have existed, are found in the germ, in this book.

In the ninth chapter, after the account of the deluge, we find that Noah, to whom the government of the earth has been entrusted, fails in his position. He got drunk. We see afterward the iniquity of Ham, who mocked his father; then, in Babel, the separation of the nations, each after its tongue. In the tenth chapter, men, united amongst one another, exalt themselves against God. In the midst appears Nimrod, the violent man upon the earth; while the family of Seth, blessed in the earth, is that in the bosom of which God establishes particular relations with men. Babel presents itself, whether as the commencement of the kingdom of Nimrod, or as the false glory of those men whose unity was in Babel, and who were dispersed of God. Such are the principal features of the three preceding chapters. Noah had failed; then the nations. Men exalted themselves against God instead of being subject to him; they joined themselves together to make themselves a name, and not to be scattered; but their exaltation becomes the cause of their dispersion.

Before we stop at the race of Shem; concerning whom God is particularly occupied, one remark is needed. A terrible principle is come up in this state of things! Man exalts himself in separating from God. But, insufficient to himself, he becomes a slave; he submits to Satan's power, serves him and adores him. Having abandoned God, Satan usurps this place; he alarms the conscience; he takes possession of the heart and energy of man, who gives himself up to idolatry. You will find

this fact in Joshua 24:2. It is the principle of Satan's power on earth; that adds to the history of man. Joshua furnishes us with what we add to this account of the things which came to pass after the deluge, —the violence of man, the dispersion of the nations; namely, that even the family of Shem, these children of Heber, worshipped other gods than the true and living God. The apostle tells us they were demons. "The things which they sacrificed, they sacrificed to demons, and not to God." Such is the new world; Satan becomes the ruler of the one we inhabit (a circumstance we set too much aside). God can deliver us, in one sense, from the yoke of Satan as ruler, although it abides true that he can tempt us by the lusts of this world, and make us fall morally under his yoke. For example, if the gospel be received outwardly in a country, and if the Word of God have free course there, whilst in another country evangelization is not even permitted, it is evident that, in this latter, souls labor under a yoke which does not weigh in the former, and that Satan rules over one of these countries as he does not over the other. I believe it is important in these times to discern these two things. The simple fact of being entrapped by one's own lusts is a yoke of Satan, but is not the rule of which we speak. Now, it may happen that many individuals in the enfranchised country may be more guilty; for the very reason that they have superior advantages: but the yoke is not the same.

Independence of God is the desire of all men. Man will do his own will, and he falls into the enemy's hand. Such was the state of Abram's family, as of all other men. Into the midst of all this evil God comes, and manifests these three principles to Abram: election, calling, and the promises. He finds him in the evil, and he calls him according to the choice he has made; then he gives the promises to him he has called, and Abram receives them.

Besides this, we get the manner in which God does this. He manifests himself, then he speaks. Often, in those days, he visibly did this. He came down to the earth and spoke to the individuals, and he has even done this since. Let the manner be what it may; he manifests himself to faith, by producing confidence. For example, when Jesus manifested himself to Paul on the road to Damascus, he did so by a visible glory, and by acting on the conscience and drawing the heart. Paul says himself (1 Corinthians 9), "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"

In Acts 7:2, you will find these words of Stephen: "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran."

God manifests himself to the conscience: it sees itself in the presence of God; it feels that God is there; it perceives beforehand a judgment which is impending, and whatever be the lack of outward manifestation, man must find himself before God, must follow him, whereas before this he did his own will. So it happened to Saul of Tarsus. Saul had not troubled himself about God's will; but as soon as he had heard Christ, he must enlist himself. The effect produced in the heart is expressed in these—words: "What wilt thou have me to do?" The communication of life, we know, takes place in the soul. Also, God speaks, even though he should have manifested himself to the sight, as to Saul. It is his Word which makes itself to be heard, even when it is written; and the written word is in fact of authority, without question, to judge what is said, though it were an apostle who spoke. The Lord himself refers his disciples to it, ("they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them"—Luke 16:29,) and places it as an instrument above his own words. I say as an instrument, or rather, as a rule; for whether written or from his own lips, it is from himself.

This authority of the Word is immediate. The Lord may employ Paul, Peter, John, as messengers, but he wills that it be received from himself. The Word of God addressed to man, must be received on this sole authority, that it is God who has spoken it if he does not know how to discern the voice of God and to submit to it, without the authority of man, it is not faith in God; the man does not receive it because it is God. In the natural state, the heart does not hear his voice. The principle of Abram is, that he believed God, and God puts him to this trial. There is hard work in the heart of man before the authority of God himself is established in it.

I daily perceive more and more the importance of this. In an exercised soul, which has felt that God has manifested himself to it, which has known its responsibility, whose affection is in activity, the Word has often but little authority; such a soul may have received a strong impression; God has manifested himself, the conscience is awakened; but it does not receive what God has said in that quiet faith which, having owned that God has spoken, is arrested by his word, confides to it unhesitatingly, unquestioningly, and is found in peace.

We must not despise the first of these positions, neither must we abide in it. If I belong to God, I can no longer do my own will, and this is what God says to Abram: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred".... This is neither pleasant, nor easy; but hearken to what Jesus says: Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. There is the grand principle. God will have a people that absolutely belongs to Him. Christ gave not himself by halves; circumstances may vary, but the principle is ever the same. 'Whatsoever be the friends, the things which retain us, we must nevertheless come to this: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred".... This order is terrible to the flesh; it is not that we must hate our father and our mother as the flesh hates; but it is the chain that is in one's self that must be broken; it is from within the heart that we are detained; it is also from that we would escape, it is with self that we must break. But God, who knows the heart, makes it deny itself, by making it break the ties with the world, which are outside it. "Get thee out of thy country," says he. He goes further: "And from thy kindred, and from thy father's house." Because God had manifested himself to Abram he must belong to him entirely.

Abram does it, but not completely. He did not, at first, all he ought to have done. He truly left his country and his kindred generally, but not his father's house; he goes no further than Haran, and stays there. He desires not, like many, to take all with him; he gives up a great deal; but that is useless: Terah cannot enter into Canaan. He was not called. In chapter 11, verse 31, "Terah took his son Abram, and Lot his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there." We see by this verse that Terah took Abram; who did not quit his father's house, and could not make much way. The thing is evident in the eleventh chapter of Genesis; and Stephen speaks of it in these words, (Acts 7:2-4,) "The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, &c., and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye now dwell." God had said to him, "Get thee out of thy father's house," but he leaves it not. Just so it happens to a heart that has not understood that it must give itself wholly to God. It gives up a great deal for duty, it receives nothing. When the question is of following God, it keeps something for itself. Nevertheless, grace acted towards Abram, but thus it is that one often plunges one's self into doubt.

The Lord had said, Get out, and come into the country that I will show thee. Abram not having done so, might have said, What will become of me? I have not left my father's house, what will befall me? I have only followed half-way the command of the Lord; I have not done all that he said to me; my heart not being in it, I have here neither the word nor the promises; I am about to perish in Charran. But such was not God's thought. Now, in chapter 12: 1-4, it is said, "So Abram departed, as the Lord had said to him." All goes well, Lot goes with him; Abram was seventy-five years old. They came not to Haran to live there, but into the land of Canaan they came; that is to say, as to us, as soon as we will do God's will, all goes well, God takes care of everything. Before this Abram had stayed at Haran, and there was no blessing. It is only when his father Terah is dead that he goes forth and comes into Canaan. This is what we see in the four first verses of chapter 12. We may remark how God presents himself to Abram. He does not reproach him. The obstacles are removed, he is put in the way of faith.

In the seventh verse, God appears to Abram; it is a fresh manifestation. He says to him, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." He renews the promises in a more definite way; he had already brought him to live and walk in dependence on himself; now he shows him the land and renews to him the promises, explaining to him, the accomplishment of them he will give the land to his posterity. In our case, it is heaven. God wills that we also should be blessed, walking independence on him.

In the second verse, God had said to him: "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee." Verse 3: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." God will be glorified, and he will bless; two precious things, for he glorifies himself in blessing. He encourages Abram in the pathway of faith, by identifying himself with the blessing. He engages him to trust in him; "those who bless thee shall be blessed."

Thus, Balaam cannot curse; and in Jesus we are blessed. God himself conducts us, and identifies us with the blessing of Christ. The church may be tried, may, encounter difficulties; but the blessing resulting from them is assured in Christ.

God then brings Abram into Canaan; what is there for him there? Nothing as yet to be possessed. The Canaanites are there—enemies all around in this land of promise. He has only his faith for his pains—not a place where on to set his foot as properly belonging to him. Stephen tells us so in Acts 7:5: "And he gave him none inheritance, no., not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."

This also happens to the church: in the land of promise we find the wicked spirits, and we are pilgrims here below. Abram also was a stranger and a pilgrim. He had not where to set his foot. It is a little hard to the flesh to have forsaken all and to have found nothing. But he cannot yet possess the country. This happens to us as well as to the Jewish people; they go up into the wilderness, and find but a wilderness. Man must sacrifice all he loves, and rise to the height of the thoughts of God. But thus, it is that the call and the deliverance make us strangers even in the very land of promise, until the execution of judgment be come.

We read in Hebrews 11:8: "By faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went." There is that which characterizes this faith. "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a

strange country; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” In drawing him by the path of faith and renunciation in the land of promise, God gives him nothing; but he sets him on a position elevated enough to see the city which hath foundations.

God draws us also into the wilderness; and when we are there, he gives us nothing, and if we ask for anything, he answers: “It is not good enough.” The disciples would have liked to remain and for Jesus to remain; but Jesus tells them, it is good enough for your heart, but not enough for mine; I would not that ye should remain where ye are; but where I am, there ye shall be also. He desires a complete felicity for his own. He tells them, before leaving them, I go to prepare a place for you. For where I am, I desire that there ye may be also.

When we are come out of this world and of that which keeps back our heart, then he can receive us. When Abram was thus separated from his earthly ties, God showed him the city which hath foundations. The great principle we find here is, that these Canaanites (to us the wicked spirits) not being yet driven out, we are strangers in the land; but on the other hand, Abram being in the land, the Lord appears to him.

I have wished you to observe, that God begins by making the conscience act; afterward he gives the enjoyment of himself and of converse with him after we have set out. There is this difference. The God of glory appeared indeed to Abram in Ur. Thus, perhaps he reveals himself to our souls, to attract them. But after that, he will have the conscience reached, and completely separates us from all that nature would retain, or by which nature would retain us, and he will have us walk as called of God and belonging to him, that the heart may thus peaceably enjoy him, in communion with him, when we have gone out.

God can speak to Abram, not now to make him set out, but that he may enjoy him and converse with him; and further, to communicate to him all his thoughts as to the fulfillment of the promises. God will bless. This is his position He has walked with God, but as yet possesses nothing of the inheritance in the place to which God has led him. The enemies are there. But the Lord appears to faithful Abram. In the enjoyment there of this communion and hope, Abram builds an altar to him who thus appeared to him.

God introduces us into the position of promises, in order that we should worship him, and he makes us understand distinctly how he will accomplish his promises. When Christ shall appear, then we shall also appear with him in glory. We shall have all things in him.

The portion of God’s child is communion, intelligence of the counsels of God for the enjoyment of what God will accomplish. Thou shalt be a stranger, but I will accomplish my promises in giving the land to thy posterity. “And Abram builded an altar to God, who had appeared to him.” His first manifestation made him walk; this makes him worship in the joy of communion in the land of promise where into faith introduced him, and in the intelligence of the promises that relate to it. We see God by faith, and how by and by he will fulfill the promise. He makes us see Jesus, true “seed” and “heir” of all things, and gives us the enjoyment of it in our souls.

Abram, stranger-like, goes here and there. He pitches his tent and builds an altar. It is all—he has in the land. Happy and quiet he rests in; the promise of God. And this also—is what we ourselves have to do. Perhaps it will happen to us as to Abram, to buy a sepulcher (chap. 23.) and that is all.

The Lord give to us a like position; that is to say, a quiet faith like this who left all. God cannot be satisfied with a half obedience, but, having walked in what God says, we may rest in his love, and have our altar until he come in whom are all the promises; even Jesus, In whom all the promises of God are YEA and AMEN, to the glory of God by us.

## The Passover and the Red Sea

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We always find in the deliverances of God's people that God is also going to punish the world. He bears testimony against universal testimony without excepting anybody. The law distinguishes men according to their acts; but the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, because they have not believed on him whom God has sent. Hence the Gospel begins with treating the world as already condemned. God has made trial, in every way, of the human' heart. The Gospel supposes that this probation is closed, and declares all the world lost. Souls often desire, and therefore need, to prove what their own strength is, and find they have none; even converted souls sometimes try to commend themselves thus to God. But it is to—dishonor. Jesus, and to deny their own condition as judged of God.

In Egypt God was content with the firstborn of each house, as a manifestation of his judgment. Pharaoh would not let the people of God go. When God demanded, as a right, that they should serve him, the world—Pharaoh its prince—would not yield. Signs and, plagues were then wrought to arrest their attention and enforce the rights of God, but Egypt would not listen. Pharaoh was hard, then hardened, and at last becomes a monument of judgment for the instruction of all men. So it was in the days of Noah, and so it is now that the world once more is warned of the approaching judgments of God. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and on them that obey not the Gospel.

Meanwhile, God demands a complete submission to his revealed will. He demands that the world should submit to Jesus all those who will not shall be forced to do so when judgment comes, and then to their own confusion and endless sorrow. God presents his Son in humiliation in order to save the world, but without submission to Jesus all is useless, because this is what God requires and values. To believe in the Son is eternal life, is salvation; to reject the Son of God is judgment. God will have a surrender of the heart to Jesus as Savior and Lord, a surrender to his own grace in him. Thus, is the heart, and everything else changed, and all question as to good works is set aside. All here turns on receiving or rejecting Jesus. God passes over everything. Zaccheus may speak of what he has been in the habit of doing, but that is not the point now: "This day is salvation come to this house." If Jesus is welcomed, there is life; if Jesus is refused, there must be vengeance by and by for those who do not submit. How happy for the poor convicted sinner that he has not to search in himself for something to present to God. If the heart is open, Christ is the grace and glory and perfection that is needed, and the moral effects soon and surely follow.

Still the Word of God presents the certainty of judgment. Satan has possession practically of the world, but God retains his rights. The unconverted are deceived by the enemy and are in his power. Satan does all he can to make the world believe that they are free and happy, that they are or may be righteous and good enough. But God has his rights. The world will not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hopes to escape judgment. Satan too takes advantage of all that God would employ to awaken and bless the soul. Thus, with the unconverted in Christendom, natural conscience is ashamed of that which the heathen do even in their religion. But this is used

of Satan to persuade men that they Can present themselves before God, and worship him in private or public, because there is nothing in these lands so gross as among Pagans. But God holds to his rights, and nothing is well if Jesus be not received in faith.

In Jesus all that is perfect in God and man is presented to the conscience. The holiness of God is there, not condemning but in perfect grace; but God will have an entire submission to Jesus. Nobody that comes is cast out. He is God in all his goodness to attract hearts, he is man in all his lowliness to exercise no will, no choice, but to receive every one that comes to Him, for such is the will of him that sent him; but God desires submission to Jesus. If Jesus is rejected, that is the conclusive proof that the heart will not have God in any way that he takes in presenting himself to man. It is the evidence of man's heart, of his pride, his hardness, and his levity. Nothing like these can stand in the presence of God, and Jesus manifested his presence in love. Pride is ashamed of the cross. Vanity cannot go on before Jesus, despised and rejected of man. God searches the heart in this way, and man does not like it. He is bound to own himself a sinner, to submit his conscience; and give, up his will, but he will not. It is the joy of Jesus to seek the wanderer; but to return in his rags, to show his wretchedness is most distasteful to man's nature; grace alone can make him do so. His pride therefore hates grace more even than law. The heart cannot endure to be laid completely bare; but if man is to be blessed, God must search the heart and save the soul forever. God acts according to what he is, not according to our thoughts. If man will not believe in Jesus, God will manifest what he is by judgment.

Egypt must be smitten. But first we have the security of such as submit to God, confiding in the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. Israel was well aware of the judgment about to be executed upon the land of Egypt. It should always be thus with saved souls. They ought to consider the ways of God when he will judge the world in righteousness.

When God reveals the judgment, he reveals also the means of escaping it. The soul which has the fear of God keeps close to his Word, and the question is raised between God and Israel. Could Israel stand, if God came in judgment? The Egyptians were sinners and would surely be judged; but if God came down to judge, what were the children of Israel? Where were their sins? God directs Moses that they should take of the blood of the slain lamb, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door-post of their houses. "And. the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." To the mind of man it was folly, but the simplicity of faith honors the Word of God and acts upon it. The destroying angel of Jehovah passed through the land, and if there had been Israelites ever so honest, but without the blood on their door-posts, he must enter and slay. For God was, under this sign, judging sin, and sin levels all distinctions; and where the blood was not, there sin was in all its hatefulness to a holy God, sin unatoned for and unjudged.

So now it is Christ and salvation, or no Christ and no salvation. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. There is the utmost certainty for those within the blood-sprinkled doors. It is the Lord who executes the judgment by his angel. It is impossible for him to be deceived, and impossible for man to escape; but he says, "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." There need not be a doubt, whatever the judgment.

It is not said, when you see the blood, but “when I see” it. The soul of an awakened person often rests, not on its own righteousness, but on the way in which it sees the blood. Now, precious as it is to have the heart impressed with it, this is not the ground of peace. Peace is founded on God’s seeing it. He cannot fail to estimate it at its full and perfect value as putting away sin. It is he that abhors and has been offended by sin; he sees the value of the blood as putting it away. It may be said, but must I not have faith in its value? This is faith in its value, seeing that God looks at it as putting away sin. Your value for it looks at it as a question of the measure of your feelings. Faith looks at God’s thoughts.

God, then, sees the blood: on that we rest to escape judgment, not upon our own view either of sin or of the blood of the Lamb. God himself estimates the blood of his own Son, as he it is who fully hates our sin, we feel both most when we enter into this, and rest on it in faith. Faith lays hold of his judgment of sin, and feels the need of his value for the blood of Christ.

This is the first great question—a question between a holy God and a sinful people. God appears as judge. The expiatory blood of redemption bars to him the way as judge, and it secures the people infallibly; but God does not enter within—its value is to secure from judgment.

The people, having eaten in haste with the bitter herbs of repentance, begin their journey; but they do so in Egypt; yet now God can be, and he is, with them. The more we know Christ, and enjoy his purity, the more gravely shall we feel our sins. It was then that the Israelites eat the Lamb, but they eat it in security. It would have been sin to have thought that God could fail in his word or his deliverance; and it is sin now to doubt that the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin.

Israel may be in Egypt, but they are no longer slaves there. Their loins are girded that night, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in hand. Such, too, is our position in the world, which to us is nothing now but the empty tomb of Jesus. Israel begin their journey with the question of sin settled. They had been secured, and they knew it, even in the midst of God’s judgment of sin. When the revelation of God enters the heart, one cannot find peace till the revelation of his grace is as clear to us as that of his dealing with sin. The Christian finds his judgment fallen on Christ himself; he begins with submitting to the righteousness of God, who condemns our nature and acts root and branch; but who shows us the condemnation borne by the Lord Jesus.

Have you submitted to Jesus? God demands it. He asks for no offering nor sacrifice; he presents Jesus, and shows you what you are. The worst sinners in the world may be received in grace by Jesus. “Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation.”

When Israel went forth, the rage of Satan knew no bounds. Pharaoh made ready all the chariots of Egypt, and his horsemen and his army, and pursued after. Never had Israel been so sad as they were on the eve of their new deliverance. But now that sin in their case was settled, it was a question solely between God and the enemy. “And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus, the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people

feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses.”

It is well to distinguish the judgment of the firstborn from that of the Red Sea. The one was the first fruits of the other, and ought to have deterred Pharaoh from his rash pursuit. But the blood, which kept the people from the judgment of God, meant something far deeper and far more serious than even the Red Sea, though judgment was executed there too. What happened at the Red Sea was, it is true, the manifestation of the illustrious power of God, who destroyed, with the breath of his mouth, the enemy that stood in rebellion against him. It was final and destructive judgment which effected the deliverance of his people by his power. But the blood of the paschal lamb signified the moral judgment of God, and the full and entire satisfaction of all that was in his being. God, such as he was, in his justice, his holiness, and his truth, could not touch those who were sheltered by that blood. Was there sin? His love towards his people had found the means of satisfying the requirements of his justice; and at the sight of that blood, which answered everything that was perfect in his being, he passed over it consistently with his justice, and even his truth. Nevertheless, God, even in passing over, is seen as Judge. Hence, likewise, so long as the soul is on this ground, its peace is uncertain, its way in Egypt, even though, all the while truly converted; because God has still the character of Judge to it, and the power of the enemy is still there.

At the Red Sea God acts in power according to the purposes of his love. Consequently, the enemy, who was closely pursuing the people, is destroyed without resource. This is what will happen to the people at the last day, already; in reality—to the eye of God—sheltered through the blood. As to the moral type, the Red Sea is evidently the death and resurrection of Jesus, and of his people in Him; God acting in it, in order to bring them out of death, where He had brought them in Christ, and consequently beyond the possibility of being reached by the enemy. We are made partakers of it already through faith. Sheltered from the judgment of God by the blood, we are delivered by his power that acts for us from the power of Satan, the prince of this world. The blood keeping us from the judgment of God was the beginning; the power which raised us up with Christ made us free from the whole power of Satan who followed us, and from all his attacks and accusations.

The world who will follow that way is swallowed up in the waters. This is a solemn warning; for the world who call themselves Christians do take the ground of a judgment to come, and the need of righteousness; but not according to God. The Christian goes through it in Christ, knowing himself otherwise lost and hopeless—the worldling in his own strength, and is swallowed up. Israel saw the Red Sea in its strength, and thought escape was impossible. So, an awakened conscience dreads death and judgment. But Christ has died and borne judgment for us, and we are secured and delivered by that which in itself we dreaded. The worldling, seeing this, adopts the trail in his own strength, as if there were no danger, and is lost in his false confidence. To the believer, what was the subject of his fear—death and judgment—gives him joy, now that he knows the results, in God’s hand, of the death of Christ. “Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.” Honey is taken out of the lion’s carcass. The resurrection of Christ is the standing witness that the Christian’s judgment is past, and that the world’s judgment is coming. (Romans 4.; Acts 17) Christ is risen, and therefore we are justified in him; so is the world to be judged by him.

## Balak, Balaam, and Israel

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Now Israel are in the plains of Moab, having only Jordan between them and the land of their rest. But had they a right to enter therein? If the enemy cannot oppose by force, he will try another way, by putting under the curse the people who well deserved it.

Balak sends for Balaam. The grand question in this touching scene is this: "Can Satan succeed in cursing the people of God, so as to prevent their entrance into the land of promise?" It is not merely a question of redemption, and of the joy of redemption at the beginning of their course, but in the end, when all their unfaithfulness has been manifested; their unfaithfulness even after the Lord has brought them to himself. Can Satan succeed, then? No.

When Moses, in those same plains, has to say, with regard to their conduct towards God, "You have been a perverse and rebellious people from the day that I knew you," and, indeed, they had been excessively forward, a most stiff-necked people; do we not know this? Well, God says by the mouth of Balaam, the involuntary witness of the truth, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." What a testimony! What wonderful grace! What perfection in the ways of God! God sees aright; he makes no mistake; he speaks the truth according to the perfectness of his infinite intelligence; and it is because it is infinite, that he can see no iniquity in the redeemed people. How could he see any in those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb? Nor is it his mind to see it. In his dealings with the people, he will see everything, —take knowledge of everything; but with the accuser it is the question of righteousness. God only sees this, that according to the counsels of his grace, he has given a ransom; the sins of his people have been atoned for. He could not in justice see those sins. The mouth of the accuser is therefore obliged to confess that there are none, and that there is no power of the enemy against Jacob. What is peculiarly blessed and comforting in this is, that God acts and judges from his own thoughts. From beginning to end he has had thoughts about us; he has done what was needed to reconcile all his ways in the accomplishment of them with eternal righteousness; but he has these thoughts and acts towards us according to them. It is these faith apprehends, accepts, and builds on. Hence joy and peace. While the presence of God, in the midst of an accepted people, to whom a new nature has been given, and his judging all there, secures practically the holiness which he cannot dispense with, or judges departure from it, so as to vindicate his name. But here it is God acting, judging, in spite of all, according to his own thoughts.

Balaam was a sad character. Forced to see from afar off the blessing of God upon his people; when he is near, and actuated by his own heart and will, he sees nothing but the way of error, into which he wishes to drag them, that they may forfeit that blessing, if that, were possible; reasoning upon this ground, that the righteous God could not bless a sinful people. One cannot think of any iniquity worse than that.

We shall say a few words as to his typical character. Let us pursue the history. Balak seeks him. Balaam wishes to inquire of the Lord, either from instinctive fear, or to attach, in the sight of others, the importance of the name of the Lord to what he does. Effectively God does interfere, and even

goes first to Balaam. He takes the matter in hand, and has power over the unjust mind of Balaam against his will; for Balaam has no understanding of the mind of God. God said, "Thou shalt not go, —they are blessed." What is his answer? "The Lord refuseth to give me leave to go." He would gladly have gone; his heart was set upon the reward of Balak; but he fears before God. The blessing of the people does not come into his mind; he is a complete stranger to the generosity of grace; insensible to the thought of their being blessed of God, of delight in his blessing on his people. Consequently, when there is a renewal of the temptation, he says that he cannot transgress the commandment of the Lord his God; he puts on piety, and, in reality, he was not entirely without sincerity, for God held him close, and, indeed, allowed all this; but, at the same time, Balaam induces the messengers of Balak to tarry and see what God would say further. What did he want to know more about an Invitation to curse that people who, God had told him, were blessed? He had no sympathy whatever with the thoughts of the heart of God, none with himself: he was governed by the fear of consequences. Otherwise, he would have been so happy in the blessing of the people, that he would have shuddered at the idea of cursing what God had blessed. God, however, will use him, to give a glorious testimony on behalf of his people, whilst, at the same time, condemning the crooked ways of the prophet, for they were indeed crooked. He shows him his perverseness, his folly, to be more stupid than the ass he was riding: but, at the same time, he makes him go on in his way. This meeting in the way does serve to force him, through fear; to utter faithfully what God should put into his mouth. Balaam goes to meet—he does not say what. It is plain (24:1) that he had mixed enchantments with the profession of the name of the Lord, and that he had thus been the enemy's instrument, with the credit of the Lord's name, a deeply solemn case. He was thus going to meet the mysterious power which came there, and Elohim came to meet him. God restrains and hinders on the behalf of his people all power of the enemy, and causes Balaam to say what he wishes to be said. Balaam looks upon Israel from above, and utters his prophecy. This prophecy is divided into four parts. It has Israel for its object; but as to the principle of it, it applies also to the Church. The first announces the separation of the people from the world. "The people shall dwell alone, separated unto God, a people not reckoned among the nations." The second prophecy declares that God does not repent. God has blessed them; shall he not confirm what he has said? The people are justified, and without sin in the eyes of God. God it was who had brought them out of Egypt. This people had "the strength of the unicorn, and the enemy, whom he had sought, had no power against them.

Balaam, seeing at last that God was bent upon blessing, yields to the power of God, goes no longer to the meeting of enchantments, and the Spirit of God comes upon him. The justification of the people being now declared, the Spirit of God can bear testimony to them, instead of confining his testimony to the thoughts and intentions of God. Balaam sees them from above; seeing the vision of the Almighty, he sees the people according to the thoughts of the Spirit of God, as seen in the mind of God from above. The eyes of the prophet are open. And remark, here, that it is neither the anticipation of Canaan, nor Israel in their permanent habitations: Balaam turns his face towards the wilderness and sees Israel abiding in their tents. There the Spirit sees them, and declares the beauty and the order of the people in the eyes of God. The water of the refreshing of God was also always with them there; they were as trees that the Lord had planted, therefore will they be great amongst the nations, a source of power and joy. They drink from the sources of God, and pour out from them abundantly for others. God had brought them out of Egypt; they were the work of God, and the power of. God was to go with them against their enemies. We get here

thirdly, then, beauty—a freshness, the sources of which do not dry up, and power (what the Spirit does for the Church). Then, in the fourth place, the coming of Christ, the Star of Jacob, who crowns the glory of the people. Only, as it comes in the midst of Israel, it is in judgment. With regard to us, it will be to take us hence, —in order to make us participate in the joy of his presence, —to the marriage of the Lamb.

In a word, we set the separation of the people from the world, their justification, their order, their beauty, as planted by God. near the everlasting sources of the river of God, and then the coming of Christ. The prophecy is perfectly beautiful.

It is very important for us to see sometimes the Church from above; in the wilderness, but, in the beauty of the thoughts of God, a pearl without price. In the midst of the camp below, in the desert, what murmurings, complainings, how much indifference, what carnal motives would have been witnessed and heard! From above, for him who has the vision of God, who has his eyes open, everything is beautiful.

“I stand in doubt of you,” says the apostle; and immediately after, “I have confidence in you through, the Lord.” We must get up to him, and we shall have his thoughts of grace, who sees the beauty of his people, of his Church, through everything else; for she is beautiful; but for this, one would be either entirely discouraged, or satisfied with evil. This vision of God removes these two thoughts at once. We see the final judgment of the ships of Chittim, that is, of the West, north of the Mediterranean, and that of their chief, after he has afflicted Asshur and Eber also. It will be the terrible judgment of God at the end of this age.

A few words more on the position of Balaam.

At the end of a dispensation based on any knowledge whatever of God, when faith is lost and profession retained, this last obtains a renown of which men glory, as now, of the name of Christianity: Satan uses it. Power is sought from him; they go to meet enchantments, because, whilst glorying in the revealed name of God, they seek to satisfy their own lusts, and the importance of the name of God is tacked on to the work of the devil. However, God is acknowledged up to a certain point. They fear him, and he may interfere; but the system is diabolical, under the name of the Lord, with a partial fear of the Lord, and a dread which recognizes him as an object of fear. The people of God are preserved; but it is a very solemn thought, and it is truly the history of the Christian system.

## The Day of Atonement

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Having made provision for such defilements of the people as allowed of it, we have the revelation of the general provision for the purification of the sanctuary which was in the midst of a people who defiled it, and for the atonement of the sins of the people themselves. In general, there are two great ideas; first, that the atonement was made, so that the relationship of the people of God was maintained notwithstanding their sins; and then, in the second place, in the difficulties which surrounded the entrance of Aaron into the holy place, there was the testimony (according to the Epistle to the Hebrews itself) that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest during that dispensation. It is important to examine this chapter under these two points of view. It stands alone. No mention is made anywhere else of what took place on that solemn day. The sacrifice of Christ, as redemption, was typified by the passover. It was here a question of drawing near unto God, who revealed himself on his throne—of cleansing defilements—of taking away the sins of those who would draw near, and of purifying their conscience. Now, while presenting to us in figure the means of doing this, it signified indeed that the thing was not done. As to the general idea of its efficacy, the High Priest drew near personally, and filled the most holy place with incense; then he took some blood, which he put on the mercy-seat and before the mercy-seat. Sins were atoned for according to the requirement of the majesty of the —throne of God himself, so that the full satisfaction made to his—majesty rendered the throne of justice favorable, grace had, free course, and the worshipper found the blood there before him ‘when he’ drew near, and even as a testimony before the throne. Then the High Priest cleansed the tabernacle, the altar, and all that was found there. Thus, in virtue of the’ sprinkling of his blood, Christ will reconcile all things, having made peace through the blood of his cross. There could be no guiltiness in the tabernacle, but God would cleanse away the defilements, that they might not appear before him. In the third place, the High Priest confessed the sins of the people over the scape-goat, which, sent away unto a land not inhabited, bore all the sins away from God, never to be found again. It is here that the idea of substitution is presented most clearly.

There are three things, the blood on the mercy-seat, the reconciliation of all things, and the sins confessed and borne by another. This order is found in Colossians 1—peace made, reconciliation of all things by Christ, and in speaking of believers— “You hath he now reconciled in the body of his flesh, through death.” It is evident, that though the scapegoat was sent away alive, he was identified as to the efficacy of the work with the death of the other. The idea of the eternal sending away of sins out of remembrance is only added to the thought of death. The glory of God was established, and his rights vindicated, on one side, in the putting of the blood on the mercy-seat; and, on the other, there was the substitution of the scape-goat, of the Lord Jesus, in his precious grace, for the guilty persons whose cause he had undertaken; and the sins of these having been borne, their deliverance was full, entire, and final. The first goat was the Lord’s lot—it was a question of his character and his majesty. The other was the lot of the people, which definitively represented the people in their sins. These two aspects of the death of Jesus must be carefully distinguished in the atoning sacrifice he has accomplished. He has glorified God, and God acts

according to the value of that blood towards He has borne the sins of his people; and the salvation of his people is complete. And, in a certain sense, the first part is the most important. Sin having come in, the justice of God might, it is true, have got rid of the sinner; but where would then have been his love and his counsels of grace, pardon, and even the maintenance of his glory According to his true nature as love, while righteous and holy too? I am not speaking here of the persons who were to be saved, but of the glory of God himself. But the perfect death, of Jesus—his blood put on the throne of God—has established and brought into evidence all that God is—all his glory, as no creation could have done it his truth; for he had passed sentence of death—it is made good in the highest way in Jesus: his majesty, for his Son submits to all for his glory, his justice against sin, his infinite love. God found means therein to accomplish his counsels of grace, in maintaining all the majesty of his justice arid of his divine dignity; for what could have glorified them like the death of Jesus? Therefore this devotedness Of Jesus, God's Son, —to his glory, —his submission, even unto death, that God might be maintained in the full glory of his rights, has given its outlet to the love of God—freedom to its action; wherefore Jesus says, “have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?” His heart, full of love, was driven back, in its personal manifestation, by the sin of man, who would it not; but through the atonement it could flow forth to the sinner in the accomplishment of God's grace and of his counsels unhindered, and Jesus himself, had; so to speak, rights upon that love—a position we are brought into through grace, and which has none like it. “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” We speak with reverence of such things, but it is good to speak of them; for the glory of our God, and of him whom he hath sent, is found therein established and manifested. There is not one attribute, one trait of the divine character, which has not been manifested in all its perfection, and fully glorified in that which took place between God and Jesus himself. That we have been saved and redeemed, and that our sins' have been atoned for in that same sacrifice; according to the counsels of the grace of God, is, I presume to say it, precious and important as it is for us, the inferior part of that work, if anything whatever may be called inferior where everything is perfect: its object at least—we sinners—is inferior; if the work is equally perfect in every point of view.

Having considered a little the grand principles; we may now examine the particular circumstances. It will have been observed that there were two sacrifices: one for Aaron and his family, the other, for the people. Aaron and his sons always represent the Church—not in the sense of one body, but as a company of priests. Thus we have, even in the day of atonement, the distinction between those who form, the Church, and the earthly people who form the camp of God on the earth. Believers have their place outside the camp, where their Head has suffered as a sacrifice for sin; but, in consequence, they have their place in the presence of God in the heavens, where their Head has entered. Outside the camp, here below, answers to a heavenly portion above; they are the two positions of the ever-blessed Christ.

If the professing Church takes the position of the camp here below, the place of the believer is always outside. It is, indeed, what she has done—she boasts of it; but it is Jewish. Israel must indeed recognize themselves outside at last, in order to be saved and to be brought in again through grace; because the Savior, whom they despised in a day of blindness, has in grace borne all their sins. We anticipate that position whilst Christ is in heaven. The heart of the remnant of Israel will indeed be brought back, in its desires, to the Lord before that time. They will only enter

into the power of the sacrifice when they shall look, upon him whom they pierced, and mourn for him Therefore was it prescribed that it should be a day to afflict their souls, and that they should be cut off if they did not.

The day of atonement supposes, moreover, according to the state of things found in the wilderness, that the people were in a state of incapacity for the enjoyment of the relations with God fully manifested. God had redeemed them—had spoken to them; but the heart of Israel, of man however favored, was incapable of it in its natural state. Israel had made the golden calf, and Moses put a veil over his face. Nadab and Abihu had offered strange fire upon the altar of God,—fire which had not been taken from the altar of burnt offering. The way into the holiest is closed; Aaron is forbidden to enter there at all times. When he went in, it was not for communion, but for the cleansing of the defilements of a people among whom God dwelt; and the day of atonement is only introduced with a prohibition of entering at all times into the holy place, and is conspicuous as taking place after the death of the sons of Aaron. He does it with a cloud of incense, lest he die. It was truly a gracious provision in order that the people should not perish on account of their defilements; but the Holy Ghost was signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. In what, then, is our position changed? The veil is rent, and we enter, as priests, with boldness into the holiest, by a new and living way through the veil—that is to say, the flesh of Christ. We enter in without conscience of sin, because the blow which rent the veil, to show all the glory and majesty of the throne, and the holiness of him who sits thereon, has taken away the sins which would have incapacitated us from entering in, or from looking within. We are even seated there in Christ our Head—the Head of his body the Church. In the meantime, Israel is outside: the Church is seen in the person of Christ, the High Priest, and the whole of this dispensation is the day of atonement, during which Israel's High Priest is hid within the veil. The veil which hid the import of all these figures is, indeed, done away in Christ, so that we have full liberty by the Spirit, but it is upon their hearts.

He maintains there within, it is true, their cause through the blood which he presents; but the testimony of it is not yet presented to them outside, nor their consciences freed by the knowledge that: their sins are lost forever in a land not inhabited, where they will never be found again. Now our position is, properly speaking, inside, in the person of Aaron, the blood being on the Mercy-seat. We are not only justified by the scape-goat, as being without—that is done, it is clear, and once for all: for the veil is only on the heart of Israel; it is no longer between us and God; but we have gone in with the High Priest, as united to him We are not waiting for reconciliation till he comes out. Israel, though the forgiveness be the same, will receive these things when the true Aaron comes out of the tabernacle. That is why that which characterized the sacrifice of Aaron and his sons was the blood put inside on the mercy—seat, and the going in of Aaron in person. But the Church is composed of persons who are here below, who have committed sins. Thus, seen in the world; they enter, as to their conscience; into the rank of the outside people, as well as Aaron himself, seen not as a typical individual; and this conscience is purified by the certainty that Christ has borne all our sins in his body on the tree. Our position is within, according to the value of the blood of Christ and the perfect acceptance of his person.

It is the same with regard to the expectation of Christ: if I consider myself as a man responsible upon earth, I expect him for the deliverance of all things, and to put an end to all suffering, and to all the power of evil; and so individually myself, as a servant, I look to receive at his appearing,

here the testimony of his approval, as a Master, before the whole world. But if I think of my privileges, as a member of his body, I think of my union with him above, and that I shall come back with him when he shall come to appear in his glory. It is well we should know how to make this distinction; without that, there will be confusion in our thoughts, and in our use of many passages. The same thing is true in the personal religion of every day. I can consider myself as united to Christ; and seated in him in heavenly places, enjoying all the privileges which he enjoys, as head of the body, before God his Father: I may also look upon myself as a poor weak being, walking individually upon the earth, having wants, faults, and temptations to overcome; and I see Christ above, whilst I am here below—Christ appearing alone for me before the throne—for me, happy in having, in the presence of God, him who is perfect, but who has gone through the experience of my sorrows, who is no longer in the circumstances in which I find myself, but with the Father for me who am in them. This is the doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whilst the union of the Church with Christ is more particularly taught in that to the Ephesians.

## The Three Great Feasts

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### DEUTERONOMY 16:1-17.

This chapter connects the people with the throne of the Lord in Jerusalem, by solemnities in which he surrounds himself with his people, blessed and happy in the deliverance which he has granted them under his reign. It gives us three solemn feasts—the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. The spirit of each of these feasts suggests a few remarks. The Passover recalled deliverance—deliverance from bondage in Egypt, under either sin or Satan. The unleavened bread was here the bread of affliction; the knowledge of Christ, or the application of Christ to the heart, though coupled with deliverance and salvation when it takes the form of repentance, (and this is the case when the question is of remembering one's deliverance,) has always something bitter in it. Joy is not the point here. One has gone out in haste, by the mighty arm of God, and if happy, it is only as having escaped, feeling that it is through the power of God alone, and conscious of the state which required it all: They ate it during the night, and every one returned in the morning to his tent. They went home with the sense of the goodness of God, with the sense that it was a deliverance from the evil under which they had been by their own fault, and to their own ruin. Holiness is presented in repentance and deliverance from the power of evil; under the form of conscience and judgment of sin it is an obligation; one dares not remain any longer in evil; they were cut off if leaven was found in the house; whereas this holiness is in itself the joy of the redeemed. They were bound to keep the feast wherever God should put his name. God gathered the people around his dwelling-place, and linked them with his name and with himself. Their nationality and all their recollections were connected with the worship of the Lord. It was another safeguard against idolatry. (Ver. 5-7.)

Seven weeks having elapsed, the people were again to gather around the Lord. They numbered seven weeks from the time they began to put the sickle to the corn, from the day they began to reap the fruit of the land of promise. They waited for the perfect time of the work of God. That which first of all characterized this feast was, that everyone offered a free-will offering, according to the blessing wherewith the Lord his God had blessed him. It is the Holy Spirit, and the blessing flowing from him, which this type presents to us. It is not only redemption, but the power of the things which are the result of it; not in full, however, —they were only first-fruits offered to God. The presentation of these first-fruits to God is the effect of the power of the Holy Ghost. They are the remnant of Israel historically in the beginning, on the principle of 'redemption and of the new covenant; but, in fact; the Church itself becomes the first-fruits of the creation of God. But the effect produced by the Holy Spirit, the effect of his presence in general, is that which characterizes this feast. There was no mention of free-will offerings at the Passover; they ate in haste and returned home. But the Holy Spirit has made the renewed heart willing; and according to the enjoyment of the fruits of the promise, according to the measure of the blessing of the Spirit of God, it can and will render to God the first-fruits of the heart, of all that he has given us. Therefore; (and it is what always accompanies this free-will—fruit of the Holy Spirit,) they: were to rejoice in the presence of the Lord their God. The fruits of grace and of the Spirit manifest themselves in joy

and in grace. Blessing manifests itself in the spirit of blessing, in the joy and goodwill of grace. Blessed and precious results! Joy, and the desire for the joy of others, always flows from grace, known according to the power of the Spirit of God. Thus, the worshipper, his son, and his daughter, his man-servant, his maid-servant, the Levite within his gates, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, were to rejoice together in the place where the Lord had set his name. God surrounded himself with joy, the fruit of grace and of his blessing. The remembrance of having been themselves bondmen was to touch the heart and influence the conduct of Israel; and, comprehending the grace which had delivered them when they were that condition, they were to, holed to act in grace towards those who were bond men to them. They are admonished, at the same time, to observe the statutes of the Lord; for the presence of the Holy Spirit, whilst ministering joy, leads to watchfulness and obedience. We enjoy the earnest and the first-fruits before God, but still it is down here where this watchfulness and restraint are needful.

When the ingathering of the harvest and vintage were ended, (that is, God having gathered in his own, hidden them in his garner, and trodden his enemies in the winepress,) then came the feast of Tabernacles; a feast, the antitype of which we have not, it is certain, yet seen. Although all the effects of the Passover and Pentecost are not yet accomplished, yet they have been fulfilled as to the event marked by them; but there has been no fulfillment, as yet, of the feast of Tabernacles. This will take place when Israel, restored to their land after the end of this dispensation, will fully enjoy the effect of the promise of God. Consequently, joy is put in the foreground; whilst in that which prefigured the presence of the Holy Ghost upon earth, the free-will offering came first. This feast was to be kept during seven consecutive days. It is joy, full and complete joy; not according to the measure of the blessing, but because God, had blessed them in all the works of their hands; therefore, they certainly ought to rejoice. The spirit of that day belongs to us, although the fulfillment of it has not yet taken place. There is a joy that manifests itself in us, in connection with the measure of the present effect of the presence of the Holy Spirit—a joy which requires watchfulness and to walk in the narrow way, and in which the remembrance of our former condition strengthens in its the Spirit of grace towards others, and the presence of the Lord is specially marked. There is a joy known to the heart, although the things which cause it have not yet had their accomplishment—a joy connected with the, time of test, when labor will be ended, and when there will no longer be any need of vigilance, for of the remembrance of our misery, to urge us to share our blessings with others. The feast itself will suffice for the joy of all Thou shalt rejoice in thy feast.

## The Basket of First-Fruits

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DEUTERONOMY. 26: 1-11.

That it applies to Israel's possession of the land at any time is plain. The last words of the first verse imply as much: "And it shall be, when thou, art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein, that thou shalt take," &c. Exodus 23:19, Leviticus 23, and Numbers 18:13, fully confirm this. It was a standing ordinance in the land. The spirit of the offering is also clear—a full profession before God that they 'possessed the things which he had promised to their fathers. Their father had been a Syrian ready to perish—a slave in Egypt; and redemption had brought them out thence, and into the good land of which they were now in full enjoyment. Therefore, were they come up to own the Giver, in offering to him the first-fruits: They worshipped and rejoiced in every good thing the Lord had given them; and this in grace, with the Levite and the stranger. How all this bears on the way in which the believer now makes the offering is evident. All his worship is but the answer; the reflex and bringing back to God of the fruit—the first-fruits, if true faith and godliness be there—of what God has revealed himself to be to him, and of that heavenly joy into which he has introduced him. Such is properly what the Lord Calls "that which is your own;" for on the earth we are pilgrims; in the desert it is not "ours."

The characteristic of piety will be found to be, in scripture, and everywhere, and ever, that the first effect of blessing is, turning back to God, and owning it there; not the personal enjoyment of it, which, without this, turns us from God. The love that gave it is more present than even the gift. See Eliezer at the well (Genesis 24), the cleansed Samaritan leper (Luke 17), and a multitude of other examples. He who gives is more and more before us than the gift itself. This is the elevating character of divine enjoyment. Then surely, we do enjoy it freely and blessedly, and the stream of grace flows out to the Levite and the stranger, —to those whose hearts are in need, and who have not an inheritance in the land we enjoy.

It is, then, the return of the heart to God in the enjoyment of the heavenly blessings which are the fruit of redemption. The Christian, too, can enjoy or so worship, when he had the consciousness that heavenly things are his. It is the profession, the open avowal of this; if he had not this consciousness, neither can he bring his basket of first-fruits. "A Syrian ready to perish" was a thing past. The worship was grounded upon possession of the blessing, and on a known inheritance—type of "sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." It is not thankfulness for promises, however surely that has its place, but thankfulness that they are accomplished—in Christ, yea and amen. Redemption is owned as an accomplished thing that has put us in possession, though for the redemption of the body we have yet to wait.

Indeed, this is the general character of Deuteronomy. It is not drawing near to God in the sanctuary by means of sacrifice, but the people—not the priest merely for them—are themselves in possession, and hence the sentiments towards God himself, and towards the desolate of men, in the enjoyment of the blessing; for free grace becomes him who has received all through grace.

Compare Deuteronomy 16, where even the various degrees of this are traced in the three principal feasts of the Lord. Hence, also, the responsibility of the people as to the continuance of the enjoyment of the blessing;" for it is in the path of obedience that such enjoyment is known. Deuteronomy is a book of the deepest practical instruction in this respect.

## The Passage of the Jordan

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JOSHUA. 3:5

And now the people are to enter the promised land; but how enter it? For Jordan, with its flood at the highest, lay as a barrier before the people of God, guarding the territory of those that oppose their hopes. Now Jordan represents death—but death looked at rather as the end of human life, and the token of the enemy's power, than as the fruit and testimony of the just judgment of God.

The passage of the Red Sea was also death; but the people were there, as participating (in type) in the death and resurrection of Jesus accomplishing their redemption, and setting them free forever from Egypt, their house of bondage—that is, from every claim of Satan. It was then that the people entered upon their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Redemption; complete salvation, purchased by the precious blood of Jesus, introduces the Christian into this pilgrimage. With God, he only passes through the world as a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; still this pilgrimage is but the life clown here, although it is the life of the redeemed.

But, as we have seen, there is the heavenly life, the warfare in the heavenly places, which goes on at the same time. When I say at the same time I do not mean at the same instant, but during the same period of our natural life on the earth. It is one thing to pass through, this world faithfully, or unfaithfully, in our daily circumstances, under the influence of a better hope; it is—another thing to be waging a spiritual warfare for the enjoyment of the promises, and of heavenly privileges, as men already dead and risen, as being absolutely not of the world. Both these things are true of the Christian life. Now, it is as dead and risen again in Christ that we are in spiritual conflict; to make war in Canaan we must have crossed the Jordan. It is, then, death and resurrection in Christ, looked at in their spiritual power, not as to their efficacy for the justification of a sinner, but as their realization for his life in the heavenly places; into which Christ has entered. A comparison between Philippians 3 and Colossians 2 and 3. shows how death and resurrection are bound up with the true character of the circumcision of Christ. In Philippians 3, the return of Christ is introduced as completing the work by the resurrection of the body. In both passages the heavenly life is spoken of as a present thing; but there is entire separation, even down here, between the pilgrimage and this heavenly life, although the latter has a powerful influence on the character of our pilgrim life. This influence was perfect and entire in the case of the Lord Jesus; but his life in connection with men, although the ever-perfect expression of the effect of his life of heavenly communion, was evidently distinct from it. The joy of the heavenly life entirely set aside all the motives of the lower life; and leading to the sufferings of his earthly life, in connection with man, produced a life of perfect patience before God. In him all was sinless; but his joys were elsewhere. Thus, also, with the Christian: there is nothing in common between these two lives. Nature has no part whatever in that above; in that below there are things which belong to nature and the world, not in the bad sense of the word "world," but considered as creation. Nothing of this enters into the life of Canaan. Christ alone could pass through death, and exhaust its strength, in being in it as shedding the blood of the everlasting covenant; and he alone could rise again from death, according to the

power of the life that was in him, “for in him was life.” He has opened this way; he has converted death into a power that destroys this flesh which shackles us, and a deliverance from that in us which, gives advantage to the enemy with whom we are to fight, being thenceforward brought into Canaan. Therefore, the apostle says, “All things are yours, whether life or death.” Now, every true Christian is dead and risen in Christ: the knowing and realizing it is another thing. But the Word of God sets Christian privilege before us according to its real power in Christ; The Ark of the Lord passed over before the people, who were to leave the space of two thousand cubits between it and them, “that they might know the way by which they must go; for they had not passed this way before.” Who, indeed, had passed through death, to rise above its power, until Christ, the true Ark of the Covenant, had opened this way Man, whether innocent or sinful, could do nothing here. This way was alike unknown to both; as was also the heavenly life that follows this life is altogether beyond Jordan; the scenes of spiritual conflict do not belong to man in his life below. No wilderness experience, be it ever so faithful, has anything to do with it, although the grapes of Canaan may cheer the pilgrim by the way. But Christ has destroyed all the power of death for his people, so far as it is the power of the enemy and the token of his dominion It is now but the witness of the power of Jesus. It is indeed death: but, as we have said, it is the death of that which fetters us.

I will add some brier remarks. “Lord of all the earth” is the title Joshua repeats, as that which God had here taken; for it is in testimony to this great truth that God had planted Israel in Canaan. Hereafter he will establish in power; according to his counsels, that which had been put into the hands of Israel, that they might keep it according to their responsibility. This last principle is the key to the whole history of the Bible, as to man the law, and all it has to do with. An is first trusted to man, who ever fails; and then. God accomplishes it in blessing and power.

Thus this chapter supplies us with very clear indications of that which God has promised to accomplish in the last, days, when he will’ indeed show himself to be “Lord of all the earth,” in Israel brought back in grace by his mighty power. And we must attend to this testimony of the purpose of God in establishing Israel in their land. Harvest time will come, and the strength of the enemy will overflow its banks; but we, as Christians, are all, ready on the other side. The strength of the enemy passed all bounds in the death of Jesus; and we do not say now, “Lord of all the earth;” but, “All power is given unto him in heaven and in, earth.” Let us remark, also, how God encourages his people. They must combat the sole of the foot must tread on every part of the promised land to possess it; and it must be in conflict that the power of the enemy and entire dependence upon God are realized. But while fighting boldly for him, he would have: us know that victory. is certain. The spies said to Joshua,— “Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land, for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us.” This is what we know and prove by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, so different from that of the, flesh, as brought by the ten who came back with Caleb and Joshua.

But if we are introduced into a life which is on the other side of death, by the power of the Spirit of God, as being dead and risen in Christ, there must be the remembrance of that death by which we have been delivered from that which is on this side of it, of the ruin of man, as he now is, and of the fallen creation to which he belongs. Twelve men, one but of each tribe, were to bring stones from the midst of Jordan, from the place where the priests’ feet stood firm with the Ark, while all Israel passed over on dry ground. The Holy Ghost brings with him, so to speak, the touching memorial of

the death of Jesus, by the mighty power of which he has turned all the effect of the enemy's strength into life and deliverance. Death comes with us from the grave of Jesus: no longer now as death, it is become life unto us. This memorial was to be set up at Gilgal. The meaning of this circumstance will be considered in the next chapter; we will only dwell here on the memorial itself. The twelve stones for the twelve tribes represented the tribes of God as a whole. This number is the symbol of perfection in human agency, in connection here, as elsewhere, with Christ, as in the case of the show-bread.

Here also, the Spirit sets us (Christians) in a more advanced position. There were twelve loaves of the show-bread, and we form but one in our life of union by the Holy Ghost with Christ our Head, which is the life we speak of here. Now, it is his death that is recalled to us in the memorial left us by the loving-kindness of our Lord, who condescends to value our remembrance of his love. I only speak here of this memorial as the sign of that which should be always a reality. We eat his flesh, we drink his life given for us. Being one now in the power of our union with Christ risen, dead to the world and to sin, it is from the bottom of the river, into which he went down to make it the way of life—heavenly life—for us, that we bring back the precious memorial of his love, and of the place in which he fulfilled his work. It is a broken body which we eat, a poured-out blood which we drink; and this is the reason why blood was entirely prohibited to Israel after the flesh; for how can death be drunk by those who are mortal? But we drink it because the death of Christ is our life, and it is in realizing the death of that which is mortal that we live with him. The remembrance of Jordan, of death when Christ was in it, is the remembrance of that power which secured our salvation in the last stronghold of him who had the power of death. It is the remembrance of that love which went down into death, in order that, as to us, it should lose all its power, except that of doing us good, and being a witness unto us of infinite and unchangeable love.

The power of resurrection-life takes all strength from Satan: "he who is born of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." In our earthly life, the flesh being in us, we are exposed to the power of the enemy; and the creature no strength against him, even though it should not be drawn away into actual sin. But if death is become our shelter, causing us to die unto all that would give Satan an advantage over us, what can he do? Can he tempt one who is dead, or overcome one who, having died, is alive again? But, if this be true, it is also necessary to realize it practically. "Ye are dead.... Mortify therefore." (Colossians 3) This is what Gilgal means. The matter in hand was not yet the taking of cities, the realization of God's magnificent promises. Self, must first all be mortified. Before conquering Midian, Gideon must cast down the alter that was in his own house. The wilderness is not the place where circumcision is carried out, even though we may have been faithful there. Circumcision is the application of the Spirit's power to the mortification of the flesh in him who has fellowship with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, Paul says: We are the circumcision." (Philippians 3) As to an outwardly moral life, Paul had that before. Had he now added true piety to his religion of forms, the true fear of God to his good works? It was far more than that. Christ had taken the place of all in him—first of all as to righteousness, which is the ground-work; but further, the apostle says, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, being made conformable unto the resurrection from the dead." Therefore it is in "pressing towards the mark"; that he waits for the earning of Jesus, to accomplish this resurrection, as to his body. In the Epistle to the Colossians (chapter 2) he speaks to us of the circumcision of Christ. Is it only that he has ceased to sin (the certain effect, indeed, of this work of

God)? No; for in describing this work he adds, Being buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him; through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. The consequences of this heavenly life are found in chapter 3:1, which is 'in' immediate connection with the verse just quoted. Here also the work is crowned by the manifestation of the saints with Jesus when he shall appear. Our Gilgal is in the 5th verse. Mortify therefore we see that it is founded on grace. It rests on the power of that which is already true to faith. "Ye are dead.... Mortify therefore." This being the standing, it is realized. "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead," said the apostle (Romans 6), when speaking on the same subject. This is the practical lower of the type of the Stones brought from Jordan. They 'are' a symbol of our union with Christ, who was dead. Raised up together with him, we can say that we were dead with him. He has been once dead for sin; we were dead in sin: God has quickened us together with him. All that he did was for us Associated with him in life, united to him by the Spirit, I appropriate to myself, or rather "God ascribes to me, all that he has done, as though it had happened to myself. He is dead to sin—in him I am dead to sin. Therefore, I can "mortify," which I could not do as being still alive in the flesh. Where was the nature, the life, to do it in? Now, circumcision being the practical application of that of which we have been speaking, we remember the death of Christ, and the mortification of our members on the earth is accomplished through grace, in the consciousness of grace. Otherwise it would only be the effort of a soul under the law, and in that case there would be a bad conscience and no strength. This is what sincere monks attempted; but their efforts were not made in the power of grace, of Christ and his strength. If there was sincerity, there was also the deepest spiritual misery. In order to die there must be life; and if we have life, we have already died in him who died for us. The stones set up in Gilgal were taken out of the midst of Jordan, and Jordan was already crossed before Israel was circumcised. The memorial of grace, and of death as the witness to us of a love which wrought out our salvation, by taking up our sins in grace, stood in the place where mortification was to be effected. Christ dying for sins, in perfect love, in un failing efficacy, is our strength in dying unto sin. In every circumstance, then, we must remember that—we are dead, and say to ourselves, If through grace. I am dead, —what have I to do with sin, which supposes me to be alive? Christ is in this death in the beauty and in the power of his grace; it is deliverance itself. As to growth, the apostle says: "I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

Thus, in being dead, and only thus, will the reproach of Egypt be taken away. Every mark of the world is a reproach to him who is heavenly. It is only the heavenly man who has died with Christ that disentangles himself from all that is of Egypt. The life of the flesh always cleaves to Egypt; but the principle of worldliness is uprooted in him who is dead and risen with Christ, and living a heavenly life. There is in the life of man a necessary link with the world as God sees it, that is, corrupt and sinful; with a dead man there is no such link. The life of a risen man is not of this world; it has no connection with it. He who possesses this life may pass through the world and do many things that others do. He eats, works., suffers; but as to his life and his object, he is not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world. Christ, risen and ascended up on high, is his life. He subdues his flesh—he mortifies it—for in point of fact he is down here; but he does not live in it. The camp was always at Gilgal. The people the army of the Lord—returned thither after their victories and their conquests. If we do not do the same, we shall be feeble—the flesh will betray us; we shall fall before the enemy in the hour of conflict, even though it may be honestly entered into in the service of God. It is at Gilgal the monument of the stones from Jordan is set up; for if the

consciousness of being dead with Jesus is necessary to enable us to mortify the flesh, it is through this mortification that we attain to the knowledge of what it is to be thus dead. We do not realize the inward communion, (I am not speaking now of justification,) the sweet and divine enjoyment of the death of Jesus' for us, if the flesh is unmortified. It is impossible. But if we return to Gilgal, to the blessed mortification of our own flesh, we find there all the sweetness, (and it is infinite,) all the powerful efficacy of, this communion with the death of Jesus with the love manifested in it. "Always bearing about in the body," says the apostle, "the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in—our mortal body." Thus we do not remain in Jordan; but there remains in the heart all the preciousness of this glorious: work, a work which the angels desire to look into; which is for us, and Which Christ in: his love appropriates to us. We find him with us at Gilgal—a place of no outward show or victory to attract the eyes of men; but where he, who is the 'source of all' victory, is found in the power and the communion which enable us to overcome.

But there were also twelve stones set up in the midst of Jordan; and, indeed, if we apply the power of the death of Christ to mortify the flesh, the heart —exercised in and fully, enjoying heavenly things— loves to turn again to Jordan to the place where Jesus went down in the power of life and obedience, and to gaze upon that Ark of the Covenant, which stood there, and stayed those impetuous waters till all the people had passed over. One loves, now that he is risen, while viewing the power of death in all its extent, to behold Jesus there, who went down into it, but who destroyed its Power for us. In the overflowing of the nations, Christ will be the security and salvation of Israel; but he has been our security and our salvation with respect to much more terrible enemies. The heart loves. to stand on the banks of that river—already crossed—and to realize, while Studying what Jesus was, the work and the wondrous love—of him who went down into it alone, until all was accomplished. But in one sense we were there; the twelve stones show that the people had to do with this work, although the ark was there alone when the waters were to be restrained. In the Psalms we can especially there contemplate the Lord, now that we are in peace on the other side the stream. Oh, if the Church knew how to seat herself there, and there meditate on Jesus! In doctrine, the Psalms set forth, also, the connection between the death—of Jesus and the residue of Israel passing through the waters of tribulation in the last days.

Behold, then, the people out of Egypt and in Canaan, according to the faithfulness of God's promise; not only redeemed out of Egypt, but brought into Canaan; the reproach of Egypt, being rolled away, and the people of God having taken their place at Gilgal the true circumcision of heart of which we have spoken.

## David

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Let us briefly retrace the history of David. Simplicity of faith keeps him in the place of duty, and contented there, without desire to leave it, because the approbation of God suffices him. Consequently, he can there reckon upon the help of God as thoroughly secured to him; he acts in the strength of God. The lion and the bear fall under his youthful hand. Why not, if God was with him? He follows Saul with equal simplicity, and then returns—to the care of his sheep with the same satisfaction. There, in secret, he had understood by faith that the Lord was with Israel; he had understood the nature and force of this relationship. He sees, in the condition of Israel, something which does not answer to this; but as for himself, his faith rests upon the faithfulness of God. An uncircumcised Philistine falls like the lion. He serves Saul as musician with the same simplicity as before; and whether with him, or when Saul sends him out as captain of a thousand, gives proof of his valor. He obeys the king's commands. At length the king drives him away; but he is still in the place of faith. There is little now of Military achievement, but there is the discernment of that which became him, when the spiritual power was in him, but the outward divine authority was in other hands. It was the same position as—lot of Jesus in Israel. David does not fail in this position, its difficulties only the better bringing out all the beauty of God's grace and the fruits of the Spirit's work, while very peculiarly developing spiritual affections and intimate relationship with God, his only refuge. It is especially this which gave rise to the psalms. Faith suffices to bring him through all the difficulties of his position, in which it displays all its beauty and all its grace. The nobleness of character which faith imparts to man, and which is the reflection of God's character, produces in the most hardened hearts, even in those who, having forsaken God, are forsaken of him (a state in which sin, selfishness, and despair combine to harden), feelings of natural affection, the remorse of a nature which awakens under the influence of something superior to its malice, something which sheds its light (painful, because momentary and powerless) upon the darkness which encompasses the unhappy sinner who rejects God. It is because faith dwells so near God as to be above evil, that it withdraws nature itself from the power of evil, although nature has no power of self-mastery. But God is with faith; and faith respects that which God respects, and invests one who bears something 'from God with the honor due to that which belongs to God, and which recalls God to the heart with all the affection that faith entertains for him, and all that pertains to him. This is always seen in Jesus, and wherever his spirit is; and it 'is this that gives such beauty, such elevation, to faith, which ennobles itself with the nobility of God, by recognizing, that which is noble in his sight, and on account of its relationship to him, in spite of the iniquity or abasement of those who are invested with it. Faith acts on God's behalf, and reveals him in the midst of circumstances, instead of being governed, by' them. Its superiority over that which surrounds, it is evident. What repose to witness this amid the mire of this poor world But, although faith—in the place it gives us in this world—suffices for all that we meet with in it, yet, alas! communion with God is not perfect in us. Instead of doing our duty, whatever it be, without weariness, because God is with us, and when we have slain the lion, —being ready to slay the bear, and, 'through this, more ready still to slay Goliah; instead of faith being strengthened by victory, nature grows weary of the conflict; we lose the normal position of faith, we debase and

honor ourselves. What a difference between David, who by the fruit of grace draws tears from the heart of Saul, re-opening (at least for the moment) the channel of his affections—and David, unable to raise his hand against the Philistines whom he had so often defeated, and boasting himself ready to fight against Israel and the king whose life he had spared!

My brethren, let us abide in the place of faith, apparently a more difficult one, yet the place where God is found, and where grace—the only precious thing in this world—flourishes, and binds the heart to God by a thousand links of affection and gratitude, as to one who has known us, and who has stooped to meet our need and the desires of our hearts. Faith gives energy, faith gives patience; and it is often thus that the most precious affections are developed; affections which, if the energy of faith makes us servants on earth, render heaven itself happy, because he who is the object of faith is there, and fills it in the presence of the Father.

Nature makes us impatient with circumstances, because we do not sufficiently realize God, and draws us into situations where it is 'impossible to glorify him. On the other hand, it is well to observe, that it is when man had thoroughly failed, when even David's faith had been found wanting, and, departing from Israel, he—had thrown himself among the Philistines, —it was then that God gave him the kingdom. Grace is above all failure. God must glorify himself in his people.

## The Sufferings and the Praises of Christ

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The result of the truth taught in this psalm is, that they shall praise the Lord that seek him. It is the fruit of unmingled grace, brought out in a very remarkable manner, and quite different from a hope or a promise. Assuredly, that the Holy One should be forsaken of God is not promise, and that is the ground laid here for praise.

In Psalms 19 we have the testimony of creation and of the law. It is a solemn thought, that whatever man has touched he has corrupted. Creation groans when a man has been there. But if I look where man cannot reach, —at the moon, the stars, &c., all is glorious. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work.” Next (verse 7. and seq.), “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.” Here the point is, not whether man can keep it or not, but its intrinsic perfection and its value for those who by grace profit by its light. Neither of these witnesses can be changed. Man early filled the earth with corruption and violence. “And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt.... God said, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them.” The heavens spread over all, and the sun going about in unwearied circuit from one end to the other, are the bright, unchanging witnesses, above man’s defiling hand, of the divine glory. As little does the law of Jehovah vary; but if man cannot change the law, he disobeys it. The effect of law is to claim from a sinful man that he should not be sinful.

Mark in passing, the order of God’s dealings. When sin came in, God said that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. This is not promise to Adam, but the judgment pronounced on Satan: if a promise, it is one to the second Adam. Then comes a word of positive promise to Abram, the father of the faithful: “In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” Afterward, when the offering had taken place on Moriah, the promises were made, unconditionally as before, to his seed. But the question of righteousness must be raised, because God is the righteous God. Blessing under law depended on man’s faithfulness, as well as God’s. At Sinai it was said, “If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, than ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.” The law raised the question of righteousness and put man under obedience, instead of his taking his place as a sinner. “All the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do.” That was law, and Israel under it; but “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” Long afterward rises another witness—One who testified to the moral nature of God as well as his power; One who manifested the righteousness of God, instead of merely claiming that of man; One who came, as it were, with all promises in himself, if he had been received. It was love itself, it was God, who is love, manifested as man in the midst of corruption; it was man, perfect in love to God and to his neighbor—the witness, in a word, of divine love and of human perfectness in the midst of evil and unrighteousness, meeting all in grace, to show that the grace of God could and did reach to any, passing through all in perfect holiness, to show that it was God’s grace which thus visited man, as indeed that alone had a title to do. Such was Christ here below. But he came in a peculiar manner.

He came, according to promise and prophecy, among a people whom God had prepared for this purpose; a people to whom the promises had been given after the flesh, and among whom, after their redemption from Egypt, all the prophets had appeared; a people who had the covenant and the giving of the law, and the, public worship, and the revelation of Jehovah; the, One true God who gave the law and sent the prophets.

And how was Christ received? He was entirely rejected. In Psalms 20, Messiah is viewed in the day of trouble. So, the Jews will see in their latter-day trouble, identifying Jesus as their Savior. Psalms 21. is the answer to their godly desire touching the Anointed of Jehovah, and the expression of their joy at his exaltation as King? He has been heard, and has his heart's desire given him.

Thus far we have had the testimony of creation—at least of the heavens, then of the law, and lastly of Christ, the Faithful Witness, rejected on earth, but crowned with glory on high. The consequence is, that his enemies will be destroyed; “the fire shall devour them.” Man having despised Christ, the day’ is coming when his hand shall find out all his enemies: his righteousness shall find out those that hate him. “Thou shalt make them as a fiery overt in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour thorn. Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of Men.” If I take the earth, it is corrupted and gone—if the law, it is broken—if Christ, he is rejected.

In Psalms 22— we have a totally different thing. It is Christ forsaken of God. Not that he is not despised of the people there: strong bulls of Bastian beset him round, dogs compassed him, the assembly’ Of the Wicked enclosed him; but all this, felt as none but Christ could feel, what was it in presence of the awful reality of Christ suffering front the hand of God—of Christ suffering for sin? It is a sad but useful picture, the side of man; for it, is all the same nature—such were we; but turn it round, and what is the other side? Christ has brought out what God is, and that is love, even when it is a question of our sins.

What is man? What was Pilate? An unjust judge, who washed his hands, while he condemned to death the One whom he had thrice proclaimed to be guiltless; and this at the instigation—at the intercession! —of the chief priests and the rulers of God’s people. And the disciples, what and where were they? “They all forsook him and fled.” “And Peter followed him afar off.” When he comes into the palace, he curses and swears, and denies Jesus again and again. Take man where you will, and if Christ be there, everything is put to the test —only sin comes out. His cross, his death, revealed the real character of all: the history of man, morally, is closed. “Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Man has been weighed and found wanting in every way. “The flesh profiteth nothing:” it breaks law and abuses grace. The end of all I am as man I read in the cross: “But where sin abounded, grace did, much more abound.” For there is another thing altogether there. On the cross hung the One spotless, blessed man, yet forsaken of God. What a fact before the world No wonder the sun was darkened, —the central and splendid witness to God’s glory in nature, when the Faithful and True Witness cried to his God, and was not heard.

Forsaken of God! what does that mean? What has man to do with it? What part have I in the cross? One single part—my sins. Here, then, is One forsaken of God, and saying it aloud before all men. There is none to see and sympathize, as in. Psalms 20. The women who followed from

Galilee were there afar off, but they understood not. It baffles thought, —that most solemn, lonely hour which stands aloof from all before or after. How does not perfectness of Christ shine in it! “The man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth;” yet was his spirit provoked, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job;” yet he opened his mouth to curse his day, and murmured that the Preserver of man had set him as a mark, so that he was a burden to himself. In Christ nothing was brought out but what was perfect.

But if I have to say to Christ, in what only is it first of all? What do I bring to the cross? What have I in it? My sins. There is not a vanity we, have not preferred to him. What a humbling thought for us—for me! The Righteous One is suffering for sin, and vindicates God (though to himself the depth of agony) in deserting him when most, we may say, he needed God. “But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. But I am a worm, &c. It was obedience —suffering—to the uttermost; but forsaken as he Was, Christ says, God was holy all the same. We know now why it was. It was for sin, for our sins —not for righteousness. Our sins were our only contribution. What a tale that tells on our part: on his, O what blessed love! What a stumbling-block is Christ crucified 1 What foolishness! Nay, but it is the power of God and the wisdom of God. Have your hearts said that you have no power, no wisdom? Have you confessed that in the cross—the power of God to those who are saved—you have no part but sin?

The wonderful truth is, that the Son of God came into the world, and in the cross God has made him sin who knew no sin. The sinless Savior has drunk the cup of wrath. It pleased Jehovah to bruise him—to make his soul an offering for sin. He has borne our iniquities. What is the consequence? He died under the burden of sin, and what becomes of it? It is clean gone; not that it has been glossed over, but put away by the sacrifice of himself.

Thus, before the day of judgment, sin has been thoroughly dealt with by God in the cross of Christ. There will be a day of judgment, and those who believe not, will find everlasting condemnation there... But for those who believe, there has been already judgment in Christ: God must judge sinners; but were this all, where would be his love? If he overlooked sin, where his holiness? That would not be love, but indifference to evil. When I see the cross, I see the perfect desert of sin, and that not in the destruction of the sinner, but in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, suffering once the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to the God who was glorified in the sins being thus completely blotted out. Christ took sin in his own body on the tree, laid down the life in which he bore it, and rose absolutely without it. Now, then, the question of righteousness is not raised only, but settled. Neither is it any longer a promise, but a work done. There are promises for the believer to enjoy in their season; but the suffering on the cross is ended and past. Redemption is neither creation, nor law, nor promises, but a divine work wrought about sin, and already accomplished in Christ through his blood, — in Christ now accepted of God and glorified at his right hand.

Hence, if sin was judgment to Christ, it results in nothing but grace to us in and through him. For if God takes up sin in my case at the day of judgment, I am lost. But I say he has taken it up in Christ; wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; and now there flows a stream of unmingled grace. For it is not only that the unsparing wrath of God fell on Christ crucified, but that

Christ enters into all the delight of God after putting away sin. God was now no longer a judge and an avenger, but a Deliverer from death and all the consequences of the sin Christ had taken on himself; his glory as God and as Father was concerned in raising Christ from the dead, and setting him in righteous glory as man, and in infinite delight as Son before him.

What a change there is now! Christ is heard from the horns of the unicorns. Resurrection is the answer of his God and Father. But mark, Christ has people whom he calls his brethren, and to them he must go and tell it all. God has righteously and in perfect love brought him back from the grave, and now, says the Lord, "I will declare thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise to thee." Never had the divine complacency in Christ been so complete as on the cross, never was God so glorified as in him there; but there was not, nor could be, the enjoyment of communion in that awful hour, when sin was judged as it never will be again. But now sin-bearing was over, and God so perfectly justified and glorified in it, that it became a question of Christ's bringing others into the place of holy joy and peace, and his own relationship to his God and Father.

Mary Magdalene wept at the grave, for she loved the Lord, and knew not salvation in him risen: "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." To her apprehensions, if he were gone, all was lost. But Jesus made himself known to her in resurrection, and says, "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." For whom was the work done, but for them? But more than this. God was his Father, he was theirs; if his God, he was theirs also. He brings the disciples into the same place he has entered himself.

All things in man and under man had failed by reason of sin. But sin being now put away, all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. No righteousness could be had out of man. But Christ being made sin, the believer is now become divine righteousness in him.

Why go about to establish your own righteousness? Paul lets us know, that now that he saw and had God's righteousness in Christ, he would not have his own, had it been ever so fair: what he had in Christ by faith was incomparably better.

If you love your children thoroughly, you desire them to have the same place as yourself, it was so with Christ. He could suffer alone, but that finished, could he praise alone? No: "in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise to thee." All the suffering and sorrow were his; his joy he would share with those he loved. He himself leads their praises. He is come out from unutterable, unfathomable agony and shame, and does he keep silence? Does not his tone of praise well assort with the darkness he was in? Does not fullness of joy now answer to God's forsaking him then for our sin? (Compare verses 24, 25.) He had been in the depths for us, but now he is out and praising; and how should we praise? With him, in the certainty of what he has wrought God would have us free before him in joy by virtue of what Christ has done; he would have us judging every evil, for it is a holy place; but the place he is in is the result of his work, and he gives it—nothing less than it—to us. Could I go into the presence of God in my sins? I should flee from him like Adam. But, believing in Christ, I am in God's presence, because he has brought me there.

Are you then seeking God? Have you heard the voice of Christ? It is no longer the cry of deepest grief unheard. The atonement is made, he himself is raised from the dead, the accepted, glorified

Savior: and what to him the change from the affliction of the afflicted to his joy as risen? He gathers around him those who receive him, and in their midst sings praises to God. If you seek God now, you are entitled by his work to take up and join in his song of praise. For it is not a promise, but an accomplished fact. Do I believe in Christ? If so, I am before the throne of God (in title, not in fact, of course) by virtue of the cross; I am inside the veil, and my sins are left forever behind me.

From verse 22 we find nothing but grace. Do you, who seek God, say, O that I could find him? But he has found you. Come, then, and praise him. Christ has been on the cross, bearing our sins. You have to learn it as an accomplished fact; not saying, I hope he will do it. The work is done, sin is entirely put away, and Christ the leader of praise according to his estimate of sin, of wrath due to it, borne in grace, and of the perfect deliverance displayed in his own resurrection. Thenceforward is heard praise, and praise only. First, Christ in the midst of the congregation praises God, and those that fear Jehovah are called to praise him. (verses 22, 23.) Then his praise is anticipated "in the great congregation," and "they shall praise Jehovah that seek him, and all the ends of the world are to remember and turn to him." (verses 25-27.) In the millennial earth the homage will be universal, "all they that be fat upon earth"— "all they that go down to the dust;" yea, and not that race then alive only, for they " shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this."

In the light there are exercises of conscience, but how do I get there? Because Christ put away sin, and I receive him. True, we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, but it is the judgment, seat of him who loved me and gave himself for me, who saved me, and in whom I am accepted. If Christ had to do with a Pharisee, he soon unmasked him; but to one who came to him as a poor sinner, he was always grace, as to the woman in Luke 7. Never did he deal roughly with one soul who came in the truth of its condition: to such he spoke and wrought in the truth of his own grace. That sinful woman was attracted by divine love in Christ, and hears him pronounce her many sins forgiven. She knew his great love, and loved much. When he comes to this, he does not trouble himself more about the Pharisee, but says to the woman, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." And no wonder; for it is the self-same thing which brightens heaven that made her heart bright.

We must, then, be all manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ, before the person who by his death put away all my sins. What a blessing to find him on the judgment-seat! There is nothing in this to disturb the peace he has made by the blood of his cross; and peace we must have in order to enjoy communion with God. Can two walk together, except they are agreed? Then think how it is we get there. Christ will come and receive me to himself, because he loves me and wants me to be with him where he is. And how do I arrive? Glorified in a body like his own. Do you ask, how can people speak thus? I answer by the question, how can you be in heaven in any other way? He who of God is made unto us righteousness is the judge. To believe in his name, and yet doubt that we have peace, is calling in question the value of his work. He who suffered, and is now glorified, will not gainsay it when he judges. But there will be nothing secret; all will come to light. What a lesson for us when in glory! And what is the effect? I look on my past life, and what have I been? I look since I have been a Christian, and what feebleness, what failure! But am I therefore to be afraid? No, I look at God and say, what a God I have had to do with! Every step is a manifestation of my Father's love, who had led me along the way. In glory I shall see all my foolishness; but it will

be in the body risen or changed. I shall learn the love of Christ in every tittle of my life, from beginning to end.

How does the apostle describe its effect? "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." (2 Corinthians 5:2.) Now, are your hearts so entirely free from the terror of judgment for yourselves that you only go out to persuade others? This is the living activity of love; but besides the fullness of peace which it supposes, there is a sanctifying process. We are made manifest to God. All is brought into the light now; and that is what we want, in order to search our ways. Sin is never seen out of God's presence. Are you walking like Christ? The light shines into my conscience, and shows me everything inconsistent with itself.

Are your voices tuned to praise with Christ? He is gone from the wrath and darkness of the cross into the light and love of his Father's presence, and is praising. Can you praise with him? There all trembling disappears. Do you believe "he hath done this?" Oh, beloved, how those who seek him lag behind his heart! What is it you believe? and in whom? Do you not know that he drank the cup to the dregs, and is all uncertain to you still? If you think of what you are, I say you are a thousand miles off what you ought to be. If you seek him, his Word warrants that you should praise him. He is in the presence of God as the consequence of his work. May your hearts set to their seal that God is true. As a Father, he may chasten; but the chastenings are a Father's ways with children's hearts. May you not reject the testimony of Jesus, that he has spent his life, having suffered once the just for the unjust, that your souls may have present peace with God. "He hath done this."

## Christ Desires for the Christian

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This chapter has a very peculiar character, in that it is not the address of the Lord Jesus to his disciples even, much less to the world. It is their admission to hear him address his Father about them. And we can easily understand that, where such a privilege is given them, we should be let into the fullest possible apprehension of the place in which he has set us. When he spoke to the world, Christ suited himself to their capacity; and we, in our measure, ought to seek to do the same. But when he was addressing his Father, we can naturally understand that he would speak freely of what he had on his heart about his disciples. But still, as it concerned them (now, through grace, we have received the Spirit who communicates these things to our souls), he spoke it in the audience of the disciples, so that they should hear and know what his heart felt about them. Let me ask you this: If we find that Christ has an interest in us, and that he is speaking to his Father, and speaking of us, —of what he has on his heart for our blessing, —do our hearts turn with interest to liken and to know what he feels about us? We have wretched cold hearts, it is true—nothing is worse than their deadness and indifference to God. An openly bad vile man of the world is bad enough; but if I saw a son do what was wrong, and if his father went out and intreated him with all the tender affection of a father, and he did not trouble his heart about what he said, I should say, there is no hope now.

Therefore, when I find this first truth, that Christ has us on his heart, and can speak to his Father about us—that we are become the object of their common interest, surely our hearts should turn to it. “These things,” he said, “I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.” The character of Christ’s love, being perfect, was to bring us into the same blessing with himself. It is very true, but it is not all the truth, that we are blessed through Christ: we are blessed with him, and that was the perfection of his love. He loves us enough to have us near him, and have us all in the perfectness of his own heart; and having opened our understandings to see what he is and to delight in what he is, he gives us the consciousness of his own perfect love. “We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” If I always saw perfect blessedness before me, with the consciousness at the same time that I never should have it, that would not give comfort to my heart; but if I have a perfect object before me, with the certainty that I shall possess it, I shall be occupied with that object.

Whilst here below we have the consciousness, in looking at our blessing in Christ, that we are not perfectly like what he is; we desire it—we long to be conformed to the image of Christ. But still, if we have in any measure tasted the loveliness of Christ, what distresses the heart is that we are not like him. But here Christ engages the affections, and brings the heart to this point—the consciousness that this is our place in him before God, and that all the blessedness that he has is ours. Does it become us to say no? Is it humbleness to be short of that—to say we are unworthy? Is God right? But it is no humbleness to refuse grace. And then, when it is seen to be such grace—unmingled grace—it is no humbleness to speak of not being fit to have such things. If I talk about not being quite worthy, there is the thought that if I were worthier I should be fit to have these blessings. Here is just where the want of humbleness is. You ought to be on the right ground

with the Lord. That which enables us to have this thought and desire of being brought into the presence and blessing of God, and to be like Christ, is that all is grace. We are nothing if we look at the glory that is before us, it at once puts out the thought of all worthiness in ourselves.

Here, then, the Lord is just setting us in his own place upon earth. Poor feeble creatures we are for it—but he is setting us in his place on earth. “Father,” he says, “I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.” This chapter is often spoken of as being a prayer. The half is a prayer; but all the other part is a plain and full exposition of the ground on which he places us, beginning with his going up to heaven, and then going on to the glory which he will give us. There is the prayer, too; a prayer for us while we are ‘passing through the trials and difficulties of this world. Christ gives us this place with himself above; but he speaks while still in the world, that we might have it from his own lips in the world. It is not as taking us out of the world; but he begins it all from that starting point, that we shall be in the glory. When he was here, he did not want any witness; he was himself the heavenly witness. But now he is gone, he sets his saints as his living active epistle in a world that they do not belong to, any more than he did.

First, then, look at the way in which he introduces us into this place. You will see, in the first few verses, that it is a question of himself being glorified. “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, glorify thy Son.....as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” Now there are two thoughts which the Lord brings out there. He says, “Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.” That is the title which his person gives him to this glory. And the other is, “I have glorified thee on the earth,” &c. “And now, O Father, glorify thou me,” &c. That is, the Lord presents these two grounds on which he, is asking for his glory as man. He is glorified in virtue of his person, and then glorified in virtue of his work.

It is in connection with both these titles that we have to see our place on earth. He takes his place with the Father in virtue of his own personal title, and in virtue of his accomplished work. There is’ the basis which he lays for our admission into this place of blessing; and at the close he says; “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” The love wherewith the Father had loved Christ should be in the disciples: they should enjoy it; they should have his joy fulfilled in themselves. It is this that we are called to: the enjoyment, in this world, of the love that Christ knew here below—of his Father’s love. He was there the Son of God, as man in’ this world, and what was his delight? Was it from the world? Surely not. Was he of the world? He was not He was walking in the world; but his character and place, while there, was as the Son of the Father. There was his joy, not from the world no more than He was of it, but from the Father: there was his constant blessedness. The wellspring of his delight, in a world that hated him, was the constant inflowing of the Father’s love to him He was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. Now the first point is, how such as we are can get into such a place. The Lord always retained the perfect consciousness of his Father’s love. How can a sinner get there? Though he had declared his Father’s name to the disciples (take, for an example, the sermon on the mount), did they understand it? No; they had not the Spirit of adoption. He revealed the name and character of the Father, but their hearts did

not enter into this relationship.

Christ, as man walking down here, was the Son of man which is in heaven. His person gives him this title. He walks through this world in suffering and trial. He suffers from man for righteousness' sake, and for love's sake. But whatever the suffering through which he was passing, he always addressed God as his Father during all the time of his life in this world; every expression of his heart was of his conscious relationship to God as Father. But when he comes to the cross, it is, "My God my God why hast thou forsaken me?" Upon the cross, all that God was in his holy hatred of sin fell on Christ for our sakes; and hence, it was not then a question of love and fellowship, but all else that God was against him, as bearing our sins. Was God true? That righteousness was against him because of sin. All that God was—his holiness, truth, majesty, righteousness, —all was against him, because in the cross he was as the One made sin for us. The one other thing in God's nature was his love, and that Christ necessarily could not then taste; therefore, on the cross, he does not say Father, but it is, "My God? my God!" Afterward, when just expiring, he does say, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Never was he more perfect, never more acceptable to God, than on the cross. God was a debtor in that sense to Christ; for his character was brought out as it never had been before. If God had merely swept away all men in anger, there would have been no love; if he had spared all in mercy, there would have been no righteousness. But Christ giving himself up to death, and to the bearing of God's wrath on the cross, there is perfect righteousness against sin, and perfect love to the sinner. God was there fully glorified in all that he was. And now, having done that—the whole question of sin being settled, and all Christ was being proved in the resurrection—he says, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." The Lord Jesus then comes, having been heard and answered in resurrection; and now he says, "Go, and tell my brethren, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God;" that is, he brings out both these names now; the relationship in which he had been as a Son with the Father all his life long, and the full effect of all that God was as such, which he had borne as wrath against sin, he now brings out, as entirely for us. If it is a question of God's righteousness, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ. If it is his love, we are loved with the same love Christ was loved with. Grace is reigning through righteousness by Jesus Christ. Everything that the Father can be towards sons, that he delights in—as he was to Christ, so he reveals himself to us. Sin is put entirely away, and by the very word of Christ himself the disciples are even brought, by the efficacy of his work of redemption, into a place along with himself. He declares his name unto his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father and your Father," &c.; and, he puts them in this place after death and judgment has been gone through, and he is risen out of it, so that his righteousness becomes that in which we stand before God. While Christ was upon earth he remained entirely alone, because the atonement was not made. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone." But he has died, and now he can bring them into the place belonging to himself; and that is what he is doing now. Did sin hinder it? Yes; but it is put away. Did righteousness? Yes; but it is for them and for us. If we, speak of the sufferings of Christ, there were two kinds of suffering, quite distinct one from the other. In one sense he went through every possible kind of suffering. He suffered from man for righteousness sake and he suffered from God, for sin's sake.

The suffering from God for sin he took for us entirely alone; he suffered it that we might not suffer it. He took it fully—drank the cup to the very dregs, and it is done with. In his sufferings for righteousness sake, he gives us the privilege of suffering with him. "To you it is given in the behalf

of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." If we suffer from man for righteousness sake, there we are with him; but with suffering for sin we have nothing to do. He has taken it entirely alone: not one drop is left; no' particle or trace of it remains for us. He took it that we might never have it. And now, having done that, he takes another place, in which man, as man, must necessarily remain a stranger to him. But the fact that Christ is gone up on high is the reason why I can be with him. When he was upon earth, I could not be in any full sense with him. Why? Because he was holy, and I was not. But when sin has been put away, and he is gone into heaven, and has taken a place there in the presence of God, he has done that by which I can draw near. He has gone into the presence of God with a righteousness which gives me a title to be there. Thus, the glory in which Christ is, which he has entered as having accomplished redemption, enables me to be with him, instead of being a hindrance. I never could be with him, if he had not been in this glory. He might visit us in mercy, but it is as risen from the dead and gone up on high that he gives us the place of union with himself before God.

What he is doing now, is to reveal this name of the Father to us. When he spoke to Abraham he said, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me." God revealed himself in a character on which Abraham's faith was to act: it is the revelation of himself as the One who was all-powerful, whatever might be the difficulties of the path; and Abraham was to live by faith in that name. He says to Moses, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." Now he takes this name with Israel: he puts himself in relation with Israel by the name of Jehovah. He was the unchanging One, who would be faithful to his word and oath, however many the changes that Israel might have to pass through. He was thus a perfect Protector; he was the Almighty One; he was Jehovah: but that is not what I want, blessed as it is in its place. I want eternal life. But he comes now with another name. The Son reveals the Father's name. If I have found this, that the Father has sent the Son to be a Savior, and that this work is accomplished, I say this is not now merely a Faithful and Almighty Protector, or the One true God that governs the world righteously: he is interested in my salvation. He takes the place of a Father to me, if I receive his Son. I get in Christ the revelation of my place with God, and that, consequent upon the blessed truth that he has taken away the sin that shut me out from the presence of God, and has gone up before the Father, that I may have the very same place that belongs to him as the Son of the Father. Can I possibly have more than that? Yes, there is even more than that. In virtue of it, there is the Comforter sent down. "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The Holy Ghost comes down because of Christ's being exalted at the right hand of God. He becomes the Spirit of adoption. "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." So that the place in which we find Christ thus glorified, we find the believer set in, as this righteousness presented to God. The Holy Ghost is given as that which seals me, and gives me the power and blessing of the place into which Christ has brought me. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only, true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." There is the relationship. Then there is the work, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." He asks then that the Father should glorify him, and adds, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. Now they have known that all things, whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee." It was not merely what Messiah received from God, but what the Son had from the Father that was Made known to them. And he adds, "I have given unto them the words

which thou gavest me; and they have received them," &c.

Two things—you will find connected with the position in which the disciples are thus set; first, that which ministers to their joy, and then the place which they have as witnesses for him in the world: He has communicated to them all the 'means of this joy.' "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me:" "Henceforth," as he said before, "I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." Now, he puts us in the, place of sons, and, as sons, the words that the Father gives him he makes known unto us. What Christ does is bringing us into the enjoyment of his own relationship and place with God. The first thing he does is, to secure our being in it by this work of atonement. Then, having wrought this, the next thing is to give us the name by which we are called to know God as the Father. And accordingly, He gives us all the words of the Father, that we may have the joy of this place in which he has set us. "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.... Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." He puts them under the shelter of, the name.

"Holy Father." He looked for them to be kept with all the Father's tenderness. That is, they are in this world under this name of Holy Father; and then he presents these two motives to his Father for keeping them: first, "for they are thine;" and the other is, "I am glorified in them."

Do you believe that the Lord was speaking the truth? When he says he tells us these things, that we might have his joy fulfilled in ourselves, did he really mean so? I believe it. I believe that the Lord meant us to have his joy fulfilled in ourselves. If you tell me that we are poor feeble vessels to have it, that is most true; but he did not speak thus. The possession of life is not power. Power is in Christ, and in Christ alone; for the character of the new man is dependent and obedient. If you say, I have life from God, and therefore I have got power, it is not true. But if you say, I have got life from God, but I have got the temptations of Satan and the world, and all that can seduce me away from the range and exercise of this life, and you say, Father, keep me, I want to be kept, then there will be power. When Paul gets into the third heavens, what is the effect? When there, the flesh is not puffed up; for he is there to hear things which he cannot even utter down here. But when he comes down, the flesh—would use it to say that no one had ever been in the third heaven but himself. He must get that broken down. Therefore, the thorn is sent, which brings the consciousness. of weakness where boasting had been before. We are never in danger in the presence of God; but when we are thinking of having been there, danger is there—the thorn gives conscious weakness to the man himself. In Paul's case, we know it was something that made his preaching contemptible. The Lord has to put us down in every way. The danger of the Christian is, that he is not consciously weak, that the flesh is not put in its place, that he thinks he can do something. But when the flesh is put down, where it had pretended to be something, then the believer can say, "When I am weak, then am I strong," and Christ is exalted. For when Paul, with all this incompetency, was the means of such blessing to others, it is quite clear that it was Christ, and not Paul, that was the strength. This is the truth that is brought out before us in 2 Corinthians 12. —Christ's perfect righteousness and glory, which is ours, or the man in Christ; and then the man made nothing of, and Christ in him everything. There is where we get the Christian complete. In both cases it is Paul; but in the one it is the man in Christ, and in the other it is Christ in the man, and the man thus made nothing of. That which the believer has on earth is not only this place in

Christ in heaven, but the power of Christ in this world. While we certainly shall have the experience of what we are, at the same time the Scripture shows us always, as such, no necessity in this world for being anything else but Christ. "To me to live is Christ." The fact that 'the flesh is in me is no reason that I am to walk after it. The power is not in the fact that we have the life, but in exercised dependence upon the life that we have got in Christ. We have seen the full blessedness of this place, that we may have his joy fulfilled in ourselves.

And now he goes on to their testimony before the world. "I have given them thy Word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Here I find the Christian's place in the world: he is no more of it than Christ. He does not say, they ought not to be; but, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." As Christians deriving your life from Christ, and having your place with Christ, you are not of the world. The life, the place you have got in Christ, all flows from the fact that he has given you a relationship with the Father, in virtue of which you are no more of the world than he himself was. There is the manifesting of Christ to the world; but these duties and affections flow from a relationship that is established already. It is not as the way of getting into the relationship; but when Christ has become my life, then I must walk as he walked. To the world this becomes a testimony. Of what? What became of Christ himself? The world would not have him. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee." It was as good as saying, there is a complete breach between the world and me. Christ comes into the world in grace, revealing the Father, and the world hated him; and therefore he goes out of the world, and brings us into his place as gone on high. Will the world bear us any more love than it bore Aim? It will not. He is there because the world would not have him; and it is only as having entered that place by blood and death that he can say, "My Father and your Father, my God and your God." Now, he says, I will make you a witness of that. You are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world," &c.

How are we to get the character and spirit proper to us as such? It is not that we can always be in the third heaven, but that if living the life of Christ, in the power of the Spirit, we shall be manifesting it before the world, as it was with —Christ himself. He could say even as to his path down here, "The Son of man which is in heaven." Was there ever anything in Christ inconsistent with the third heaven? Therefore, my life being there, and my heart and affections, I shall walk according to that place. Where is the pathway for such a life through this world? "I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them," &c.... "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." That is not quite all Christ is the truth: the word of God is truth about everything. Do I want to know what my heart is? The Word tells me. Do I want to know what God is? The Word tells me. What Christ as a Savior is? What Satan and his wiles are? The Word will tell me. And therefore, I have the Word to make all plain, when I want to go through the world, which is a labyrinth for anyone else; for a labyrinth it naturally must be to all, and to the infidel specially. God is love, and yet there I see such misery of every kind around me; the child of three days old agonizing perhaps through the fault of its parents; nothing but suffering and sorrow everywhere. Nobody, I say, can understand this: it is unaccountable, except as the Word of God, which is truth; explains it all. Take Christ himself: he can appeal to' them and say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Yet how does it end? He is obliged to confess before men that God has forsaken him. Their hard hearts take advantage of this, and say, If God delight in him, let him deliver him. All is inexplicable; and

those who would make this world, as it is, a proof of the righteous government of God, are just doing what the friends of Job did. They were saying that this world could be explained as to the present expression of God's moral government. But no there is Job, and he is in the depths of suffering. He was very naughty, but he spoke more rightly than they. He says, I have seen the righteous man suffering. He wants to find God; he says, Oh, if I could see him! but I cannot find him. All this; I again say, is in itself inexplicable. But the moment I search into the word of God, I have got the key to it all. Take the infidel upon his own ground, and he has not a word to say: he is the least capable of any of explaining. the facts that are going on every day; for they are inexplicable, except as sin has come in. "Sanctify them through thy truth." It is the word of God applied to judge every thought and feeling that is in me. He does not say, "Sanctify them by the law," but by the word. Persons take the law as a rule, but you want power; you want an object that seizes your affections. What object does the law give you? Where is the thing—the One—you are to love? Where is he? Who is he? The law cannot and does not tell me, save of a judge: I have the object before my soul to give me blessed and holy affections; but the Father's word does give me this.

That is what he goes on to immediately. "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Now I get something more than the word: it is. Christ himself who is the substance of all that the word speaks about. And therefore, Christ Says, as regards his place, "For their sakes I sanctify myself." He has gone up to glory, and there sets himself apart as the object for our hearts: the Holy Ghost reveals him to me, and the word is the revelation of all that is in Christ; it brings to me all that Christ is—, "Sanctify them through thy truth." How? "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." I have now got an object: it is the truth, which will judge everything that is in my heart: this it is that sanctifies me, by showing me the One that I love, and who has said that I am going to be like him. I have a Christ who has got hold of my heart, who has given me a place with himself, and has fitted me for it by the revelation of himself to my heart. And that is what I find here. And besides this place, I get the Comforter sent down, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to me, revealing to me that he has given me what he has, that I may have it with him, that I may be like him, when I see him as he is. And now the sanctifying power is, that the Spirit takes of these things and shows them unto me. More than all, Christ himself is mine. He is the perfect and blessed man set apart in the presence of God; and that, transported into my heart in the living power that it has in me through the Spirit, sets me apart to God. It is the truth that sanctifies me; but if I look at what the truth is perfectly, it is Christ. We, "beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "For their sakes," as our Lord says here, "I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

"Neither pray I for these alone," (he brings in other Christians there,) "but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." He imparts to us all that he has taken as man in blessing and glory. He will have us enter into his joy while upon earth; and then I find, "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as— we are one." When the Lord comes, and when the saints are displayed in the glory of Christ, and with him, that will be the revelation to the world that we have been loved as

Christ has been loved., “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one: and that the world may know that thou. hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.”

But even this is not the best thing he has to give us. He goes on to say, “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” While he has given us the glory of the inheritance, he puts us before the world as those who have been brought, into the same glory with himself “When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” And then the world will say, these poor people, that we have despised, are loved with the same love Christ was loved with. But while all that is true and most blessed, we shall, besides, have the enjoyment, of himself we ought to have it now. “I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” We get the present knowledge that we are loved as Jesus is loved; for he has declared the Father’s name to us, and will declare it, that the love wherewith he is loved may be in us, and he in us. There is the place in which he puts the Christian now. Christ will bring us into the glory; but even that, in a sense, is an inferior thing, compared to the enjoyment of Christ himself. I do not wait till then to know that I am loved as Christ is loved: I know it now; the world will know it then. All being founded upon this work that he has done, and upon his being thus in the presence of God, which put us in this himself, we can say, I know that I am loved as the Father loves Jesus, if Christ says it, “that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.” Is it in you? Have you believed Jesus word, that the Father has loved you as he loved his own Son? It was not enough for him to give his Son for you, but he puts you in the same place, and loves you with the same love. If we grieve the Spirit, we may not enjoy the power of it; but there is the place in which Christ has set us to stand with his Father and our Father, his God and our God, and to enjoy him who is the truth, and who gives us the consciousness of being loved as he himself is loved. It may be manifested before the world when he comes, but it is ours now. The Lord only give us to believe it. If we are seeking the world, that is not the Father’s love, but enmity to it. “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away,” &c. You will find these three always opposed the one to the other—the flesh and the Spirit, the devil and the Son, the world and the Father. “All that is in the world,” if our hearts seek after it, damps the enjoyment of the Father’s love; for we are not of the world, even as Christ was not.

The Lord give you to know it, as it is testified of Jesus himself; and then, as walking in his steps, and sanctified by the revelation of himself in your heart, to enjoy the real consciousness of the blessedness of the love wherewith the Father, loves you.

## As is the Heavenly

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There are two great things that the Scriptures present to us as effectual for salvation. One is, the full vindicating of God's moral character in grace towards us, which the atonement does. There is righteousness in God against sin, and there is love to the sinner; for God's character is not only vindicated in the atonement, but he is glorified in it. But besides this, there is another and a distinct thing, and that is, the coming in of power to bring us out of all the misery and wretchedness which are the effects of sin, and to set us in a new place. Both these things form a part of this great salvation. The one was absolutely necessary, if sinners were to be reconciled to God at all; for the atonement, must have been made in order to our being brought near to God. If God had brought us to himself without his righteousness having been perfectly vindicated, he could not have been the holy and blessed One that he is. But all that God is has been perfectly cleared and vindicated on the cross, which without the cross never could have been. If God had let everyone off in mercy, that would not have been love; it would have been indifference to sin. If one of my children, for instance, were to be naughty, and yet I if were to persist in treating him the same as all the others, that would not be love. You cannot have true love, unless there is a perfect maintaining of righteousness according to the truth of God's name but to maintain that must, necessarily, have shut out all sinners without the cross—without the death of Christ, as giving himself up to the perfect righteousness of God, of his judgment, of his hatred of sin, of his authority; for it is a question of authority, as well as of holiness, and, at the same time, of perfect love to the sinner. And this is what the cross of Christ is for us, the full bringing out and vindicating of all that God is, not only in love; but in holiness. It is full of blessing. We come to God as needy sinners, and we find there the mercy-seat, and his precious blood sprinkled upon it. But when in peace I can reflect upon the cross, I see how perfectly God is glorified in it. The more it shows me the holiness of God, the more, also, what a wonderful thing the cross was; there is nothing like it in heaven or earth, excepting, of course, God himself. No creation, nothing that has ever been seen in this world, could be what the cross was. Creation may show God's power, but it cannot bring out God's love and truth as the cross does, and therefore it remains everlastingly the wonderful and blessed place of learning—what could be learned nowhere else—all that God is.

But while that is true, there is another thing, —the coming in of a Deliverer to take us out of the condition in which we were by nature; for so indeed we were, poor, wretched creatures, struggling in the ditch, and no way of getting out of it. Supposing, then, that God had been vindicated and glorified by the cross of Christ, it did not follow that you and I should therefore be brought out of the condition in which we were. This required that God should come down to us, and take us out of the condition of sin and misery, and put us in another condition altogether; and that needs the coming in of divine power.

Salvation is a deliverance wrought by divine power, so as to bring us out of one condition into another. It is true, we are morally changed, but we want more than that—though whoever has got that, will surely have all the rest. But supposing I get the new nature, with its desires after holiness, what is the effect? It gives me the consciousness of all the sin that is in me. I want to be righteous,

but then I see that I am not righteous, and I bow under the power of sin and of the knowledge of such holiness which I have learned to desire, only to find out that I have not got it. I say, what is the good of my knowing holiness in this way, if I have not got it? it is no comfort to me. Here we have been speaking of God's righteousness; but when I look, I find I have no righteousness. Where can I find a resting-place for my spirit in such a state as this?

It is impossible; and the very effect of having this new nature, with all its holy affections and desires after Christ, brings me to the discovery of the lack of what this new nature cannot of itself, impart. I have got the cravings of the new nature—all its holy and righteous desires; but the thing craved for I have not got. It is the, desire of my nature. I say, Oh, that I could be righteous! but then I am not righteous. that way God meets us with a positive salvation. He meets us and quickens us into the desire and want, of holiness; he gives us a nature capable of, enjoying it when we get it. But that is not all. When I have got that nature, have I got the thing I want? Now I strive, and think, oh, if I could get more of this holiness! but still I have not got it. I may hate the sin, but the sin is there that I hate. I may long to be with God, to be forever in the light of his countenance; but then I see that I have got sin, and know, that the light of his countenance cannot shine upon my sin; I want a righteousness fit for his presence, and I have not got it. It is thus God meets us in the cross. He not only gives the nature that we want, but, he gives us the thing that we want. And not only that, but in Christ he gives us both the perfect object and the nature, and that in power.

We get, in the expression of this, a remarkable thing in this chapter. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as, is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." It is not there what we shall be in point of glory; for afterward he adds, "and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We have borne the image of the first Adam, in all the consequences of his sin and ruin, and we shall bear the image of the second Adam. But he lays down first this great truth for our hearts, "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." It is what we are now. There I find what my heart, as quickened of God, wants; and I learn what blessedness is in Christ, by whom God has revealed it to us. He has given us a righteousness in Christ, who is the accepted, blessed man in the presence of God, of whom alone God could say, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." You have been rejected by man, but you are just my delight. "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." It is that which God brings before us. He puts us into a new condition before himself, and then makes us judge all that is inconsistent with that. Then, besides that, power is given: not a new nature; merely, with cravings after a position which we have not got, but power to judge practically, from a position which we have got, all that is inconsistent with it. There will be that which has to be judged, but I shall judge it in the consciousness of what God has given me in Christ. It is there that I get the measure of what God, come in in power, has made me. "As is the earthy, as is the heavenly," &c. Here are these two men, so to speak. There is the first Adam, of the earth, with those that pertain to him, earthy; and there is the second man, the Lord from heaven. There are these two Adams; and I get in both the pattern and model of all other—men that are after their image. I get the first Adam, fallen; wretched, and corrupt; then I get the other Adam that becomes in a spiritual sense the head of a race after he has taken that place in God's counsels in glory.

I say, there is the pattern, and model, and head of that race. It is not merely a truth that the atonement has been made for us, in respect of what we were as belonging to the first Adam; but

God has been glorified in respect of our sins. The more we get into the presence of God, the more we shall learn the value of the cross. But then this chapter, in speaking of the resurrection; speaks of the coming in of power. We just see how the Lord first deals with Christ in power of resurrection, and then, at the same time, how we are objects of this very same thing.

Now what I see first in Christ, as he was—upon earth, is perfect goodness in his dealings with men—perfect goodness meeting them in all their need. The heart gets cheered and encouraged by that. He feeds' them when hungry, heals them when sick, casts out devils. There was power, too, but not in those with whom he had to do. It was divine power. It ministered to their wants. It was the wretchedness and misery in which man was, to which the goodness of God in Christ was applied, and the only thing in the person was the sin and misery to which the goodness was applied. I have felt latterly, that the more we get at the facts of the Lord's life on earth, the more power there will be. We do not sufficiently present facts, but we reason upon the value of the facts. I am persuaded, that the more the facts of the gospel are presented to people's souls, the more power there will be.

Looking, then, at Christ upon earth, I find God in this lowly man. Let me get firmly hold of that simple fact, in a world of misery, and wretchedness, and toil: God has come into it, and have found him. I have met him. It is by faith, of course; but still, God was there, and I have met him. I know what he is, and what he is for me. I was a sinner, like all the rest of the world; but God was there, and he was all goodness to me have found him, and I know what he is, because he has been it to me. Christ was upon earth, coming down to all my need, and I have met God in him and I know him. Now I say, that is in one sense everything to my soul. You may reason as to what he will be in the day of judgment; but I say I have found him, and know what he is, and that is perfect goodness. I was a vile, wretched creature, troubling myself about nothing but pleasure, or worse; but I met him and know what he is. When the soul has got that, it has got a key that opens every lock in eternity. I have found God, and I have found that he is perfect light. Of course, just because he is light, I may see failures in myself, I may be ashamed of myself; but still I know what he is, and what he is to me, and thus my soul gets a resting-place and a divine acquaintance with the God I have to do with. I see that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." He has been here with me on earth; but now I have another trouble—that I am not fit to be with him in heaven. Why, here is death, here is sin, here is failure to be dealt with; and sin cannot go to heaven. Therefore, I get another fact: I find that this blessed One, who is the expression of this perfect grace that I did not think anything about—I find him coming down into my condition, made sin for me, going under the death and under the judgment that were due to me, and bearing my sins. I find Christ not merely as a living Christ upon earth, kind towards my miseries, showing all goodness to me, but as taking my place under the suffering of the wrath and judgment of God, and there I find him altogether alone. Christ may suffer in a way in which I may suffer with him He may suffer from man, and we may suffer thus in our little measure. He may learn what suffering is in this world, in order to comfort me and suffer with me. But when I find the Lord suffering on the cross, there I find him absolutely and entirely alone, and there I find the great question of sin perfectly and forever settled between God and me. But I was not there at all. I could not be where he was; for he was there just that I might never be there, bearing the wrath of God and drinking that cup of suffering, which, if I had tasted the least drop, it would have been everlasting death. Well, I see the Lord coming down to this place of my deepest misery, and now the power of God

comes in there. He has taken my place in grace. Where sin had brought me, grace had brought him. There, into that place of death and wrath, he came; and now I see power coming in.

Atonement has been made; and where he perfectly glorified God, the power of God comes in and sets him at his own right hand in heaven. So that I do not merely get God glorified in the cross of Christ, but I see the power of God coming in and taking that very Christ when he was down in the depths of death, and setting him at his own right hand in heaven. Here, then, I have found a positive, actual deliverance; and so truly was this the case, that Christ can celebrate the name of God in association with others. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." He can celebrate that name, knowing it after all which he himself has gone through for us, bringing him into the presence of God his Father, in all the full blessedness of the light of his countenance, after he had taken all the full weight of sin upon him. But power had come in, as is said in Psalms 16, "Thou wilt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption," and he did not see corruption. True, he had had there to say, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but even he trusts himself to God his Father, and God puts his seal upon him by raising him from the dead. There I get, in the resurrection of Christ, coming in of divine power in the very place where we were lying in ruin and helplessness, and where Christ was in grace for us, and it takes him entirely out of it. Now I have got the man Christ Jesus in. heaven after atonement has been made, and after the question of sin has been settled, in virtue of his having glorified God about it. I get him in the place of power as the object of God's counsels. For it is in Christ that all things are to be gathered together in one; and even now God has set him head over all things to the Church.

The whole question of sin is thus settled in the resurrection of Christ. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead;" and we are not in our sins. There I find the heavenly man that has been down here and borne my sins, in power of resurrection in the presence of God. He is "the Lord from heaven" too. Mark this afterward the apostle says in Ephesians, that the very same power that wrought in Christ, when God raised him from the dead, is exercised in every one that believes. He desires that they may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Exactly the same power that wrought when God took Christ from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, has already wrought in you that believe, and you have got a place with him there; and, therefore, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." We are in Christ in the presence of God; and now I get not desires only, but the answer to them. I have got not merely a new nature, but I have got what the new nature wants, because I have got Christ. I have got not merely cravings after something, but the thing I crave. I want righteousness and holiness, and that is what I have got, because I am in Christ. I want to be without fear in the presence of God, and I am in it, because I am in Christ. I have got now, in a word, full salvation—not merely a new nature, but salvation. God has come down to me, and he has saved me. He has come, and by his own power has taken me out of the place in which I was lying in misery and helplessness, in the first Adam, and has put me in the place of the second Adam, before himself, without a sin upon me—all sin put away, because all was judged in the person of Christ. Such is the condition into which Christ has thus brought us. After the fall of the first man, after the thorough trial of man as man—tried

without law—tried under law—then God comes in with perfect grace, and sends his well-beloved Son. So to speak, he says, That is the last thing I can try man by; but when they saw him, they said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” Man, as the first man, has been perfectly tried, and has been found wanting. No means can mend him. But what do I find in Christ? He has taken the place of the first Adam down here for us. He has died in it, and there is a total end of the whole state for those that believe. Now I reckon myself dead to sin, because Christ has died. He was treated as being in that place, and he died, and the whole thing is ended—ended for me, under judgment of another’s bearing. As a believer, I shall still feel the workings of the old nature, and have to judge it; but I see Christ taking it for me, and judgment executed upon it in his person on the cross; and now he is out of it all, alive again for evermore. That life is wholly gone in which he laid it down; and the old nature, to which sin and judgment applied, is gone. Just as a man who may be in prison, awaiting there the punishment of his crime, and he dies: the life to which the punishment is attached is gone. It is impossible that there can be any longer a question of punishment for the sin; the life is gone to which the sin and its punishment attached. Just so was it with Christ. And therefore the apostle always addresses the believer as dead to sin. “You are dead,” he says to him; you are not a living man at all. “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

It is never said in Scripture that we are to die to sin; for if that were said, it would be ourselves that would die, and that would be an end of us altogether. But what is stated in Scripture is, that we are dead to sin through Jesus Christ. Now that Christ has died unto sin once for me, let me reckon myself to be dead to sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ. This is what I get as the principle of the Christian’s place. That while as a fact he is alive, yet as Christ has died, the very nature that God dealt with as to the question of sin in the first Adam, is done with, and now a power has come in that has made me alive with Christ. The very nature that had to be dealt with is looked at as a judged and dead thing, and I am brought into the position of Christ, as risen and in the presence of God. When we sit with him, we shall be like him; but as to our real condition before God, even now we are sitting in heavenly places in Christ. It is divine love that has reached down to the place of sin and death in which we were, and divine righteousness that has taken us up and set us in the place of light, where Christ is; for there is no middle place. If I know what sin is, I see that it deserves condemnation. It would not be mercy to leave the sin alone, and pass it by. It must be put away; but how It must be put away by death, because its merits are condemnation, If God is dealing with sin, looked at in my relationship to him as a sinner, he must deal with it in death. There is no forgiveness for the sinner, looked at as guilty before God, without that real work which deals with it according to God’s nature, and it was dealt with thus in the cross. He hath appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. But that is not all. Having thus put away sin, he has done with the old thing altogether, and has got into a new one, (that very nature left behind in which he was responsible, and suffered for sin,) and now he is the heavenly man in the presence of God, and there we are set in him. “As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.” Therefore, it is that in the epistle of John we get the same truth brought out. First of all, we have there (chap. 4: 9) that “the love of God was manifested toward us, because that God sent his only begotten on into the world, that we might live through him.” There I see divine love, that visited this world in the person of the Son of God. There were two things that were needed. That he should be the propitiation for our sins, because we were guilty, was one; but besides that, he goes on to say, “Herein is love with us made perfect,” &c. There is the perfectness of love. Not merely that

God's love visited us in this world, in all our need and sorrow, not to leave us there. But here is the love of God "made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world."

How can I have boldness in the day of judgment why I am the same as my Judge, and in this world too. "As he is, so are we, in this world." Just what I get here, "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." It is the same truth. What a thing that is! What a salvation it is! not merely mercy that forgives sin; it is a real, perfect salvation; it is a deliverance which has taken us, as in Christ, out of the condition in which we were, and has put us into another, and that other is Christ. It is true that we shall all be manifested before the judgment-seat of Christ; everything must be brought out there. But even so, why, I am like himself. What is he going to judge? How do I get there at all? Because Christ has come and fetched me. I am going, he said to his disciples, to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. So that when I come to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, it is because Christ has so loved me, that he has come to fetch me there; and in what condition? I am in glory before. I get to the judgment-seat. Everything will there be brought out, and with immense profit and gain to us. We shall know right and wrong then, as we are known. We shall be manifested, but manifested before him who is in the presence of God as the warrant of our salvation. We shall not thoroughly bear the image of Christ, till the time of glory. But even now as to our standing before God, "as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." Now, as regards my soul and My eternal life, he has come and brought us into this condition, making Christ to be my life, and in Christ my righteousness and hope. He has brought me in faith, and in the truth of my new nature, into this wondrous place in Christ. The realization of it is another thing, and may be hindered through failure or infirmity. You begin to search, perhaps, in yourself, and find such and such a thought contrary to Christ. But I say, that is the old man. If you take yourself by yourself, there is not righteousness for God, and therefore you cannot stand an instant in God's sight. I must look at Christ to see what I am, and I say, "As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly;" and that is what I am in the presence of God. There is no veil: we are to walk in the light, as God is in the light.

Now the measure of the judgment of the working of my flesh, and of everything else, is according to this love and grace. The moment I have got Christ, and I can say, I know a man in Christ (and so thoroughly was this the case with Paul, that he could say, "I know a man in Christ, whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell"—he is not thinking of himself at all), then everything is judged according to what I am in Christ. It is not there I glory of Paul. Paul knew what infirmities and distresses, &c., were; but "I know a man IN CHRIST," and I am glad of such a one to glory; I will glory with all my heart in it; because he is not looking at himself and at his righteousness. "Yet of myself," he says, "I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." Here I get to the true reality of what my condition as a poor feeble creature down here below is. But then God has put me in Christ, and now whatever passes in my mind must be judged according to him. "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." I may come short, but this is the only measure. In 2 Corinthians 12 he takes this very ground. "I will glory," he says, "in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." It is not that he was always in the third heaven, or that we shall be in the full enjoyment always of our position; but this is true, that the Christ in whom we are is in heaven. He is not here, he is in the presence of God, and we are in him there; and even

though we do not realize always our place in Christ, yet I say that Christ is never inconsistent with what he is in that presence; and Christ dwells in me; and this is where I get the perfect rule of life that I need. The power of Christ dwells in me even upon earth. If Christ walked upon earth, his walk was perfectly consistent with a heavenly man. I find him to be the perfect expression of the love, and grace, and holiness that he was in the Father's house.

It is true Paul says, "I know a man in Christ," &c. But does that mean that the Christ he had then was a different Christ to the one he had known in the third heaven? No; he had got the very power that was suited to a Christ in heaven. We get the principle of all holiness of walk from the fact of our position being in Christ. I must know that this is my place before God, if my walk is to be according to Christ. For their sakes, said our blessed, Lord; "I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified through the truth." He is set apart to God as this pattern—man in heavenly places, that the Holy Ghost may take and apply it to us here. I see this perfect Christ set apart for me in heaven, and I say I must walk according to that pattern. I will walk in love, because Christ also hath loved us, and given himself for us. I get there, "Be ye imitators of God." And in another place, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." He sets before us, as walking through this world, the—kindness of God even to his enemies. The starting point of all my measure of conduct is the place in which I am already set in Christ.

Since the fall of man, since our judgment has been a fallen one by sin, our thought of obligation and duty is always as a means of gaining something. People often fancy, that if there is not the uncertainty attendant upon this responsibility to get life, there must be carelessness. But supposing you have got children, they are your children, and never can cease to be your children. But—does that destroy their responsibility? Their, relationship to you is the very thing that forms their responsibility. The principle of a real responsibility till sin came into the world was a blessed one. It was this—I am to, act up to the condition that I am in. The Christian responsibility is not that of a man hoping and trying to be a Christian. It is not at the time of the difficulty and danger that we get the capacity of walking according to Christ. The way to walk in a time of difficulty is not by valuing Christ for the temptation, but for his own sake. If we live in the constant valuing of Christ for his own sake, we shall assuredly have him delivering us from the temptation. If my heart is full of Christ, the things that are contrary to him do not attract me. I may feel my failure and weakness all the more; but the God that, by power, has brought us into this place in Christ, can sustain us in it. The whole of our relationship with God upon the ground of the old man is closed in the cross, and then, in a risen Christ, all is begun afresh in perfect blessing, in the power of the deliverance in which we have been brought in Christ. The place in which we are thus set begins from the cross, where I see my old nature judged and set aside. And therefore it is that the apostle can say such a thing as "when we were in, the flesh." There are multitudes even of true believers that say, what are we but, in the flesh, now? But the apostle says, "When we were in the flesh," evidently implying that we are not in the flesh now. It is what we were in the first Adam. The standard of our walk gets its real power and blessedness when once we see that we are no longer in the flesh, but are set in Christ before God. The government of God comes in, and that is another thing; but we are brought into that blessed place in the light, in the perfectness of the grace which has brought us there. We ought to be able to come, our hearts set at large by God, and, as we deal even with the world, say, what we have to talk to you about is a salvation that we have got. I have found God, and I am come to tell you of a salvation that I have got through the delivering power of God.

## Thoughts on 2 Corinthians 12

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This chapter presents to us, in a remarkable manner, the way in which the power comes whereby a Christian can walk through this world: It is not merely now a path in which he can walk, but the way how he may have strength to walk in it, and what the perfect work of God is in order to his walking in this path. Here we see the two extremes of what a Christian Can rise to, and into what he can fall.

In the beginning of the chapter a man was caught up to the third heaven: he, was in the highest extreme of spiritual blessedness. Such blessedness indeed he had been conscious of, that it was not suited to speak of when he got back into his natural state. No doubt his faith was strengthened by it for his work, but he could not speak—of such things. Now there is the highest state of spirituality which you can suppose, and yet it is that which is true for us all. No doubt it was brought home to the apostle in a special manner, but the thing that he so realized is true of us. Then, at the close of the chapter, is seen the other extreme; viz., the terrible state into which a saint can get. We read of envyings, wraths, strifes, uncleanness, fornication, &c. So bad indeed was their state, that the apostle could not then go to Corinth. It was such a corrupt place, that it had even passed into a proverb among the ancients; and it was found true even of the saints there, that “evil communications corrupt good manners.” Hence the apostle says, “I fear, lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not.” At first he would not go back to them; but now his first letter had wrought upon the minds of the Corinthians, and they had put out the man who had committed the dreadful evil Titus, too, had been to them, and had come back and had told him of their repentance, and mourning, and fervent desire towards him, so that his heart was comforted. Still they were in a very difficult position, and great snares were around them; for he says here, “ I fear lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes,” &c. There had even been such fornication among them as was not so much as named among the, Gentiles. True, they had received the apostle’s reproof, and the man was put out; but they were so used to it, to see evil everywhere around them, that they did not feel it. It is different with us, for we have been brought up to feel and judge everything by a sort of moral light that has been in the world since Christianity has been professed; but they had been always accustomed to uncleanness; they had corrected things in the main, but still the apostle was trembling about them. “I am afraid, lest when I come again I shall be found such as ye would not.” I shall be found very severe with you; I may come with a rod. He trembled lest he should be forced to exercise this kind of severity towards those who had not repented.

We get then the extreme, in the beginning of the chapter, to which a Christian can go in spirituality, and in the end of it the extreme to which he can go in the flesh. Such is the awfulness of the evil that remains in us even as Christians, and on the other hand, the blessedness to which a man can be carried in spiritual enjoyment. Of course, it is not that everyone goes up into the third heaven; but all have the blessedness, on the one hand, of a man in Christ, and on the other, the incorrigible wickedness of the flesh. I do not say of a man in the flesh, for that is not a Christian state at all. We see what the place of a Christian is, looked at in his privileges, and then what he is, looked at in his

path down here, and how it is that a parson, with the possibility of all this infirmity, if he is not walking watchfully—how it is that he can walk according to his privileges. Because here we are in a world of temptation and evil, and we have got the flesh that the devil is always seeking to draw us aside by; and how is a person, walking in the midst of temptation, with the flesh there and the devil too, to walk according to thick heavenly condition in which he has been put? The first thing is to know what the privilege is. The apostle was made to enjoy it in an extraordinary manner: but the place which he gives to himself is one which, in principle, belongs to every Christian. The title that took Paul to the third heaven takes all there. We do not realize it now to the extent that he did, but still that title gives us our place there. We are come to God in glory now, that is the place that is given to us. And therefore he says, I do not talk about Paul—“I knew a man in Christ.” I do not get a man in the flesh, but a man in Christ. That is where the Spirit of God sets a Christian. It is the place of every believer. They may have great exercises of heart before getting there; but where he sets them is not in the flesh, but in Christ. That is not the flesh; it is the glory at the right hand of God. A man in the flesh cannot be there.

Where the apostle says, “When we were in the flesh,” he means that we are so no longer; it is a past thing. If I say, when I was in Bristol, I did so and so, it means that I am not there now. In that way it is he says, “When we were in the flesh.” He had had the commandment, and might assent to it that it was good, but he could not get power through it. It was not with him then, rejoicing in the Lord always, and saying, of such an one will I glory. But there was his very being, his nature, his walk all opposed to God; and the consciousness that he had of himself and his flesh was this: “I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.” This is what he got the consciousness of before God. Supposing the man was desiring to do the right thing, but did not do it—rather did what was the contrary—he had the consciousness that this was what he was before God. In Romans 7 he was walking in sin and death in the first Adam, and he had to answer for it. In chapter 8 he says another thing: “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.” There we have the man in Christ, and “there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” There is the not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit, that will be seen. But where is now the power for it? “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Mark, that when he is under the law, and has got these holy desires, which the new nature always must desire, he sees that the law is right, he consents to the law that it is good; but he also finds another law in his members, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin. He sees that it is of no use. How can I stand before God? I wish the right thing, and do the right thing. Am I not answerable to God? And how can I answer to him, if I am always doing the thing that is wrong? All through this part of Romans 7, mark, he does not speak of Christ, but of man in the flesh. It was not that there were not new desires, but he did not do them and there he was, a responsible man, having to answer for his own condition before God; and he says, My condition is all wrong, “O wretched man that I am” &c. That was true, but what was he speaking of all this time? The law. “We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.” It was not merely that the law judged any gross misconduct, but it required—from him what he ought to be, quickening his desire and wish to be it, and yet he was not it. “I consent to the law that it is good.” He has got to do with law. Again, what does he delight in? “I delight in the law of God, after the inward man.” I have got a desire after what is right, but I have not got a Savior. I have got a law, and what does this law say? You must love God with all your heart. But I do not that then you are lost. It requires from me what I ought to be, but what I am

not. It requires from a man that he should not covet; that he should love God with all his heart, and soul, and might, and his neighbor as himself. But who” is this man from whom that is required? Why it is a man in the flesh, with all the lusts of the flesh constantly dragging him into evil. The law requires from a man that is a sinner, that he should not be a sinner. It is just that. If I then, as a responsible being, am under law, what can it do? Why, condemn me—righteously condemn me. It could not do anything else but condemn me. It comes and requires from me, when I am a sinner, to be what, as a sinner, I cannot be; and therefore a man in the flesh, if the law of God comes, it condemns: him. It must condemn him, because, the heart is so thoroughly corrupt and bad, that the very fact of a command being given only brings out the evil that is there. We know it by experience in our own hearts. If there were anything upon this table, and I were to say, nobody is to know what is there, at once everybody would be longing to know what it was. This is just human nature; it is not the fault of the law at all. Supposing you have children, they may have no particular desire to go out of the house; but if you tell them not to go, and put a barrier to hinder them, then comes a child that wants to go, “O wretched man that I am,” &c. He had been striving to be better, and the only result was that he gets this experience of himself by God giving him the law, which is the standard of what he ought to be. Then he says another thing, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” He is looking now not at how he, as in the flesh, should be better, but that Another should come and take the matter up for him, and go through it all. That is where the soul is brought when it is converted—when it discovers itself to be not merely a sinner, but without strength. I now get the consciousness of the weakness that sin has produced in my flesh, and I say somebody must take up the work for me; I cannot do it myself. I have the consciousness of what sin has made me in the presence of God, and I cannot get out of that condition. “Who shall deliver me?” Mark the answer. He says, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is all settled. He is thanking God already. Why so I, because “what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,” (the law was all right; but “what the law could not do,) God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh!” There I get God doing the whole thing. What the law could not do, because of this principle of sin that is in me, God, sending his Son, has done. Supposing I were to say to my child, “You love me; and if you do not, I will whip you,” do you think it would make my child love me? Certainly not. I should not get a bit of love from him. So with the law. The law says, love God; but that never produces love. Commandment never produces love, nor changes the nature that does not love. What, then, can do it? “We love him because he first loved us merely a sinner, but without strength. I now get the consciousness of the weakness that sin has produced in my flesh, and I say somebody must take up the work for me; I cannot do it myself. I have the consciousness of what sin has made me in the presence of God, and I cannot get out of that condition. “Who shall deliver me?” Mark the answer. He says, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is all settled. He is thanking God already. Why so I, because “what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,” (the law was all right; but “what the law could not do,) God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh!” There I get God doing the whole thing. What the law could not do, because of this principle of sin that is in me, God, sending his Son, has done. Supposing I were to say to my child, “You love me; and if you do not, I will whip you,” do you think it would make my child love me? Certainly not. I should not get a bit of love from him. So with the law. The law says, Love God; but that never produces love. Commandment never produces love, nor changes the nature that does not love. What, then, can do it? “We love him because he first

loved us.”

The law tells me that God is a righteous Judge. It tells me what I ought to be; but what does it tell me that God is, except that he will not have unrighteousness? It tells me that I am to love God, but does it tell me what the God is that I am to love? It says nothing about it. It says you are to love him; and if you do not, you will be punished. But it tells me nothing of what he is, that I may love him; he had to walk-in this world. But even as walking through the world, it must still be taking this blessed One as our life. When I see Christ Walking in this world, was there anything inconsistent with this heavenly place? Never. He was the manifestation of the divine nature down here. Now that is what you ought to be. “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” I get, that is, not merely what man under the law, but what the divine nature is, expressed in a man upon earth, and that is what a Christian ought to be. He is a man who has become a heavenly man; who has got his place in the presence of God, sin forever put away, and the Holy Ghost uniting him to Christ, and in spirit and faith in the presence of God. And now he has to act so in the world, not as in the flesh, but the flesh being there; and in trials and duties of all kinds that he has to go through, he is to abide with God. If he cannot abide with God in what he has got to do, he must give it up to God to bring Job into the condition of being made nothing of in his own eyes, and then God can bless him. It is very disagreeable work to get to know ourselves, but very useful work. Peter is sifted, and has to learn that this confidence that he has in himself is the very occasion of his failure. In the end, the Lord not only restores his soul, but makes him the channel of blessings to others. When you know your own utter nothingness, then you can go and help others. Go and feed my sheep, the Lord says to Peter, It is very humbling and trying to be made nothing of, but very useful, because we are all disposed to think too good of ourselves, of the flesh being proud of having been there. We feel our nothingness in the presence of God. But now Paul finds that the flesh was just as bad and mischievous as ever. Wherever the flesh works, if it gets into the thought of the third heaven, it makes mischief, and if you could give a man the thought of a fourth heaven, it would only be worse. There is no mending it. And what does God send? A thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him. There is grace, which Satan himself must be God’s servant in the world, just as it was in Job’s case. Who begins the business with Job? Was it Satan? No, it was God. God says to Satan, “Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth?” &c. And then God allows Satan to bring Job to the very point where he wanted him, the discovery of what he was. Job said, “when the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me. Because I delivered the poor that cried &c. And he had done it: that was his third heaven, and therefore the Lord allows Satan to break him down entirely. And what does he say then? “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.” That is exactly what he wanted. Satan had been used as an instrument of and united to him in the power of the Holy Ghost, joined to him in one Spirit, and that not in his condition as a child of Adam, but as born of God. So that when I look at Christ, as walking in this world, I can say that this is my life. I see this life in him in all its perfectness, and I say, that is very precious. I see that very eternal life, which was with the Father, and I say, that is my life. I had a life in the first Adam, that brought in the bitter fruits of sin and corruption; but now I have got the life of Christ. But Paul could not stay in the third heaven God to bring Job into the condition of being made nothing of in his own eyes, and then God can bless him. It is very disagreeable work to get to know ourselves, but very useful work. Peter is sifted, and has to learn that this confidence that he has in himself is the very

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Lest, then, Paul should be exalted above measure, a thorn in the flesh is given to him. We learn from the epistle to the Galatians that it was something that made him contemptible in his preaching. It was something to keep him from being puffed up, but that is not strength. We have got the blessedness of Paul in the third heaven. We have got the man in Christ, who can thank and bless God for what we are made in Christ, who can say of all of us, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us, meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." But after this we have another thing, the flesh and its inclination to be puffed up. And then we find a third thing, the flesh made exceedingly disagreeable. But that is not strength—on the contrary, it is the emptying of strength. You cannot get God to help the flesh and to help self-will. He will break it

down, he will humble you by it, but he will never help it, He breaks the vessel, that we may know that the power is not of man, but of God. So that Paul says here, "When I am weak, then am I strong." When I am weak, I feel that I am weak; I know the truth about myself. Here the apostle was preaching, and his manner of preaching was contemptible, and yet hundreds of people were converted through it. Well, that does not come from what is contemptible; it does not come from Paul; but from God. The Lord, then, when he had made him feel his weakness, says, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." If Paul had got strength, Christ need not have had so much for him; but if Paul had none, the strength that came from Christ was in him. The man had been brought into conscious weakness, that the power of Christ might rest upon him.

Now there I have got, not the man in Christ, but Christ in the man, and that is what I want down here. If I think of the man in Christ, it is perfection. But when it is a question of walking down here, we want strength as well as sincerity, we want power. If the power be in myself, there is the old man set up, and that will not do. The old man must be set down, and then another power comes in: I have got Christ with me, I am a dependent man. Christ said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." We see him constantly dependent and always right. There is what is so difficult for us. We get into mischief just when we get into independence of God. And therefore, it is that we so often see a Christian have a fall, after a season of great joy. Why? Because his joy has taken him away from dependence upon God. When I am emptied of self, and am in distresses, and infirmities, and necessities for Christ's sake, then I can say, I will glory in them. Why? "That the power of Christ may rest upon me." Now, there is where there is blessing—to be made nothing of in one's own conscience, but then to have the consciousness of the power of Christ resting on me. That is not the man in Christ, but the power of Christ resting on him as he walks down here; it is Christ in the man. Supposing I am emptied of self, and Christ is living in me, what shall I get? I shall not be always in the third heaven, but Christ is always there. I have got my security there, my life there, my righteousness there, everything there that I need. Christ is my title: I am in Christ, and not in the first Adam.

The robe that was put upon the prodigal son when he came home, he had never had before. It was not a patching up of his old rags, but a new robe. The best robe was brought out and given. So what we had in Adam is lost, and never can be recovered, but we get a new and far higher thing. An innocent man is one who does not know good and evil. A holy man knows good and loves it. It is not now mere innocence, but what Christ is worth in the presence of God that I have got. The robe that the Father put upon the prodigal was a new robe out of the treasures of his own house, that he had never had before. God has given us Christ in heaven. I am not always in the third heaven, but Christ is there, and my place and title is to be there by faith, according to the working of the Spirit of God. If Christ is my life, there is nothing in that life inconsistent with the third heaven. The Christ that is in heaven, even when he was walking upon earth, could say, "The Son of man which is in heaven;" and all his life down here was the expression of that. Our union with him is a real living union. I am in Christ above, and this Christ is in me below; and there I get the principle of all my walk, and the power of it too. I may be about my work and business; but in that work and business I have to live Christ—to walk in the Spirit of Christ, whatever circumstances I am in. Supposing I am doing that, the Spirit is not grieved, and I enjoy the third heaven: I have not been inconsistent with it. I have not been there, but I have walked consistently with it, because I have walked in the Christ that is there. He is both my life and the power of my life. If I have been in

the third heaven, and come out of it to be engaged in service, I may go on with my affections the same spiritually and morally; and when I go back to it, I enjoy it all the more. Take a man working for his family all day long. He may have to labor hard, and away from them, but when the work is done, he comes back and enjoys them all the more. So the Christian, besides being in the third heaven, has to walk through the world. But Christ in his righteousness, his title for being there and therefore his place is in heaven, and walking in the power of that life, he is back into the third heaven as happy and fresh as ever. We may fail in it, but that is what the power of Christ resting on us down here works in us. Mark how Paul speaks as regards our title to take such a place. "I know a man in Christ... of such an one will I glory." In that we ought to glory. If I say I am in Christ, I glory in it I say, what an astonishing place God has put me in! He has taken me out of the ditch, and placed me with his Son. He takes a thief upon the cross, and puts him in the same glory as the Son of God. He takes a Mary Magdalene, from whom he casts out seven devils, and puts her in—the same glory as the Son of God. I am to glory in that. And what is the effect down here? That I shall be made a fool of. If you talk of a man in Christ, of such an one, he says, I will glory; but if you talk of me, Paul, why I was going to be puffed up about having been in the third heaven! There can be no good at all for me, unless I am emptied of self. When there, so little thought was there of self, that he did not know whether he was in the body or out of it.

People may say all this is presumption. Allow me to say a word about that. Are you in Christ? If you are not in Christ, you are lost. It is no good saying it is presumption. If you are not in Christ, you are lost; if you are in Christ, you are safe. What is the effect? Is not Christ your righteousness? Are you not going to glory in that—not in yourselves? We do not think badly enough of ourselves as sinners in the flesh. If I know what it is to be lost—without Christ—I shall not think it presumption to glory in being in him. I have no need to think of myself, because I am perfectly happy in the presence of God. He has made me happy by the grace that has brought me there, and by the present communion that I have with himself in the place in which he has put me. We have to be taught practically, and therefore Paul had this thorn in the flesh. After he knew his own wretchedness, and Christ his righteousness, there was the perfect learning of his own nothingness. This is the grand work which remains for us. We are in Christ as our righteousness; but if we have only a light thought, that is not communion with God, though grace comes in, and there is intercession. The man in Christ has got his standing with God, and when he has that, his business is to manifest Christ before the world. There he wants power, and the power comes—not merely from having been in the third heaven—not merely from being made the righteousness of God in Christ. He wants present power. To be sincere is not enough. You will meet with temptation; you will have your business, your trials of one kind and another; and you want the power that gives Christ a preciousness to you, that makes everything you meet with to be as nothing to you. It is Christ himself that becomes your power—the power of Christ resting upon you. Now I ask you, whether you can say, "When we were in the flesh?" It is an important thing; and the apostle, speaking of it, says, "When we were in the flesh." Have you learned that the ground upon which you stand before God is not the ground upon which the first Adam stood, but that God has put you upon a new ground, in the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, I say, you are a man in Christ, and therefore you must walk as Christ walked— But if not, you have got a lesson to learn, to have your souls realizing that you are lost without Christ, and, therefore, if you are to have hope of anything, it must be in Christ. But God puts me in Christ; and then I say, Oh! I am in Christ before God. He bore my sins and put them away; He blotted them out for ever. But though there is

the power of the new life, and the presence of the Holy Ghost, of myself I—will not glory, save in what pulls this wretched flesh to pieces; but in Christ I will glory. Do you desire to manifest Christ to the world? You will say you want power; but if so, you must be emptied of self, and find him your righteousness before God, and his power you get in your weakness as your power to walk through this world. Then our hearts can say, Come, Lord Jesus.

The Lord give you to know what it is to value him now: first, as poor sinners, knowing him as meeting all our need, and then, in the communion of his love, as One that is dear to our hearts, and as One that we long to know face to face, in all his fullness.

## The Word of God and the Priesthood of Christ

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There are two things that God employs in carrying us through the desert, as spoken of here.. One is the word of God, and the other is the priesthood of the Lord Jesus.

The word of God is used for the detection and discerning of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,.... and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Whatsoever is flesh it cuts down mercilessly—and thank God for it, because it is a hindrance to our blessing. The Warning of which the apostle speaks here, alluding to the history of Israel, is that their carcasses fell in the wilderness. They had got out of Egypt, and yet their carcasses fell in the wilderness. There is, of course, for us the danger answering to that—a very real danger. No doubt, God will keep his own to the end, but there is the principal danger; and if we are kept, it’ is through faith. Now, that which tends to make us fall in the wilderness is the flesh, and the means that God uses that we should not fall in the wilderness, is the word that is sharper than any two-edged sword. Whatever is not a thought that comes from God, and an intent that goes to God, the word of God judges—that is, whatever springs naturally up in the heart of man, whatever comes from the flesh, which, of course, is everything in a mere natural Man, in the heart, out of which are the issues of life. The flesh never gets from the wilderness into the land. It may die in the wilderness, but it never can get out of it. The flesh belongs to it, in a sense, and may die in it, but cannot get from it. There is nothing for the flesh but the sword—a figure, of course, of that which judged, detects, and condemns it—and’ let us thank God for that.

As regards acceptance with God, we can say the flesh is condemned already. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak, through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Thus, looked at as a question of righteousness; in the cross of Christ God has condemned sin in the flesh; and then, when we come to the journey’ through the wilderness, the word of God judges whatever is not according to that word. The cross has dealt with the flesh already: whatever did not suit the death of Christ in a thought or act was thereby judged and condemned. The word of God is one means for the practical carrying out of this; and the second means employed is the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of God, we saw, judged the thoughts and intents of the heart, while the priesthood applies to all infirmities and failures. The moment it is a question of thought or intent of the heart, it has to be judged as coming from the flesh; and this is done by the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword. On the other hand, looked at as regards trials and Weakness, there you get the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of God is the eye of God, judging everything in my soul that is not according to himself. And then we have “a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.” Where it is a time of ‘need and difficulty, it is the High Priest full of tenderness and mercy, “that we may find grace to help in time of need.” It cannot be, evidently, anything inconsistent with the word of God. It cannot be the one to cut and the other to spare the flesh; and therefore the priest must sustain us, according to the blessing which is

given us entirely out of the reach of the flesh. And so it is that Christ becomes High Priest. He is gone up where the flesh cannot enter. That is the place in which we have to say to God; and, therefore, as our High Priest, he has to carry on our affairs in that presence of God, where nothing that defile's can enter. He lays the foundation of that in the sacrifice, by virtue of which he can go there; so that this very priesthood of Christ is founded on our acceptance.

As a figure, the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, which preceded all their journey in the wilderness, is here used. We have done with Egypt altogether. The Red Sea put death and judgment between the journeyers and Egypt; and so with the saint now. Death and judgment form the starting-point of the saint. There is that which goes before it in exercise of heart; and when a soul sets out to leave this world of ruin and condemnation, it often finds itself, as Israel did, on the banks of the Red Sea, the waters before, and their enemies behind them. There they were completely shut, in to this judgment, where Satan was driving them. But the moment they had passed over the Red Sea, all that was entirely and finally closed. What had been a barrier, where Israel could go no further, was now left wholly behind, and served as a barrier against Egypt. And to us, death and judgment are a securing barrier between us and all that Was against us. It is not that there may be no conflict after, no weariness after; but there is no question of deliverance after that. If Israel were not faithful, they failed in gaining victories, but there was no question of God's being against them. Next comes this journey through the wilderness, the judgment of the flesh by the word, and then the priesthood of Christ, which is exercised for us. And when I come to see where Christ is, I find that it is the very One that has gone through the death and judgment that were due to me, and has taken his place in the presence of God, where he is exercising his priesthood. He has settled the point where I belong to, where I worship; and it is in the presence of God that my place is. All that belongs to me, as in the first Adam, is done with in my intercourse with God—not as regards conflict with it, but as regards my place with God. The old nature is there still, and the word comes and judges all the movements of it that would hinder me in my path. But the place where Christ exercises his priesthood is out of the flesh altogether; it is in heaven. "Such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Israel had a place on earth, and a priest on earth; we have a place in heaven, and a priest in heaven.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." He must first be made perfect in, his place as priest, before he begins to lead and administer to those who were to worship through Him. We shall find that Christ exercises this priesthood because we belong to a place where flesh cannot enter, because he has set aside all that we were connected with in the first Adam. He gives us access into the presence of God, and there he maintains us. The high priest in Israel, taken from among men, was not there: They did not go even in figure within the veil, save once a year, and that was with clouds of incense, to hide the glory of God from them. They were men in the Flesh and therefore could not be connected with the holiest we are men in the Spirit, and therefore we are in the holiest; but the flesh has no part there, in any way. The Jews, as a nation, being the flesh, they must have an high priest—in the flesh, compassed with infirmities, because they had infirmities; as it is said here; "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." He was outside like them he was on the—mine ground. Well, in a sense, we are on the same ground with our High Priest, and it is on the ground of the new thing that is in heaven. 'We are

associated with God in this new place that he has made for us in Christ. But Jesus our High Priest, is the very contrast of the Jewish high priest taken from among men. He must be separate from sinners, and made—higher than the heavens, because we are: All the question of our capacity to go on with joy, as being there, depends upon the intercession of Christ.

There are three things here, as regards this fitness of Christ for the priesthood. The first is the title—of his person, no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also, Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest did not set up to be a person worthy in dignity to take such an office, but God says it of him, he is my Son. And there he was, having a competency in his own person. “But he that said unto him, thou art my Son, today have I begotten thee.” In the second psalm we find it said, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee:” When I look at Christ as a man upon earth, (for it is not his eternal Sonship that is spoken of here,) and say, who is this man, that he can have a priesthood? What is his title? The answer is, He is the Son of God. He has, a competency in his own person to have such an office.

Then we come to the installing of him in this office. “As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” It is not like a high priest taken from among men, who dies, and gives the office to someone else, but He is a priest forever, &c. The carrying on of the priesthood of Christ in heaven is founded upon an already completed salvation, as regards both blood-shedding and righteousness. If the righteousness were not already perfect, the failure would bring down judgment instead of intercession. If propitiation has not been made for the sin, the sin must be the cause of judgment. But righteousness having been perfectly made in Christ, and made for us; he sits now in heaven, and intercedes for those for whom propitiation has been made through his blood. The atonement has been perfectly accomplished, sin is put away, and I am made the very righteousness of God in Christ. But the question still remains of our intercourse in this holy place with God in blessing, and in the perfect enjoyment of the position he has brought us into by the death and judgment through which Christ has passed. Here the intercession comes in, “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Thus, we have the Lord Jesus Christ in the dignity of his person, as Son of God, and in the title for office, as priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. If he is to be our priest in the presence of God, we have him in the dignity in which he can carry it on.

But then there is another difficulty. If he has this mighty title—if he is the Son—how can he enter into all the sorrows and trials of such poor creatures as we are? If he were a priest like another man, he could understand the infirmities of other men.

But I answer, the priesthood is carried on where there cannot be a thought of infirmity; where the enjoyment is spiritual enjoyment; where, if there were a thought of the flesh or of sin, there could be no communion with God. Therefore, the place of Christ, as priest, is necessarily out of the reach of all infirmity. Another priest could join with sinners, and feel their infirmities, as being himself a partaker of them. How, then, can the Lord Jesus Christ be fitted, in that sense of the word, to be our High Priest? It is not while he has his priesthood that he is thus fitted for the office. It is what he was upon earth, not what he is now as a Priest, that has fitted him for such a work. “Such an High Priest became us,” &c. He has gone through the difficulties and trials of a godly and perfect man upon earth. He has known every possible difficulty which a godly man can find in his

path through this world, and the trials too. He suffered and was “tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.” Now that is just what I want, I do not want sympathy with my sin; I find the word of God to cut it down, but no sympathy with it. Christ does not intercede for the flesh. What I want Christ’s help for, is for the new man against my flesh. I want to be helped as a believer going through this world, against myself, so far as the flesh is there.

“Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” That is what I am to learn, only in his case I hear, “Though He were a Son,” &c. Christ had to learn obedience. Why? Because He commanded everything through all eternity. I have to learn obedience because I have a wicked heart and will; Christ had to learn it because he was God over all, and therefore obedience was new to him. It is new to me, because I am a disobedient creature; it was new to him because he was not a creature at all. He was put into all the difficulties and trials that we can possibly go through; and more than that, he was even put under the wrath of God, that we might never be there. Into those sufferings we can never enter. In his sufferings, as a righteous man on earth, we—can, in our little measure, sympathize with him. Supposing I am seeking to lead a godly life in this world, I must take up my cross and follow Him. “All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” And if we get too much ease in this world, it is not a safe thing for us. Suffering must be my portion. If I am godly in my ways, I shall find suffering; and if I walk in the power of the love of Christ, there I shall find suffering too. I may suffer for righteousness’ sake, and for Christ’s sake; but whatever it be, we find there, in our path through this world, the Lord himself going before us, suffering first and most of all. In ‘the sufferings of Christ about our sin, He was entirely alone; but there is another kind of suffering which Christ went through, of which we cannot say that we suffer with him, but in which he can sympathize with us, and that is in the close of his life. The special character of that, though not exclusive, was the suffering of the Jewish remnant in the last days. For that reason, he can sympathize with the remnant of Israel in the sufferings that they will pass through. Wherever this character of suffering comes in, judgment against man is what we find called for. Hence the constant appeal to God to arise and avenge them on their adversaries, which we find throughout the Psalms. Whereas when expiation is made, it is mercy that is called for. In the one case it is calling for judgment upon men, because men, as the instruments of Satan, are making Christ suffer; but the moment he is suffering, from God, because of atonement for sin, it is exactly the contrary. You then read, “I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I sing praise unto thee.” It is all grace, and nothing else.

Christ only has drunk that cup, because he suffered from God—entirely apart, totally alone; and nothing but grace remains. After he has said, “Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorn,” you will not find one single thing but grace. It is the wrath of God he was bearing for others. Christ, in going through the two first classes of sufferings, can sympathize with \*me, where it is the trial and suffering of a godly soul, and can intercede for us and help us on. I have no doubt, too, that the presence of Christ in heaven now sustains Israel as a separate nation.

“And being made perfect,” &c. The whole thing has been passed through, and he becomes a qualified High Priest, as regards my sorrows and difficulties, because he passed through them when he was here. He has gone through all the difficulties of a godly life on the earth, and

therefore now, while he gives us this place in heaven, he is competent to sympathize with us as we pass through the world. My place is in heaven, and my path upon earth is that which belongs to, and is consistent with, the place that I have in heaven: my path ought to be the expression of that. What was Christ's path in this world? Even as the Son of man upon earth, he was ever "the Son of man who is in heaven." Every atom of his life was the expression of this blessed One in heaven; and so is it with us, so far as we are consistent. The Christ who is in heaven, and who gives me this, place in light in the presence of God, —is the Christ that is in me. So the apostle says, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." The life of the Christian upon earth is the manifestation of that life in Jesus, with whom he is in heaven: he is the expression of that Christ upon earth. Where we fail, where our life is not the expression or that life in Jesus, there comes the word, which is the expression of it, and searches us; and thus there is sanctification by the truth. The word brings Christ to me, where I am not showing forth Christ, and judges it.

But what if I find difficulties and trials by the way? There I have the intercession of Christ. I have Christ interceding for me, as knowing all the comfort of the grace of God that flows out to this life upon earth. He has known how a soul is comforted in this trial, and he takes it all for me, and pleads for me before God, according to his own knowledge of my need. There I find the supplies of grace that I want, through a person who understands the application of grace to a heart that is going through these difficulties. Before he stands in his place of priesthood, he has gone through them all. Thus, his walk upon earth was ever that of a dependent man, and now he intercedes for us, as dependent ones, and thereby maintains our communion with the blessedness of God, in the place where our title is. You may be conscious of much infirmity; but if you say, I am weak, you are also entitled to say, God is for me in that. Do I want light? God is for me in that. Do I want direction for my path? God is for me in that. I get all that God is for my need; and such is the effect of the intercession of Christ. In all this path of trial below; there is not one of the difficulties to which grace does not apply it. There is not a step of my life that God is not thinking of me. There may be that in me which requires that God should deal with it, as, for instance, was Job's case. He sees that Job is not going on well, and he says, I must take that case up, and deal with it. And so he lets Satan loose upon Job, till Job was made nothing of in his own eyes; and that is exactly what was wanted. In Peter's case, Satan took the start. The Lord says, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." He prays there before the sin was ever committed. The Lord was thinking about him, and when the fitting moment was come, looks at him, and Peter weeps bitterly. It was good for him. to be' sifted. He was a man true and sincere, but with too much confidence in himself, and in his love for the Lord. Then, in order thoroughly to restore his soul, the Lord applies the word, "Lovest thou me more than these?" And Simon, conscious of how little love he had shown, is forced to appeal to divine knowledge of it: "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." You know that I love you, though nobody else could. The Lord then says to him, "Feed my lambs." There We get the application of it. "When thou art restored," he had before said to him, "strengthen thy brethren."

Christ having "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," associates our hearts with himself in the perfectness in which God is, by applying that perfectness in grace to all the wants of our souls. Then when we fail, intercession comes in, and restores the soul; and yet it always maintains the soul in the confidence of divine love. The Lord intercedes for us without our even

asking. We do not gain him to intercede for us because of our repentance or prayers. He did: not intercede for Peter when Peter repented, but before he sinned he interceded for Peter because he needed it. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." It does not say, If any, man repent of his sin, but, "If any man sin." That is, he wants it. It is the exercise of grace in his own heart towards us to restore our souls.

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat." People are alit to talk about "strong meat," as if it meant something very great. But the simple truth taught here is, that milk is fitted for babes, and strong meat for grown people; and therefore if you are not able to eat solid meat, you are in a bad state. I do not give milk to a grown man, because meat suits him. If we cannot take the solid food, the fact is, we have been content to stay babes, we have not been growing up into Christ: the thought and intent of the heart is not right. We are called upon to have our senses exercised to discern both good and evil; and that is impossible, unless we are walking in reality with God. But the place where Christ keeps our hearts is in the holiest of all. He has sanctified himself in the presence of God for us, and that is the place where he keeps us. We may forget him, we may fail in appreciating the position in which he has set us, and in walking according to it; but in the holiest he keeps us in unmingled, untiring enjoyment of what is there—there in perfect love and in the light, as God is in the light; sin put away, and ourselves made the righteousness of God in him. I have nothing more to think about my competency to be there. I am there; and I cannot get there, except as being perfectly cleansed. All sin blotted out; and there, consequently, as thus cleansed, I enjoy the unclouded favor of God. The place into which I am introduced is the unclouded favor of God that has been brought, in by the death of Christ, which has cleansed me. And now here, in this earth, I am to manifest Christ. But in the midst of all the trials and difficulties of the way, we find these two means which God uses to carry us on: the word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, which judges everything that is contrary to God, and the intercession of Christ, which meets all our weakness and failure. He has trodden the same path which we have to tread, and has met the same temptations in that path. And now our very weakness, if we are kept in dependence upon Christ, is but the continual exercise of affection to Christ, and the drawing out of his affections towards us.

## Hark! Ten Thousand Voices Crying

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O the joy of the salvation  
We possess around the throne,  
Countless thoughts of admiration  
Mingling leave that joy but one.  
Hark! ten thousand voices crying,  
“Lamb of God!” with one ‘accord;  
Thousand thousand saints replying,  
Bursts at once the echoing chord.  
Long with free and glad devotion  
Universal praise prevails,  
Till, blest fruit of deep emotion,  
Voice by voice in silence fails.  
Now, in wondrous adoration,  
Dwelling on His matchless love,  
Sway’d with power of that salvation,  
Silence fills the courts above.  
Then their richest thoughts unfolding,  
Each to each with joy divine,  
Heavenly converse blissful holding,  
Tells how bright His glories shine.  
Some on God’s high glories dwelling,  
Brightly beaming in His face;  
Some His First-born greatness telling,  
Ordering all things in their place.  
These of Godhead’s counsels deep  
Him th’ Accomplisher proclaim;

These how Jesu's self could weep,  
Of Godhead's love the witness came.  
All on love 'surpassing rest,  
That clothed in flesh the great I AM: —  
Till from a heart divinely perst  
Bursts forth at length the loud exclaim,  
"Praise the Lamb! "—at once awaking  
The gather'd hosts, their voices throng;  
Loud and wide each tongue partaking,  
Rolls renew'd the endless song.  
Grateful incense this, ascending  
Rises to the Father's throne;  
Every knee to Christ is bending,  
All the mind in heaven is  
All the Father's counsels claiming  
Equal honors to the Son,  
All the Son's effulgence beaming  
Glory of His Father's throne:  
By the Spirit all pervading  
Radiant hosts unnumber'd round,  
Breathing glory never fading,  
Echo back the blissful sound.  
Joyful now the wide creation  
Rests in undisturb'd repose;  
Blest in Jesu's full salvation,  
Borrow now no thraldom knows.  
Rich the streams of bounty flowing,  
Common blessings from above,  
Life and holy joy bestowing,

Tell of God's unwearied love.

Hark the heavenly notes again!

Loudly swells the air-borne praise;

Throughout creation's vault, "Amen,

"Amen!" responsive joy doth raise.

J. N. D.

The above is the original form of this well-known Hymn.

## Our Relationship to Christ

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Revelation 1:4-7, 22:16-21.

I have taken these two passages which precede and come after all the prophetic part of the book, as giving us the relationships in which the saints stand to Christ, to whom the book is confided.

In these opening verses we get an address, and the answer of heart in the saints to that address; and then, when the book closes, the address of the Lord to his people as the Bride, and the answer. I desire to show the place in which the Spirit of God sets the saints, and the connection of it with their character, affections and duties.

One abstract remark maybe made—Our affections and our duties flow from the relationship in which we are set. It is clear, that if we are creatures of God, our duties as such flow from our knowledge of that. So with our earthly duties and affections—they flow from our relationship one with another, whether as husband and wife, or father and child. It is a very simple remark, but of all importance with regard to the saints' position. But, then, I must be in this relationship to have these affections, and I must know what the relationship is to which those duties belong. If I had no consciousness of being a child, and happened to meet my father, I should have no sense of the duties and affections belonging to me as a child. In order to have right affections, I must be in the relationship to which the affections belong, and I must know that I am in it too. The relationship must be known as mine, in order to possess the affections belonging to me as a child. The relationship must be known as mine, in order to possess the affections belonging to it. I cannot love Christ as a Savior, if I do not know whether he is a Savior or not to me; cannot love God as a Father, if I am not sure whether or not I am a child. Now the importance of this is, that a full settled knowledge of salvation is the spring and foundation of our duties to God; not only the knowledge of the fact of salvation, but of what that salvation has brought me into. It has made me a child, and I am bound to walk and feel as a child. It is so if I take Christ as he presents himself at the end of this book: immediately the Spirit and the bride say, Come. If I do not know that I belong to the bride of Christ, how can I, when he thus presents himself to me, say to him, Come? It is the relationship in which I am from which all must flow; and no duties and affections are rightly founded, until we know ourselves to be in this relationship to God. There may be a craving after the thing, and there will be. If I am an orphan, I would give anything to have a father; but I cannot have the affections of a child, because I have not got a father to love me. Wherever the divine nature is, there is the spring of these thoughts and feelings of love to God, and of holiness; but I cannot have them in perfection for my soul, because I have not the constant enjoyment of my relationship. A law may be imposed upon a person, but it never produces any affection. There may be a law which claims certain feelings and affections from me, but that gives no consciousness of the relationship by which these affections are produced: consequently it gives me no power. This is the real character of the law. Instead of being founded on a relationship that is existing, it promises that by keeping it I shall get life. If keep the law, without having real life, I am to get life by keeping it.

I find that principle laid down in Scripture—duty called for in order to the obtaining of life; but never does it produce the thing. Law claims from man what he ought to be, but it does not and cannot place man in any relationship with God, in which he may enjoy the blessing that belongs to God. Now it is not so with Christ: he does bring us, by the salvation which he has wrought, into relationship with God; he gives us a known settled place before God; and then our affections and duties flow from the place we are in. They are not the means of obtaining the place, but that which belongs to the place we are in. If we are the bride of Christ, we ought to have the feelings and wishes of one that is so. Throughout, when you enter into these verses, that suggests itself to the heart. In whatever way Christ is spoken of, there is at once what calls forth a response from the hearts of the saints. Whatever may be said as to his titles or offices, or what he is, the effect of speaking of him with whom we are in relationship, is to awaken feelings in our own hearts of what he is to us. For instance, if I were to speak to a child of its father, as one who had eminently distinguished himself as hero, or a statesman, the child's feeling at once would be, That is my father. He would not say, that is a great conqueror. The child's feeling would be, that great man is my father. So it would be with a wife. If she were told that such a person had greatly distinguished himself in any place, and she knew it was her husband, she would say, That is my husband; because all this' glory awoke, in the mind of the child or the wife, the consciousness of the relationship in which they stood \*to the one to whom they belonged. Now that is the case with the Church of God you cannot speak of any glory of Christ or of God; that does not awaken in the heart of the saint the consciousness of what God and Christ are to itself. This is characteristic of the existence of such a relationship, and the affections that belong to it. You cannot speak of the person with whom others are in relationship, without awakening in their hearts the sense of what the person is to them.

The whole character of this book is one of judgment. It is not the Father communicating with the Church by means of the Holy Ghost which dwells in it. And when Christ is described, it is as One whose eyes are like a flame of fire, judging in the midst of the churches, or as One coming out of heaven on a white horse, a sharp sword going out of his mouth, that with it he should smite the nations. When it is God, he is sitting on a throne from whence lightnings and thunderings proceed, and sending out preliminary or final judgments on the earth.

Now we shall find here, by the feelings that are expressed, the way in which the saint, the child of God, feels when Christ is brought forward. We shall find that, even when he is presented in judgment—that is, in an earthly character, —the Church has immediately awakened in her heart the place and relationship in which she stands to the one thus presented. Jesus, the Prince of the kings of the earth, is alluded to: at once the answer is, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." If the "Root and offspring of David" is named, the Spirit and the bride say, Come. It is the characteristic of the soul that lives in the conscious blessedness and enjoyment of an existing relationship with God. However, Christ is presented, it is our own relationship with him that is at once awakened in the bride. What'll see in the word is not merely God visiting us as sinners, as he has done, but that when he has visited us, has brought us into blessed connection with himself; and having brought us there, he calls us, as in that connection, to live in the delight and in the duties that belong to it.

We do not thoroughly understand how lost we are in our natural state, because we do not look simply to our place in Christ. It is in the measure that we understand that they who are in the flesh

cannot please God, and that the flesh is not subject to God, and cannot be remedied, that we are cast over by faith into our place in Christ. The moment I come to know that my relationship with God depends upon what he is for me, and what he has made me by grace in himself, and not upon what I am to him, it is all simple. It may astonish many to see that it does not depend upon what they are to him. They will say, are not men judged according to their works? To be sure they are. But who among you will stand this judgment? It is not merely a truth; but what is your condition if it is a truth? We are lost. We can only say, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." There is an end of all flesh as such. If Christ came, he came to call sinners—to seek and save that which was lost. It was all a settled thing as to man in the flesh. You and I, looked at as moral, responsible beings before God, have walked in such sort, that we could not stand in the judgment—no one, not even a Christian, could. I am not now talking of grace saving; but of man judged as a responsible being to God. If God deals with us on this ground, we could not, as Job says, answer him one in a thousand. That we know to be true. There is not a single person, if it were a question of the most careless person in the world, who does not know that he cannot stand in the judgment. If he were brought today into the presence of God, he would do what Adam did—go and hide himself if he could; he would not dare to stand and be judged of God. The saint knows it, but the sinner knows it too: As a present thing, he has no desire to be with God. If it was offered to ever such a decent man of the world to go to heaven today, he would not—nor tomorrow either. When, then, is he to go? When he cannot help it if he must die, he would rather go to heaven; but there is not a man of the world but would stay out of heaven as long as possible. If God reveals himself in judgment, man will fly from him; and when he revealed himself in grace, what did man do? Spat upon him, crucified him. The story is told. Conscience tells us one thing, and the facts of Christianity tell us the other—man would not have God. This is what we all are, and without any difference. Some may have produced more bad fruit than others, but we are all alike lost, and therefore God deals with us, consequent upon the death of Christ, on the ground that we are lost. It is of immense importance to see this fully, in order that we may fully enjoy God's love. "For a good man some would even dare to die." "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." That is, I learn this—that if I am bad, dreading judgment, and having no affections towards God, if God has loved me, it is according to the perfectness of his own nature. This is how grace meets a man's case. He is brought to this conviction, that he is a poor lost sinner, with no desire after God—a lost sinner after having been tried in every possible way—tried without law, tried under law, and then tried by Christ, coming in grace to meet them in all their need. And what was the result? Man was lost, hopelessly lost. "We will not have this man to reign over us." We will have the world, without being troubled with God.

Here I get God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself; I find perfect love cognizant of what the sinner is, knowing how it would be treated, yet coming down to save. When I look at Christ's coming to me, I get thus the knowledge that God, in perfect love, and with the knowledge of what I am, has visited me to save me. He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Having found this, I have met with God, and I know him. I find myself perfectly evil, my heart altogether evil; but I have seen Jesus, and he loves me perfectly: I have met him in my sin, and I know him. That is not relationship yet, but I know what he is. If I have gone to a person that I have considered my master, and have done everything against him; and if afterward I have met him, and he has assured me of his love, I have my every doubt and anxiety taken away. I shall not then

wait for the day of judgment to know what God is to me, for I have met him in Christ when I was in my sins. But then we could not go into heaven with our sins; and the next thing I find is, that Christ takes up this very place in which I was. Was I in death? He goes into it. Was I under condemnation? He goes under it. Was I in sin before God? He is made sin for me. I find in the cross the Lord Jesus coming and putting himself in the very place where I was before a God of judgment. Thus, taking the sinners' place, he goes down unto death. He is forsaken of God; and being made sin, he bears their burden upon the cross, and now he is risen again. The question of the dealing of God with sin has been gone through on the cross; but that blessed One having been made sin for me, the holiness of God has been gone through, and man has been proved a lost sinner. But Christ having taken his place, the whole history of my sin is closed; it has received its reward in the person of Christ. And he is risen, and there is another Adam, instead of the first Adam, in the presence of God. It is not merely God visiting the sinner in his sin, but one who had taken the judgment of my sin upon himself already, in the presence of God in righteousness. There I get the whole dealing of God to settle the question of sin. "Christ has appeared once in the end of the world, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" In order to be enabled to enjoy the love of God, that is what my conscience wants. If I receive that by faith, I can stand in the presence of God with the knowledge that God loves me perfectly, and that as a righteous God he receives me in Christ.

If you take these two passages, you will find in one what Christ has done for us and the place in which he has put us, and in the next, the relationship which flows from it and the conduct consequent upon it.

In Revelation 1:4, there is not a word about God in his character of Savior, but in the character of Jehovah, as Almighty; and the seven Spirits' that are before the throne show that perfection of the divine Spirit in which God judges. Therefore, Christ comes last, and when I come to him, I get the statement that he is the faithful witness on the earth; then there is his resurrection—he is the first-begotten of the dead, and lastly, he is the Prince of the kings of the earth. It passes over all that he is in heaven as the High Priest, and as my righteousness before God. But though Christ is only thus spoken of, in connection with the character of the whole book, yet what is the answer of the saints when Christ is spoken of? "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." It is what he is to them. Though Christ is spoken of suitably to the whole character of the book, yet the Church knows him as he is for itself. Even if he is spoken of as the Prince of the kings of the earth, I say, that is the One that loves me, that has saved me; I know him as the One that is in heaven, consequent upon the work that he has done for me. I know what he is for myself. He has loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood. He is the faithful witness, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; but what I know is, that he has loved me and washed' me from my sins in his own blood. And if I think of the place in which he has set me, he has made me a king and priest to God and his Father. It is the character of Christ's love, that all which lie takes from the Father in glory and blessing, as man, he gives to us. If I talk of him even as a Prince on the throne, he cannot do without me, he makes me a king too. A man of the world can be generous, but he does not bring another person into his own condition. That is what Christ does. "My peace," he says, "I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you." I will give you the very same peace that I have myself. So too, "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given

them.” And not only that, but he gives them his Father’s love— “that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” He puts us into his own place. That is perfect love. He himself comes, and he has washed us from our sins in his own blood. If he is a king and a priest, he has made us kings and priests along with him. It is only when I have the consciousness of being utterly lost, and look up to the love that God has shown in the gift of his Son, that I can understand it all: If I look at the day of judgment, I say, it is all over, it is a settled thing with me; and if God deals with me in judgment, I am ruined. It is too late to talk about being better—I am lost. But now through Christ I am saved. I have got God that has come in, dealing with this lost person, and giving his Son for him it is not merely quickening him, but besides that, when a soul is quickened, and feels what sin is, and what righteousness is, and yet that he has not got it, God has given Christ as his salvation. You want deliverance out of a condition that you are in by nature, into another condition in Christ, and that is what God provides. The believer, is not only born again, and sees that holiness must be, but he has found in Christ the very thing that he wants. The grace of God has brought salvation. This is another thing. I am not merely renewed, but I wanted an answer to the exercises of my soul, and that is what I have got in Christ. Would it be right for a child to be uncertain whether its father loves it or not? If it were so, I should say, that child has not right affections. We ought to be able to say, I know thoroughly well that the Father loves me—he has given his Son for me. It was a love which knew my case, and thought of it. And lie has loved me and washed me from my sins in his own blood. He has made me as clean as the value of Christ’s blood can make a person. I am put thus before God, and then made a king and priest to God. By and by everyone shall be blessed under his own vine and his own fig-tree; but the place that the heart of the believer finds itself in now is in Christ’s own place, consequent upon the love \* wherewith lie has been loved.

“Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.” And what is the consequence? “And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” I can testify that every eye shall see him.... and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Um But am I to be wailing because He conies who has washed me from my sins in His own blood? No; I am rejoicing. My portion is one thing, my testimony another.

If we look at the last. chapter, after all the prophetic details have been gone through, I am not only washed and made a king and a priest to God, but I am the bride. And here Christ sets himself again before the Church; he always does so. In the previous part of the chapter, as a warning, he said, “Behold, I come quickly.” And now the Lord; having closed the testimony lie had to give to the world, says in verse 16, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.” And then lie gives himself these three characters: “I am the root and offspring of David;” he is the root of David; the spring of all the promises made to David; and he is the heir of all of them, because he was the promised seed of David. But, then, he gives himself another character, and that is, “the. bright and morning star.” Nothing is said about the Bridegroom hers. He is the bright and morning star. What is that? It is not the day. It is what no one sees the moment the sun is up. Those who are on earth in the day of the Lord will not see that star. It is what is seen by those who during the night are watching. Then, when the Lord comes, the star is seen no longer.

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand.” That brings home our present condition urgently to the Church of God. From the moment that Adam fell, it was night, it was dark. It was still deeper night, as God went on dealing with man till Christ was rejected. And now the judgment comes. But it is

just there the dawn begins Man had departed from the light. The rulers of “the darkness of this world” is the expression. Before Christ came, it was night, because the sun had not risen; and when Christ was in this world, he was rejected. There was no connecting man with Christ but by his death. He came down to man, he visited him in grace; but “except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.” He was merciful, he might come down to others in the meeting of all their need, but: he was alone except he died; and when Christ died, there was the closing of the practical judgment of all that man was, looked at as in the flesh. It was proved that no dealing of God could make the fig-tree bear figs, and he said, “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever.” He had gone on digging and pruning, but no fruit was borne; the gardener was cast out, Christ was rejected. But “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;” and God comes in grace, and sets a man at his own right hand. And now the night is far spent, the day is at hand. The very rejection of Christ, which proved fully and completely the entire darkness in which man was lying, set a new man, another man, according to God’s councils and heart, in glory at the right hand of God, displays this blessed One before our faith and says, look there, and you will find life. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” You will find righteousness—everything—there.

I now know that God has come in, not merely trying man as he did for four thousand years, but doing his own work; and he has wrought that work completely, and Christ has gone up as “the second man” that has taken his place in righteousness in the presence of God. I can say, that is my life. There is a victory over sin, there is a putting away of sin, there is an accomplishment of righteousness, there is One who has got his place there because of sin being put away, and because of accomplished righteousness. Just as surely as the first Adam was turned out of paradise, the last Adam has come in. And now I can say that I can see the dawn. The Jew must wait till the High Priest comes out to know whether the offering is accepted or not. When Christ comes out again, they will look upon him and mourn. But I do not wait for that, because the Holy Spirit has come out, and his presence gives me the blessed consciousness that Christ has been accepted before God as my life and righteousness. My faith makes me know that I have it all in Christ. But when am I to get the fruit of this? I have got the Holy Ghost, but what is my relationship to Christ? The Holy Ghost come down gives me the knowledge of it. I have got the Spirit, and the knowledge—of these two things—that Christ is my righteousness in the presence of God, and the Holy Spirit the seal of it. But more than that: Christ is the Head, and we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. And what is their character when he talks about them? It is as the bride it is never said of Christ that he was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh when he was down here. But now that he is at the right hand of God, we are bone of his bone \*and flesh of his flesh. Just as Eve was of Adam, we are of Christ—and more so—because the Spirit of Christ dwells in me and unites me to Christ. When the Sun of righteousness arises with healing in his wings, there will be judgment, treading down of the wicked, &c. But meanwhile, while Christ is hidden from the world, faith sees him; and faith, seeing him, has trusted and leaned on him as its righteousness before God, and the Holy Ghost is given as the seal of that righteousness. Therefore, he says, “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” He is these two; the earnest of the glory, and the present certainty of the love. I do know the love now, the Holy Ghost giving me the consciousness of perfect love; but he is the earnest of the inheritance.

That bright and morning star is before the day rises. We know Christ before we see him. We have not seen him, and yet have believed. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." We are associated with him while he is not in the world. When the sun rises, I shall see him in his glory, but we know him behind the cloud. He is the Son that has revealed himself to me—this One who is in the heavens—as he revealed himself to Paul: therefore it is the gospel of the glory. I know Him as my righteousness, and as the bridegroom to the bride. The morning star is that which will be accomplished, but which is the knowledge of Christ as known to the watching believer when he is not known to the world at all.

So, in Peter, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."

The word of prophecy is a light shining in a dark place. The world is all dark, and prophecy comes in and tells me the end of a dark world, and of all that passes in it. It is going on down a full stream to destruction. I cannot go on with that—my affections cannot be engaged in it. But the night is far spent, and the day is at hand. We know Christ in heaven, we know him as the morning star when the world does not see him we know him above where the Church first was put in relationship with him. It is said to the church of Thyatira, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my Works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron," &c. "And," he adds, "I will give him the morning star;" i.e., he shall be a king, and shall rule; but, besides that, I will give him myself. We shall have an inheritance, and this with Christ. But do you think, supposing a person were going to be married, and said to the bride, you will have a fine estate, would that be what would most occupy her mind? Certainly not. If her affections were true and right, it would be himself, and not the inheritance, that she would be occupied about so it should be with us. All God's word will be accomplished. We shall have the inheritance, but we shall have Christ. We get the bright and morning star. It is in that character that Christ reveals himself here. But what is awakened in the Church's heart is the thought of her own proper relationship to Christ. He does not say; Now I am coming; it is the who says it. "I am the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come." It is the desire of her heart. When he is named in that character, she is longing for him to come—not to be washed. The saints already had said, He has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood. His first coming did that. He has done it all. And when, through grace, I am brought to look up to God, and trust him as a poor sinner, I am brought into this place by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven, because righteousness has gone up on high. The Holy Ghost comes down and seals me, because I am made the righteousness of God in Christ. And now it is not merely the thought and feeling, I wish I were the bride, but there is the consciousness of the relationship, and I say to the Bridegroom, Come.' The Spirit says it because the Spirit is down upon the earth. I have got the living water and the Spirit, but I have not got the Bridegroom. The Holy Ghost, having come down, and dwelling in believers, produces the certainty of the value of what Christ did and was down here, and the longing desire to see him. We shall reign with Christ; but to be with himself is better. James and John said, Give us a good place in the kingdom. But what does Paul say? "That I may win Christ." and I want him. It is not the uncertainty of there being relationship, but the affections that belong to the relationship.

The Spirit and the bride say, Come. We get the whole circle of the Church's affections. When the Spirit of God is working in the saints, what will be the first affection? Christ. The Spirit and the bride

turn to him, and say, Come. What is the next affection? It is the saints. Therefore it turns and bids him that heareth say, Come. If you have heard Christ, you come and join the cry. Even if you have not the consciousness of relationship, would you not be happier if you saw him as he is? Therefore say, come. The first affection is towards Christ himself; but the bride would have every saint to join in these affections, and in the desire to have the Bridegroom. But does it stop with those who have heard the voice of the Lord Jesus? No. The first effect of the Spirit's turning our eye to Christ is the desire. that Christ should come; and next, that the saint who hears his voice should have the same affection. And what next? We turn round to those who may be athirst, bidding them come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. The saint, who has the sense of the blessedness of having drunk of the living water which Christ gives, wants others to have it also. What is a thirsty man? It is a man that has got a want, and no answer to it. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." I have an affection created in me by grace, but it is satisfied. I have got what my soul wants. I have got God in all his blessedness in love, and I have got him nearer to me than any human friend could be. I have known what it is to thirst, but now I am satisfied. I have got all that my soul longed after. But if there is a thirsty soul here, you will say, If I could only feel sure that I had got this living water! That shows that you have not drunk. You cannot enjoy Christ without knowing it. If the Spirit of God quickens a soul, it will have wants that are not satisfied; but if it has gone and drunk of Christ, it will be satisfied. The Church has not yet got the Bridegroom; but it has the water of life, and therefore it can say to the world, I have got what you want; you come and try. If you are thirsty, and only drink of that water, you will never thirst again. I have got Christ in my heart; and when you possess him in your soul, it gives you the consciousness that you have got the very same happiness that there will be in heaven. You may know Christ better, and love him better, when you get there: there will not be the hindrances of the vile body; but it is not another God, another Christ, another Holy Ghost that you will have. All the things that will make me blessed in heaven I have got now. I may be inconsistent with Christ, groaning in this wretched body, because I have so little faith to see my place. I say, what a but I am in! The reason I do not like the but is because I know I have got a palace. I judge my present position because of the glory that is before me. But if you want to know what makes a Christian happy in life and death, it is, that the Christ he has got now is the Christ that he will have in heaven. He has got his home there; where the One he loves and knows best is already.

But more than that if we have this living water, and people do not even thirst, still I can say, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." I can tell them I was just as vile as they, and God came and called me in his grace when I was going far astray from him So that now I can say to others, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." We have got this water; we have not got to buy it. We have got this relationship to Christ, and the affections that flow from it, so that we turn to those that are athirst, bidding them welcome, welcome; yea, "Whosoever will, let him take," &c. And thus I get the whole circle of the Church's affections, from Christ himself down to the poor sinner far from God, because I have the consciousness of the affections that are suited to Christ. The Christian is in this world, in virtue of his salvation in Christ, a witness of the love that has saved himself. And then we have to seek, remembering that the life we have is a dependent life, that this witness should be bright; "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

Only remark these two things—where we are brought in faith, with the Holy Ghost dwelling in us. I see that Christ has died to put away my sin; that is what I know, looking back. And, looking forward, I see that the same Holy Ghost who gives to my soul to—possess a certain knowledge of the value of Christ’s first coming, tells me that he is coming again. “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should. live soberly Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us.” He puts us back, and shows us Christ; and forward, and says, that is your Bridegroom; he is gone to prepare a place for you. He will come again for you.

If I look back at Christ made sin for me, and if I look forward to his coming again to receive us unto himself, shall I be afraid of judgment when he comes? He positively declares that he will come and receive me to himself. Is that the way I shall stand before his judgment-seat? Yes; he will come. and fetch me, and receive me to himself and why? Because at his first coming he had settled the whole question of my sin. The person before whom I appear in judgment is the One who has already put away my sin, and who is my righteousness before God; and it is as made like to his glorified body that we appear before him.

I would ask you, are your souls standing in this relationship with God in Christ? Do you believe that God in mercy has thus visited you in perfect love, and that now the place you are set in is that blessed relationship itself as the bride of Christ, who is waiting till he comes to receive her to himself? Only remember, that if you desire the affections and the walk that belong to a Christian, you must have the consciousness of being in the relationship, or you cannot have the affections that belong to it. God has given us a salvation that brings us, as saved persons, into relationship with Christ. But in order to be consistent, I must know what I am to be consistent with. Do I expect you to be consistent with me as my servant, or as my child, if you are not standing in those relationships to me? If I am of the bride of Christ, let me seek to be consistent therewith. But we must be consciously in the place of relationship, and then seek, though it be amid suffering, to be consistent with it. The Lord give us, by his living grace, to be brought into the consciousness of the place in which he has set us.

## God's Grace and Man's Need

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Here we have the wonderful contrast between the ways and actings of man's heart towards God, and the ways and actings of God's heart towards poor guilty man. These two things must be brought close the one to the other, and be shown as they rightly are. Men's hearts were not fully put to the test before the Lord Jesus came. John 15:22-24,— "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." It was all fully brought out then; and what man's heart was, was plainly proved. When he saw God, he hated him. Although God was present in the midst of Israel, he 'was not openly revealed. He was hid within the veil, within which the high priest, shrouded in a cloud of incense, alone approached his holy throne. Neither did man's heart come up there to see the holiness of it; nor did God come down fully to man. It was not the full revelation of God. It was that which could leave man in a good deal of darkness, and God hid; and therefore that which could not clearly detect man's heart. Consequently he says, "If I had not come, they had not had sin:" not that they had not sinned; but that the Lord would not hold them finally guilty, until he had manifested himself in him of whom he had spoken' to Israel. But when God was made manifest, man hated him. God had before revealed a great deal, but not himself. He revealed much in the figures of the law, which foreshadowed and veiled better things; and we find the use man made of it. I am, not here speaking of the law, as trying man's conscience: though, in passing, we may notice that too, as bringing in—not sin, for that was there already—but transgression. The use God made of it was to prove man a sinner. It was used to make manifest—in fact, to create—transgression.

To turn for a moment to the use man made of the law, in contrast with God's purpose in it. God used it, as we have seen, that the offense might abound—that sin might appear exceeding sinful. Man set about to make himself righteous by the very thing by which God was proving him a sinner, and sin exceedingly sinful. This you are doing, if you are seeking to satisfy the demands of God's righteousness by your own ways. Man seeks to save himself by the righteousness of the law; but God's use was not that, for he never thought of saving any but by Jesus. When a child is forbidden 'by its parent; by an express law, and breaks that law, it not only makes manifest the evil disposition that is in its heart, but there is then positive disobedience, and the consciousness of sin, in that which the child does. It might have followed its inclination in many cases before, without consciousness of sin; but now not so; —the conscience is affected and defiled; and by the law we are under condemnation and death.

To return to the figures and shadows of better things. Men took those very ceremonies and sacrifices, which were typical of that One Sacrifice which sin had made necessary, and by them, their conscience nothing satisfied, tried to eke out their own righteousness; and they follow the same course now. We know that there were a great many sacrifices for sin under the law: for God has tried this way, that we might know its incapacity of bringing us to him. To employ similar means is mere superstition, and denial of Christ. Men first set about to be righteous, by commands

which they cannot fulfill; and then they seek to add ceremonies, to eke out a righteousness of their own. That is the sum of the religion of so many, —making an attempt at keeping the law, and adding ceremonial observances thereto, and then attaching the name of Christianity to it, while all God's truth is shut out.

Further after all, the conscience never will be satisfied; because there will be the dread of that day when God shall make manifest the secrets of the heart. The soul is not on the road to have a conscience at peace with God. Traveling on this road, the man will go on from one thing to another. He may add ceremony to ceremony, and tradition to tradition; but he has only got farther from God—he has only got more between God and his conscience, and no forgiveness after all. The conscience gets satisfied. for a moment or two; by man's dealing with it in this way; but there is no peace with God. When sin is brought into the presence of God's holiness, the conscience, if not despairing, gets hardened. See what a state' those Jews were in, who could go and buy Christ's blood for thirty pieces of silver, and yet have scruples of conscience as to where the price of blood should be put—refusing to put it into the treasury, because it was the price of blood. Anything will suit man, provided it is not his conscience in the presence of God. Where he is detecting the state of heart, and making it know complete forgiveness, so that it can be in his presence without sin, it is another thing. Nothing is more simple than this, glorious as is the grace that has wrought it; indeed, it is too simple for those who are not taught of God to love the truth. But simple as it is, man's conscience is thus in the presence of God; and anything suits man rather than that.

Though God is infinitely high, he is very simple to man's wants, and to man's conscience. The washing the hands is not that Which signifies, but that which cometh from the heart. Here we have something more simple than all the intricacies of ceremony and tradition. God's light deals with realities; and God's purpose is, by the powerful light of his Spirit, to bring into the conscience of man all the different evils of his heart. When God's light shines in, that evil of which the conscience before took no notice—a vain thought or the like, that passed and was forgotten—is now made manifest. That which cometh out of the heart is what defileth a man.

God is dealing with realities. He wants nothing from man. He is showing him what he is. He is bringing into man's conscience what is already in his heart. When God's light shines in, it detects what is in the heart; and thus there is a manifestation to a man's conscience of all that comes out of his heart. That light soon teaches him the vanity of washing his hands, and such things. (ver. 2-8) It tells him that to draw near to God with his mouth, and honor him with his lips, while his heart is far from him, is all in vain. It shows him that all mere ceremonial offerings and prayers are worse than useless. "This people draweth near unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." The light detects the evil of man's heart (vet. 11-20): "Not that which goeth into the mouth, but that which corneal out of the mouth defileth a man. For out of the mouth proceed evil thoughts, murders," &c. Thus, God's light comes: in and shows what comes out of the heart. Take the first index of what is there, when seen and expressed in the light—an idle word, perhaps. (James 3) But farther, The Lord does not say, simply, you have done this or that, but he traces the evil to the root. He traces the conduct or the words of man to some source; — to what? to the heart! If there are idle and corrupt words, there is an idle and corrupt heart; and out of the—abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. That is what man's nature is, what he is. So that, — though men have the fairest conduct outwardly, God Unmasks what is within, and

shows the vanity of all their outward ceremonies as a means of eking out a righteousness of their own. He regards not the mere outward conduct of man, but measures the heart; and tracing all the evil to that, asks, Why is this? For out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts (19); and there he closes with man. His purpose, in all these dealings and ways with man, is to show him what he is before God.

Then we turn to the other side of the picture, in which God's heart is brought out, in the case of the woman of Canaan, verses 21-28. This woman had not the pride of human distinction in which the Jews gloried. She was neither a Jewess nor a Pharisee—quite the contrary; she belonged to a city which God had held up as a most reprobate city. (Matthew 11:21.) She was a Syrophenician—a Canaanite—of a race held in the Old Testament to be accursed (Genesis 9:25-27), whence nothing of repentance could be expected. The Lord comes into the coasts of Tiro and Sidon, peopled by the descendants of Canaan (“cursed is Canaan”). That is where grace ever comes. And she was one of these outcasts in the fullest sense of the word. She had no privileges, no claims. Well, she recognizes him here as the Lord, the Son of David, and salutes him as such. As such, she knew what mercies he had brought among the Jews; and she comes and asks for blessing. He does not answer her a word. He takes no notice of her whatever. His ear was closed to her request, at least so far as that he gave her no answer.

A repentant Jew might have appealed to him under this title. He was in the place of the promise which Messiah came to accomplish. Verse 24: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” But for this there must be some claim to the promise. If you meet Christ on the ground of what he is as promised to Israel, you must have some fitness for the promise, some claim to it. If you are seeking by righteousness to get the help of grace, that is not my errand, says Christ; I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Why is there no answer? the heart may say; for she had recognized, his Lordship. She had and could have no claim on or connection with him on that ground; with the Son of David a Canaanite had nothing to do. The disciples were anxious to get rid of her by satisfying her demand, but he would not allow it; he holds to God's order. If she came to the Son of David to get help, she must come as a Jew.

But here (v. 25) she gets a step farther,—she ceases to address him as the Son of David (the ground on which she supposed, giving him the due honor, she might expect something), and her sense of want constrains her to cry out, “Lord, help.” Are there none here expecting that, because they entitle Christ aright, because they give him his due title, and honor him, he must answer them, and astonished that he does not? The poor woman felt her sorrow; she wanted something, and there was the simple expression of her need; but, even then, he answers, “It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.” My errand is from God; I do not go beyond that. Her owning and addressing him as, the Son of David was in the way of righteousness, which was true. Her need still makes her go forward, and she says, “Lord, help me!” But he answers, I am come to the children, —to seek for fruit on the vine which God owns. You might think God would own righteous, well-conducted people, and that they might then take the fruits and blessings God attached to that. But you have no claim on that ground you are sinners. As far as God's ways were revealed outwardly, the Jews were God's people. But she was outside everything—a dog. She is looked upon as a dog, and she now takes the place of a dog. What now, being a dog, could she hope for? Why not give up hope?

Why! because she abandons all title and claim in herself, but the need which cast itself on pure bounty; and there was, she asserted, an overflowing abundance of grace, which could even give some supply to the dogs:— “Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table.” There was bounty in the house of God for dogs themselves. Be it, she was a dog; she made no pretense to take the children’s place; and therefore it was no answer to her to call her that, because the Master could look beyond the children, and there was an overflowing supply of grace and fullness that did not leave even the dogs without provision (verse 27). And such was the poor woman’s real state. She knew the Master of the house was infinitely rich. She knew God and Jesus ten thousand times better than the disciples around. She knew that there were bounty and plenty enough in the Master’s house, and from that super-abounding supply of grace he could let the dogs eat. The vilest and the most hopeless could find food in the Master’s house. The real understanding of God is according to our understanding of our total vileness and nothingness. Israel had never Understood Divine love, as it was here exhibited to the dogs—fathomed by her need, —fathomed by her wretchedness. She reached up to the source from whence even the children are fed. The fullness of the love of God himself, which did not shut even dogs out from his bounty. She passed by all dispensation, even to what God himself had done, seeing he had come down, not to hide his holiness, but to show what he really was; and when the sinner was brought to a confession of her own nothingness, he swept away everything between the sinner and himself, as he did with the woman of Samaria.

She had arrived at what God was. He had done away with that which brought man a little nearer to him, i.e., ordinances, &c.; and he now comes down to show what he is, and what man is; and when man comes to his true and real standing, God is there to meet him in all his unlimited grace. Law was given by Moses, and was but a vail; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The full truth of what man’s heart is, is brought out by the revelation of God in Christ. Now there was not any one between God and man, to vail his holiness or to conceal his love; not even any oft-repeated sacrifice; not even a Moses with a vail on his face; but man must deal with God himself—with God in Christ. And here, you see, the Lord would not satisfy this poor woman on any other plea, but on that of her own real character. He calls her really what she was, and she understood that there was in God’s heart all that the Lord Jesus Christ had seen in it when he was in heaven, for he was here to show it. And supposing she had been something more than a dog, she would not have needed so much grace. It is our vileness which brings out that wonderful grace which God gave. For if she had been in less need, what would have been the consequence? Why, that there would have been less grace manifested in God.

And what is the great truth in Christianity that is brought out by all this? That the vail is rent from the top to the bottom; and that man, as he is, is in the presence of God—the man is there unveiled. What have we got in the cross? The first thing is, God dealing with man in his own presence. But how? Did he come to require anything? Nothing; how should he come and require it? In a certain sense he did require fruit from the vine, but there was none. What then did he come for? why did he come into a world full of sin? what did he seek there? He sought sinners’ did he come here ignorant of the extent of their sin? No; for he knew what was in man’s heart full well before he came. He knew their sin well. He knew all that would come upon him. But what stops the sinner? Not that he is to come to God—we see the Lord Jesus Christ come down to him in his sins. Is there anything between him and the sinner? No, my friends—nothing; not even his disciples. They

might quiet and get rid of importunity, but neither show God's holiness nor reveal his love. It was the prerogative of his own love to come and touch the sinner without being defiled by the sin: just as he did to the leper. The leper exclaimed, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The Lord puts forth his hand and touches him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." And remember, if he came to show God's love to man in his sins, so that his heart might be won, and have confidence with God, he came to take away sin from man by taking it upon himself.

The vail of the temple being rent from top to bottom, I see the holiness of God: but the very stroke which has thus unveiled the holiness of God has put away the sin that would have hindered my standing in the presence of that holiness. I see what God in his love has done for us in the person of Christ. I see that the bruising of his Son has taken place. Here I get God himself coming down to me, and I am enabled now to go back with Christ into the rest of his holiness. In the death of Christ I see the fearful vengeance of God against sin; and the rending of the vail, which displays God's holiness and love to man. And so the more the eye of God scrutinizes and searches me, the more it brings out the blessed truth, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. It shows the whiteness of the robe that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb.

If I hesitate to stand in his presence, I am putting in question the value of Christ's precious blood. You may say, "I hope to be saved." You cannot hope that Christ will die for you! It cannot be a matter of hope whether Christ is to die! The way the heart reasons is, I am not hoping Christ will die for me, but I hope to get an interest in him. I want a proof of his love. When you question this, you question whether Christ has become the friend of publicans and sinners; and further, you question the power of his blood.

Suppose you had a title to demand some proof of his love, what could you demand more than what God has given? He has given his own Son. You could not ask so much as he has already given. But if I am seeking that God should tell me something else, I am seeking some other revelation than what he has given me. He rests my peace on believing the one he has given. The soul that has come to God knows that he is love, and it is to himself we are come.

The very way in which I know God is through faith in his Son. I know his own love, that he thought of this, and did it for me. Why is it the soul does not get this wondrous, simple peace, to be in his own presence without a cloud on his love? Because we are telling to God, and to our poor hearts, something short of this, —that we are dogs. Grace is to the sinner, and to none other. If I can stand before God in my own righteousness, grace is not needed. He will bring down your hearts to your real condition. There he can act in the fullness of his grace, according to the need of the heart that has discovered its need in his presence. He is manifesting that grace, according to the value of the sacrifice, now that he is at the right hand of God: not merely now that God can come to the sinner, but that the cleansed sinner stands accepted in the presence of God—accepted in the person of Jesus; and that nothing stands between us and God. The Lord give us only to own the fullness of his grace, and see the way in which we are debtors to him who was willing to suffer all things, that he might present us spotless to God Amen.

## The Feasts

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I apprehend that these feasts must be taken to apply entirely to that which is earthly. Other knowledge may enable us to carry our eyes onward to the results of what is here taught, which have their place in the heavenlies; but as addressed to the Jews, they cannot historically, I conceive, be taken beyond that which took place on earth. But this is of infinite value and importance to us, because (whatever the results may be—the heavenly and glorious results) still many of the most important subjects and resting-places of faith were accomplished on the earth historically. The Lord was offered up a sacrifice on earth. The Holy Ghost descended on the disciples on earth. The Church, though its glory may not be on earth, has been formed in suffering on earth. And the Church itself looks for the deliverance of the creature from the bondage of corruption. And the value and character of what has been done on earth, of which the Church is partaker, is here delineated in detail.

There are seven feasts: —The Sabbath; the Passover; that of Unleavened Bread; the Feast of Weeks, or of first-fruits; of Trumpets; of Atonement; and of Tabernacles.

But the first was distinct in character. Before all the history of the transactions which brought in the rest, or preceded it, the great truth, that there was a rest that remained, was made prominent and conspicuous. It was the primary and characterizing truth. Between the three former and the three latter of the six remaining feasts, there is a large gap, a characteristic gap, so that the full course of the year to the seventh month goes on, before the trumpet is blown for the first of the latter three. This interval had no feast; and one only remark is made as to it, which may be noticed by-and-by.

A similar arrangement we find in the seven parables, in Matthew 13; the prophetic history of the kingdom of heaven, as this is of the earthly dealings in grace with Israel (in many things, we know, by adopting grace with us also): this, the history of what prepared the rest, preceded by the statement of the rest, God's rest, in type that, of the effects and character of the work, preceded by the generic statement of the workman, and the manner of the reception and result of his labors in principle.

The rest of God is that which distinguishes man from the brute, and from being as a brute, with hopes and labor ending only here in that which perishes, to say even the best of it. The promise is left us, says the apostle to the Hebrews, of entering into God's rest. This is the portion of blessing and communion in which God, in the delight of his works of creation or redemption, refreshed himself; and into which he introduces us in the riches of his grace, and by his work, into fellowship of delight and joy with him, whether of heavenly communion or of earthly blessing. The rest of God is the great end and beginning of thought and desire into which the renewed creature is brought in fellowship, now, of hope. Here God and the creature are brought into unity or community of happiness; the creature, even we, by the Spirit, being capacitated for this communion. The creation also has blessing and rest. Faith, and patience, and conflict, are now involved in it, and hence the complex character of the believer's mind; for one is sure, is certain, and his; the other present, and he toiling in it.

The Sabbath, then, even the seventh day, was the first great characteristic and repeated feast: the seventh day, because the rest was at the close of labor, and rest not known in the flesh, and under the law, until the end of labor; and the rest of the world, and of the earth, creation-rest, was after all the toil and labor that sin had introduced into it had ended and was passed away. This seventh day was God's creation-rest, and it remained when labor and toil came in to man, the pledge and type (as in the flesh, and having earthly things) of the rest that remained to the world and him.

But the saints have nothing in the world; they are dead to it. To them resurrection is the beginning, and, withal, the substance and end of their hope and life. The first day of the week, in which Jesus rose from the dead, is the living witness to them in joyful service (and remembrance of that through which it was purchased) of the rest that remained to them, which they have now in spirit, and go forth from that to toil yet awhile in the world in which they are conversant. It is not to them creation and earthly rest, (but redemption, resurrection, and the hope of heavenly rest,) and therefore enjoyed, not on the day of God's rest in creation, but of Jesus, (beginning of blessing and glory as head of the Church, "the firstborn from the dead,") in resurrection, in which he rested, as to work to be done in redemption rested: save as to everlasting blessing and service to his saints, in which they have joy and communion with him as their Priest—the leader of their praises, in which, as in living strength now in spirit, then in body also, they rest not. Thus in this double type the whole millennial rest is taken in, heavenly or resurrection, and earthly, or rest for the flesh; of this; however (save in the great general principle), the earthly rest, creation-rest, is only told of here. Of this the law maintained the type, though it proved that man could not attain the rest under it; and therefore when the Lord was accused of breaking the sabbath, he replied, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," sheaving the divine intervention (of the Father and the Son) in grace accomplishing that comfort which the law could not do; in which man, in a word, impotently failed; and therefore God, in sovereignty and in redemption-glory, as Father and Son, had now manifested himself as having set himself to work—to do—nor rested; for he was in grace where wretched man found no rest. Hitherto (for yet man was not delivered) they worked.

But to turn to the other feasts. The first three (the feast of weeks has its own distinct character) are leading feasts, in which all the males were to gather at the place where the Lord set his name. But we must take their order from the text. They are divided into ordinances by the expression, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." The first paragraph, or ordinance, closes at the 8th verse, connecting in one continuous train the Sabbath and the Passover, and feast of unleavened bread, though distinguished by the 4th verse as beginning the six yearly feasts historically, yet morally in constitution the rest connected and identified with it. For it is by the Passover, and simply so, that the rest is obtained: there may be other conducive workings, but by this the rest is obtained; and this is true also of the Church in principle, as well as of the earthly rest; *ικανωσεν ημους*, hath qualified us for the inheritance, says the Scripture. (Colossians 1:12) And this is a very important principle.

The Passover of God is the simple, single ground of rest and security; upon the blessed value of this the children of God can feed within, the security of the blood being upon their door-posts. That meets the destroying angel, and he goes, and can go no farther. Within all is peace—judgment may be around, and conflict and trial before, but the Church rests in the security which faith has afforded or enjoys in the Paschal Lamb, eaten within the blood-stricken doors. This is not the work of the Spirit of God, save as revealing it in and to us: the work of the Spirit detects sin, leads into

conflict, animates into those exercises which ever bring to light the evil, short-comings, and failure of our own hearts, but is never the ground and warrant of peace. It may be the means, on being charged by the enemy, of proving that the peace we have is not a false one, but is never the proper ground and warrant of peace; for it is ever connected with imperfection; and perfectness somewhere must be the ground of peace with a perfect God. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "He has made peace by the blood of his cross." Nothing can be mixed with this, nothing in us comes up to the measure and expression of holiness which that blood affords, or, therefore, can make peace as it does. It is the very vindication of perfect holiness against all sin, and, therefore, the perfect peace of the believer against all sin; for the thing which alone adequately measures it puts it away, cleanses from all sin those that are walking in the light. "But Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." And we have thus definitely the anti-type of the Lamb that was slain. It is, moreover, in this character that Christ at present holds the throne, as regards his work and its worthiness, as it is written. (Hebrews 1:3; Philippians 2:9,10; Revelation 5:9.)

The secondary feast connected with this was the unleavened bread. This was consequent upon the other. As received by the blood, we feed on and apprehend the unleavened perfectness of Christ. It is his intrinsic character as known by faith. There was no "leaven of malice and wickedness" in him, and in the spirit of his holiness in our new nature we hold communion with, delight in, and feast upon, him the spotless sacrifice and unleavened perfectness of Christ; with which we have communion, are the things then presented by this Feast,—the sure ground of rest, the rest which remaineth to the people of God: this of Christ as in the world; we know him such here.

At v. 9 a new ordinance begins, which continues to v. 23—the connection of Christ as risen and presented before the Lord in resurrection, and the Church—that is, properly, the Jewish remnant, connected with him (the Gentile adoption being another thing, though abundantly shown in Scripture, there being neither Jew nor Gentile in the full result), but here confined to resurrection.

On the morrow after the Sabbath, the unbroken sheaf of first-fruits was waved before the Lord. On the first day of the week the Lord Jesus, not having seen corruption, rose from the dead, became the first-fruits of them that slept. Thus, as well as of the Passover, we have in this case the literal, and authenticated fulfillment of the type given. On the same day a lamb for a burnt-offering and a meat offering was offered to the Lord. I must shortly digress here with regard to the offering, the use of which will appear also in the subsequent part of the ordinance we are now treating of. It will be seen (v. 19), that with the first-fruits of the feast of weeks, a sin-offering also was offered, and a peace-offering, but not with the sheaf of first-fruits, typical of Christ's resurrection, on which the Church and Jews rest for acceptance, as it is written (v. 11), "To be accepted for you."

The offerings recorded in the book of Leviticus, (into the details of which, with the Lord's permission, we may enter on some other opportunity,) were these: —The Burnt-offering, the Meat-offering, the Peace-offering, the Sin-offering, and the Trespass-offering, and in this order. The first two present Christ offering himself spotless and perfect to God; the next, the communion of the worshipper in it, and with God by it; the two latter the necessity of the worshipper, as a sinner before God, borne for him by the victim vicariously substituted for him, and treated consequently as himself, under and responsible for the sin thus taken upon it. These are very distinct things in their character, and all true of the death and offering of Jesus.

The Burnt-offering was the complete surrender of life, on which all hung, and this not by virtue of imputed transgression, but his own offering of himself; not an imposed necessity, but of his own voluntary will, as in John 10 “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.” Now the whole life of Jesus was on this principle, his death was the full accomplishment and exhibition of it: proved all the rest, “He gave himself for us.” Of this, i.e., his giving himself, describing him especially as the Son of God, the gospel of John is the especial witness: I speak merely as refers to this subject. There is, besides the quoted passages, no garden of Gethsemane, but, “Arise, let us go hence.” “I am he,” and “they went backward, and fell to the ground.” “If ye seek me, let these go their way;” that the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, “Of them which thou hast given me, I have lost none,” even them who all forsook him and fled. There was no “My God I my God! why hast thou forsaken me?” not merely ἐξέπνευσεν, he expired, but, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit;” and having so said, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, he gave up his spirit, or the ghost.

Here, then, we have the burnt sacrifice offered to the very utmost of his own voluntary will, at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation. It was always true in principle, “his meat was to do the will of him that sent him;” “but it was wrought to the full effort when the blessed Master and Lord, the free Lord of all, gave up his spirit to the Father. This sacrifice was an offering made by fire, a sweet savor to the Lord. This was not said of the Sin-offering, as such. The fat, to connect it with burnt-offering in principle, for both were one in Christ, was burnt on the altar, and this was of a sweet savor; but the offering in its differential character was not an offering made by fire, nor of a sweet savor to the Lord. This the Meat-offering was, however, as well as the Burnt-offering—one being, it appears to me, the complete offering of the life, the other of all the natural faculties of the Lord as man, which, being perfect as his will, he was in them all an offering made by fire, a sweet savor to the Lord. The Peace-offering was, as far as the fat burnt upon the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet savor to the Lord; then the offerers feasted on the flesh, and being the communion of the worshippers, evil was mixed in them, and they were to offer leavened bread therewith. On the Sin-offering sins were confessed; it was burnt without the camp as a vile thing, not an offering made by fire—no sweet savor. It was the vicarious substitute for offenses, bearing them on its head and in its body, made sin for the sinner, vile, and treated as such.

With the offering, therefore, of the sheaf of first-fruits, there was no Sin-offering, no Peace-offering, but only accompanying this presenting of Christ to God, waved before him as risen uncorrupted, the witness of the perfectness of that self-sacrifice in which Jesus had offered himself living and dying to God—his own perfect offering of himself. As to leaven, there could be no question of it; the seed sown, and the first risen sheaf, were alike by their nature free from any portion or partaking in it. With this the Church is connected, on this it is built; indeed, all hope, I say, upon the resurrection. Sin and death have entered, resurrection is the only way out of it. One alone could provide a spotless sacrifice which should bring others out of it. Resurrection was the witness, the power of the Church’s acceptance; for its sins, which Jesus, as representing it, had borne in his own body on the tree, were gone, discharged. He rose free from them all in every sense. “He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification,” therefore we have peace. Resurrection was also the spring, and source, and character of its life, as well as the power in

which Jesus exercised all the functions in which he secured “the sure mercies of David” to the Jew, and glory by a continuous priesthood for the Church—the sinner called by grace. The Church is quickened together with him, being forgiven all trespasses.

But connected with this, in the communicating energy by which it and all resulting from it, is enjoyed, is the gift of the Holy Ghost answering to the gift of the law after redemption from Egypt.

Accordingly, on the morrow after the seventh sabbath, after the former offering of first-fruits (called hence the day of Pentecost), the associate feast was introduced, a new meat-offering was to be offered, the feast of first-fruits. “Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals, they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, they are the first-fruits unto the Lord.” These, it is to be remarked, were to be baked with leaven. The force of this in such case may be seen. (1 Corinthians 5:8.) This leaven mixed with the cakes of first-fruits is spoken of also in the direction as to the meat-offering.

(Leviticus 2) “No meat-offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven, for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire.” As for the oblation of the first-fruits, “Ye shall offer them and, indeed, the whole of the epistle). And I say necessary, both from its revelation of the mystery, as stated in the passages, and from the Lord’s word in John 20:17, rejecting the acknowledgment of him in worship by the Jew, as seen in resurrection, until the accomplishment of his glory in ascension—the heavens receiving him till the times of the restitution of all things; and, therefore, Peter, in preaching upon the gift of the Holy Ghost here typified, says, “He being by the right hand of God exalted, had shed forth this which ye see and hear.” But these feasts being in themselves expressions of what took effect upon earth as being to the Jews, though Gentiles might be brought in, does not enter thus within the veil, though the waving before the Lord expresses the presenting to him in a general sense. This was necessary for all.

Unto the Lord, but they shall not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savor.

Now, of this subsidiary feast to the resurrection-sheaf, we have also the fulfillment historically afforded in Scripture, the history of “the day of Pentecost fully come” is too well known to need the proof of its application. By this the Church was first formally gathered; and though the operations of the Spirit were continued in gathering even till now, still they partook of the same character. “Of his own will begat he them with the word of truth, that they may be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.”

As, then, he had Christ sacrificed as the Passover, and raised and waved as the sheaf of first-fruits uncorrupted to God, and the burnt sacrifice and meat-offering in which was no leaven offered therewith, so we have here, consequent thereon, and connected therewith, the quickening, gathering operation of the Holy Ghost, but the cake which it made the first-fruits of the creature mixed with leaven. There was still in the work which it produced other besides itself, leaven was there; consequently, though offered to the Lord, it could not be burnt on the altar for a sweet savor. Here, then, we have the essential difference between the Church and Christ. The one in all its parts perfect, and in his offering a sweet savor made by fire, unleavened beauty and perfectness, and fit and able to be presented to God in the holiness of his judgment; the other under the operation of the Spirit, offered indeed to the Lord, but let it be ever so blessed, leaven, the leaven

of malice and wickedness still there, and incapable of being presented as a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

Such, then, is the character of the Church still, as presented in itself to God. The fruits of the Spirit in it may be most pleasant to the Lord, and are so, and of a sweet savor; the flesh may be subdued and kept down, and these blessed fruits, against which there is no law, most pleasant to God as the offspring in us of the seed of his grace glorifying him, the rather, as produced in such a soil, but as presented in itself to God still such. But for this there was also characteristic provision: in verses 19, 20, we find a sin-offering offered, waved with the leavened cakes; and as the offering of Christ was in its own purity, and could be a sweet savor, so this was accepted through that which accompanied it—the sin-offering which met, as it were, and supplied the defect of them, was waxen. There was also a peace-offering, because there the joy and communion into which the Church was brought by the Spirit.

The whole of this dispensation rests under the character of this feast; the Passover and unleavened bread is connected with the rest; the sheaf of first fruit, with its suited offerings of perfectness, and the leavened cake consequent upon it, with its called—for offering of sin-bearing, and resulting offering of communion, still characterized by accompanying leaven. (Leviticus 7:13.) The work of Christ for rest, and the gathering and state of the Church met by the sin offering, are brought into clear and distinct light; nor does this dispensation pass beyond these things.

Next, we find allusion to the harvest, but it is not actually treated of. It embraced heavenly things, the wheat, in that Christ was rejected, risen, and glorified, was to be gathered into his barn. It passed beyond earthly things, for he had. The whole condition and circumstances of the Church, though under the energy of God's Spirit brought out on earth, did not belong to them; it was a leavened cake still. The harvest was properly associated with the waved sheaf—with resurrection; it is passed by, because the risen Church would be associated with Christ in heavenly glory. But there is allusion to it; no feast nor part of a feast, but a fact connected with it. The harvest did not, and in God's purpose was not meant to clear the field. The corners were unreaped, the gleanings ungathered. There was left in the field by the harvest still that which, though not gathered into the barn, was wheat; and of this only is such a thing spoken. We have nothing to do with tares here. Hereupon we return to the course of earthly things. Long months had passed since the purpose of God had begun to work; and long months ere the full time came round, after the unnoticed period of heavenly things, for returning to purposes properly earthly.

The first fruits characterizing the whole period, and only noticing, as to the harvest, that it did not clear the field.

The 23rd verse of the chapter introduces, as accompanying the ushering in of the seventh month, a holy convocation, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a day of joy and holiday. The Lord was called to mind in it. Such is the character of this feast—it was a memorial. When the moon began afresh to receive its new light from the sun, yet feeble and heretofore waxed dim; when the other thoughts had passed away, the Lord's memorial takes effect. The trumpets were blown at other times, for a memorial to be remembered before the Lord. Now it was the feast of remembrance—the trumpets characterized the very object of the feast; only it was upon the re-appearance of the moon, not the sun of righteousness. It had hitherto eclipsed the moon, yet now from it this, renewed, should receive its light; gradually had it waned to be hidden in his

splendor, now emerging from it, risen in his light reflected—forgotten in it, to man’s judgment, at least. The trumpet is blown in the new moon, on the solemn feast-day. (Psalms 81:3; Isaiah 51) For if a woman should forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the fruit of her womb, yet if to man forgotten, “she was graven on the palms of his hands, who fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching, of his understanding.” “If he had spoken against them, he earnestly remembered them still.” “His servants were now to think upon her stones.” But the summons was public and loud, though in the new moon; it demanded the attention of the isles—yea, all the inhabitants of the world, and dwellers upon earth, when he blew a trumpet. The circumstances and interpretation of that 18th chapter of Isaiah 1 do not enter into, but it marks the connection of the period.

The great public summons being now given, brings on the day of atonement for Israel; that is, their coming in personal humiliation under it, and this was separative in its character. It was a day for them to afflict their souls, ceasing irrespectively from all worldly employment— “Ye shall do no work.” Whatever soul was not afflicted was to be cut off, and so it will be: we find it in Joel 2; we find their character in Zephaniah 3:12; we find the affliction itself in Zechariah 12 Their acknowledgment in terms of the value of that which made peace for the mourners is in Isaiah 53.\*

(\*Applicable, I need not say, in its value to the Chinch, but spoken in terms by the remnant of the Jews in the latter day.)

These two are yet to come—ordinances for Israel, whose anti-typical accomplishment is yet to be looked for, after the lapse of the period allotted in specific character to the Church, gathered by the Spirit as a waved cake of first-fruits with leaven. The day of blowing of trumpets, and the day of atonement—of humbling, afflicting their souls to Israel was followed in the perfected time of twice seven days, by the great solemn assembly of the feast of Tabernacles, at which all the children of Israel were to appear, “the great congregation.” As to this, there are some remarkable circumstances. This alone, save the feast of Passover once in Deuteronomy 16: 8, with, I believe, a similar purpose, is called a solemn assembly, as far as I am aware, or day of restraint. It was the great final feast of the year. It was at this feast that Solomon’s temple was dedicated, when “the king turned his face and blessed the whole congregation of Israel;” when the blessed Lord God of Israel had with his hands fulfilled that which he had spoken with his mouth to his father David, and the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God. It was at this feast that the children of Israel found themselves assembled under Nehemiah, on their restoration from Babylon to their own land, after the captivity. It was at this feast that the brethren of Jesus proposed that he should show himself to the world; but his time was not yet come, though their time was always ready; and he went not up (then) unto the feast. It was the final assembly of the whole congregation of Israel. There was, however, another remarkable circumstance in the feast of Tabernacles—there was an eighth day, or, as we should say, a first day of the week, which was not the case with the other feasts. This is noticed, after the regular history of the feasts which we have been tracing, in verse 39; again, and in connection with another feature, that it was after the gathering in the fruit of the land. All born Israelites, moreover, we are told in this second notice of it, were to dwell in booths, in witness that they had been made to dwell as pilgrims in booths under the Lord’s shadow, as it were in a houseless, homeless wilderness. It was the feast of ingathering. Now, this eighth day, as we observed, is the first day of the week—the resurrection-day; the whole seven days they were to rejoice before the Lord: such was their portion in their rest, but the eighth day was the solemn

assembly, “the great day of the feast.” This surely marks the connection and introduction, the extraordinary connection of the resurrection Church, with the rest that remained to the people of God. Our Lord’s reference to this “great day of the feast” marks and confirms—indeed, establishes this. Upon the last day, that great day of the feast, at which, though typically present, he declared he would not show himself then to the world, he cried and said, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his belly shall flow, as the Scripture hath said, rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit which they that believed on him should receive.”

In the first place, there is the admission of the Gentiles here. “If any man thirst;” and there is the gift of the Holy Ghost, the witness of heavenly things, whence flowed the refreshing streams of divine knowledge and grace, concerning that which was verified in the ascension where Jesus was glorified, of which it was the witness as coming from it. This is doubtless in allusion to the rock in the wilderness, on their coming out of which into the land, they were to keep the feast of the Tabernacles. Jesus was not yet manifest to the world, nor would he be till he came in glory. In the meanwhile, his thirsting saints would be in the wilderness, “in a barren and dry land, where no water was,” waiting to see the glory which would give them rest—that first day of the new and everlasting week, when Jesus should appear. But then as to each, out of his belly would be a river of living waters; his own soul, through the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, would be the channel of boundless refreshment; each one that once thirsted would be the source of refreshment to others. It was not merely he was born of the Spirit; it was not Merely that it dwelt in him, as a well springing up in him unto everlasting life; but it should be from his soul a river flowing forth of spiritual, heavenly things, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. “Out of his belly,” because it was not merely as to the believer a conferred gift, the lowest way in which it would be present—for Jesus might still say, “I never knew you,”—but from the planting and reforming the affections of his soul, capacitating them, through the energy of the Spirit, for the communicative possession and enjoyment, as well as statement, of all these heavenly joys, which should be accomplished when, in the great eighth day of the feast, Jesus, long hidden, and doing things secretly, should show himself to the world. This, then, embraces what we are accustomed to call the Gentile Church—the glorified Church; of which the indwelling Spirit, in its blessing of all power in the individual soul, had been marked by the Lord as the sign in the wilderness; not merely a rock out of which for all, but out of his belly who believed, should flow rivers of living water. Thus, the force of the eighth day is made very distinctly apparent.

The feast of the ingathering properly embraced Israel—the people of God, restored out of the wilderness to the place of God’s rest, to rejoice there, gathered back out of all lands. But it involves with it another scene, dimly marked and given room for, in which indeed Israel and the world too had resulting blessing, but which flowed (as the eye of the believer filled with the Spirit is opened to see) from higher sources, though it might refresh the gladdened plains below—exhaustless, boundless sources of heaven—caught supplies. When to the desires, thus quickened and thus exalted, the Lord should “pour forth his fullness; and the Lord should hear the heavens, and the heavens should hear the earth, and the earth should hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel.” God would sow her unto him in the earth, and have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy, and say to them on whom Lo-ammi had been written, “Thou art my people;” and they shall say, “Thou art my God;” a time when the mountains, catching the full rain of blessings from above, shall but distribute them by the valleys which the Lord has formed; and the

wide scene beneath shall be refreshed by goodness and blessing, which its own far distant lowness would have never reached or drawn? Blessed shall be that day, a full, unhindered, united time of joy, when all long severed, never properly one in glory (knit only in the misery which he, who had defiled the heavens, and deceived and ruined man upon the earth, had brought in), brought into one fullness in order, and united, and suited blessing, in connection with a far higher, even the highest infinite fullness through him who, being Lord from heaven, descended into the lower parts of the earth, that he might fill all things (gathered together in one, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, in him; in whom we have received all inheritance), shall be in him, to the praise of his glory; shall minister in perfect unison of various reflective glory to the perfectness of his love, whose all the glory is. And the blood of the Lamb, through which it has been accomplished, shall be seen in all its glory, in all its value. They shall declare its excellency in marveling thankfulness forever. It hath cleansed and redeemed us for communion with the Highest, and purged the defiled inheritance—the now accomplished rest of God in love and peace.

## The Land I Love

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My heart is onward bounding,  
Home to the land I love;  
Its distant vales and fountains  
My wishful passions move.  
Fain would my thirsting spirit  
Its living freshness breathe,  
And wearied soul find resting  
Its hallowed shades beneath.  
No soil of nature's evil,  
No touch of man's rude hand,  
Shall e'er disturb around us  
That bright and blissful land.  
The charms that woo the senses  
Shall be as bright as fair;  
For all, while breathing round us,  
Shall tell of JESUS there.  
What light, when all its beaming  
Shall own HIM as the Sun!  
What music, when its breathing  
Shall bear HIS name along;  
No pause, no change of pleasure,  
No cloud to dim our view;  
The draft that lulls our thirsting  
Shall wake our thirst anew.

J. G. B.

## The Vessel

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“Filled in all the fullness of God.”—Ephesians 3: 19.

“ We learn in suffering what we teach in song.”

“A few more breathings in this dull and oppressive element, then all will be health and buoyancy, strength and gladness, purity and peace.”

Oh, is it come—the sweet and blessed calm,

Foreseen and hoped for through those darksome years

Of anguish and of dread? Here, here at last,

I, a deep vessel in the shoreless sea

Of thine own fullness, O eternal God!

Filled in that fullness, find my prayers, my hopes,

All, all fulfilled, and nothing more to crave.

The bright reality, the thing itself,

Transcends all thought, eclipses every hope;

Dwelling in God, by God indwelt, I know

Love in its fullness; life to me is bliss.

All, all within, beneath, around, above,

Speak but of Thee, and tell me what. I am—

The happiest of the happy! O thou peerless One!

Great God revealed in flesh, the living link

‘Twixt Godhead and my soul! be thine the praise,

The loving worship of a loving heart

Rich in Thyself; for oh! however filled,

Howe’er exalted, holy, undefiled,

Whatever wealth of blessedness is mine,

What am I, Lord? an emptiness, a nothing.

Thou art my boast, in whom all fullness dwells

Of the great Godhead, Thou whose name I bear,  
Whose life is mine, whose glory and whose bliss,  
All, all are mine.

E. D.

## Proofs from Scripture of the Pre-Millennial Advent

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MY DEAR BROTHER,—The desire you have evinced to inquire impartially into the subject of our Lord's second advent, combined with the truly Christian kindness and courtesy you have invariably manifested in our recent conversations on this subject, emboldens me to address you thus, in the hope that, by the Lord's blessing, we may further prosecute the inquiry in such a manner, as ultimately to see eye to eye; and not only so, but likewise to see what the mind of God on the subject. really is. Unity of judgment, to be desirable, must be unity in the truth. Diversity of sentiment is better than unity in error.

Better one have the truth than neither; best of all, for all to see alike by all seeing aright. Never may we forget, however, that sweet and reconciling word in Philippians 3:15,16: "Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in anything we be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Practical union of heart and life, as far as we are agreed, with patient forbearance of one another wherein we differ, is the course in which we may look to God to reveal to any of us that of us that of which we are ignorant. It is His to reveal His own truth to His own children; still, brotherly intercourse is what He often uses for this end. O that we and all God's children might feel that we have no end to gain but to glorify Him by learning and doing His blessed will; and would that we all had more confidence in one another, as heirs together of the grace of life-members of the same family of love-learners in the same school of holy, gracious discipline and instruction!

Our last conversation was on the parables in Matthew 13, more particularly on that of the wheat and tares. As to the interpretation of that parable, or rather, the sense in which we are to understand our Lord's interpretation of it, we were agreed in the following particulars: First, —That the parable represents the state of things in the present dispensation.

Secondly, —That good and evil, the wheat and the tares, continue to be mixed together to the end of this present period or dispensation.

Thirdly, —That the harvest is the end of this age, period, or dispensation.

Fourthly, —That the period which follows, when the Son of man has gathered out of his kingdom all that offends, and those which do iniquity, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun, is the millennium, that period of universal holiness and happiness on the earth which all Christians are expecting.

Fifthly, —That the offenders are gathered out at the harvest and cast into a furnace of fire, and that this terrible judgment on the wicked is executed at that crisis by the instrumentality of the angels.

If I remember aright, you distinctly stated your concurrence in the above interpretation of the passage, but you objected to it as a proof of the pre-millennial advent, that the advent is not mentioned in the passage. Had time permitted, I should have rejoiced to have gone with you into

the consideration of several passages which indisputably refer to and describe the same era or crisis as in this parable is termed “the harvest,” and in which it is distinctly stated that the advent or coming of Christ will then take place. Lack of time hindered this at our last interview; and as it may be that another may not take place soon, I am desirous in this communication to draw your attention to this point.

I would first explain a little the kind of proof which is gathered from thus comparing one part of Scripture with another. No one passage of Scripture contains all that is taught in Scripture. If anyone verse, chapter, or even book of Scripture, contained all that is revealed in Scripture, the rest—that is, all the other verses, chapters, and books of Scripture—would be superfluous; and that, I am sure, you would be very far from saying. Indeed, no one could say this who believes the Scriptures to be the word of God. So, as to any given subject treated of in the Scriptures. It is not usually in any one passage of the Word that we can learn everything that relates to the subject. On most topics of importance, we have instruction in many different passages; one affording light on one part of the subject, another especially treating of some other branch of it; and yet there must be marks of identity between the passages as to their general subject, or else we could never understand that they are different branches of the same theme, and therefore could not receive from them the instruction they contain. To illustrate this. We have not one account only, but four accounts of the crucifixion of Christ. Had these accounts been perfectly identical as to all their details, three of them would have been superfluous, except indeed as distinct testimonies to the fact; though, even in this light, they would have been of little value, but for their characteristic differences in detail and yet, if there had not been marks which infallibly identify them as to their general subject, they would have been equally unavailing. Nay, they would have tended to mislead; for we might have supposed that they spoke of different persons, or of different eras in the life of the same person. But as it is, in the provident wisdom and goodness of God, they have enough in common to show that it is the same event, viz. the crucifixion of Christ, which they narrate to us; and yet they differ so much in detail, that one informs us of circumstances in that event of which the others had left us ignorant. And it is only by a careful comparison of all, that we can learn all the circumstances of that solemn and important crisis in the history of our Redeemer. Thus, if I open John 18:6-8, I find a fact stated which is recorded by none of the other evangelists. If someone (acknowledging, of course, the authority of Scripture, and therefore of all the four Gospels) should dispute this fact, and allege that Matthew says nothing of it, and Mark says nothing of it, and Luke says nothing of it, how should I have to answer him? Clearly, by proving to him that John is speaking of the same blessed Person, and of the same solemn period in his history, and that he states it. I should have to remind him of the features common to all the four narratives, which identify them as to their general subject; —they all speak of the same persons, Jesus, his disciples, his betrayer, and the officers and others into whose hands he is betrayed. They all lay the scene in the same place, the garden of Gethsemane.

They all speak of the same period, that immediately succeeding his conversation with the disciples during and after supper, and immediately preceding his examination before the high priest. They all relate other circumstances which occurred to those persons in the place and at the time specified, such as the cutting off the ear of the high priest’s servant by Simon Peter. Can anyone doubt, who considers these things, that the general subject of John’s narrative is the same as that of the other evangelists? And if so, it proves, that when John tells us that the officers went

backward and fell to the ground, this circumstance did actually occur at that time, in that place, to those persons; and it does not in the least invalidate this proof to say that the other evangelists do not record the circumstance. I give this illustration as a very simple one, and yet most conclusive as to our title, nay, our duty, to compare Scripture with Scripture; and where the same subject is treated of in different passages, to receive the testimony of each, not only to corroborate the rest, but also to gather from one those details of instruction which are not afforded in another. I have not selected the above example as the best, but it was the first that occurred to my mind, and I think you will yourself allow that it is sufficient.

It may be said that great caution is needed in examining Scripture thus. This is admitted at once; but it is no reason for neglecting to search the Scriptures in this manner. We do need the utmost self-diffidence in searching and handling the Word of God; we need, too, the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit; but, depending on that light and guidance, and sincerely distrusting ourselves, we have every encouragement to expect that we shall be kept from the paths of error, and be led into all truth.

Let due care be taken that the passages referred to are really identical as to their general subject. Let them be thoroughly and patiently examined, before we conclude that this is the case; but, if they have so much in common as to put this beyond doubt, then let us not fear to regard the details of one as equally belonging to the subject, with all that is contained in the others.

As to the passages I have now to bring forward, I have two things to prove. First, that they relate to the same subject as the concluding part of the parable of the wheat and tares. And, secondly, that they state that the Lord will come in connection with what is there termed “the harvest.”

How is it to be determined that any other passage speaks of the period termed in this parable “the harvest?” There can be but one way of determining this; that is, to ascertain what distinguishes “the harvest” in this parable, and then inquire whether the marks by which it is distinguished are to be found in the passages in question. Of course, when I speak of its distinguishing marks, I mean those which essentially distinguish it from everything besides, and not any minor circumstance. If these be found in another passage, though some of the minor circumstances be wanting, we should certainly be authorized in concluding that the subject treated of in both passages is the same.

Does not the following definition of “the harvest” embrace all that essentially distinguishes it from everything besides? It is that solemn act of judgment by which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other at the close of the present mixed state of things, and at the commencement of the millennium. There are three distinguishing marks of “the harvest.”

1. It is at the end of this present age in which the wheat and the tares grow together. “The harvest is the end of the age.” So shall it be in the end of this age.
2. It is at the commencement of the millennium—the period of universal holiness and happiness on the earth. “Then”—when all things are gathered out of the kingdom that offend, and they which do iniquity—” then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”
3. It is the time at which the righteous and the wicked are separated from each other by destroying judgment on the wicked. “As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be

in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

In whatever passage of Holy Scripture we find these three things, there we find “the harvest.” There cannot be more than one end or close of the present age; there cannot be more than one commencement of the millennial period. And the judgment which separates the wicked from the righteous at the close of the present age and introduction of the millennium is “the harvest.”

One word more before quoting the passages we are to consider. As to those quoted from the Old Testament, we must not expect to find in them what is the special subject of Matthew 13, viz., “the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” It is during “this age” that these mysteries have their existence; and “the end of the age” is a great public crisis spoken of in the Old Testament as well as the New. But in the Old Testament it is spoken of more with respect to Jews and Gentiles, than with respect to true and false professors of Christianity. In Matthew 13, the wheat represents true Christians—the tares, false professors. The great fact is, that they grow together till the end of the age, i.e., till “the harvest.” Evil exists till “the harvest.” But it exists in other ways as well as the mixture of false professors with true Christians. It exists in the unbelief and sufferings of God’s ancient people Israel, and also in the oppression of that people by the Gentiles. But “the harvest” puts an end to ‘all evil of all kinds. It is then that all things which offend, and all which do iniquity, are gathered out and destroyed. And in many passages, both in the Old Testament and New, is this harvest spoken of, this judgment which terminates the present mixed state, and introduces millennial blessedness. And in those which I shall now adduce, it is stated that at that time the Lord will come.

1. Let us look at Isaiah 26:20; 27: 6. Here we have a fearful, desolating judgment, “to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity,” when “the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more conceal her slain.” This judgment is a separating or discriminating judgment between the righteous and the wicked; for while the wicked are thus punished and overthrown, to the righteous it is said, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself; as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past.” This solemn judgment, which thus severs the righteous from the wicked, is at the commencement of the millennium. “In that day the Lord, with his sore, and great, and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.” Now, whatever may be said of the dragon that is in the sea, and which is slain, we know who the crooked, piercing serpent is. Genesis 3:1, 2 Corinthians 11:3, and Revelation 12:9, make that plain enough. And we all know too that it is at the commencement of the millennium that Satan, that old, crooked, piercing serpent, is punished by being bound and cast into the bottomless pit. (Revelation 20:1-2.) So that this judgment is in the day when Satan is bound, which we are all agreed is at the commencement of the millennium. But there is further evidence in the passage that this judgment is succeeded by the millennial period; for it is said, “He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.” Verses 12 and 13 also connect the whole with the restoration of the children of Israel, “who shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem.”

We have, then, in this passage a terrible judgment on the wicked; the righteous preserved from that judgment; and consequent upon it, "in that day," the punishment of Satan, the restoration of Israel, and Israel caused to blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit; in other words, the millennium. The passage does not say that all this is at the end of this age, of the present mixed state of things; but then, a moment's consideration will satisfy any one, that as day cannot begin without the ending or passing away of the night, so the millennium, or state of universal blessedness, cannot begin without the present mixed state of good and evil coming to a close. So that we have all the marks of "the harvest" expressed in this passage, excellent one, and that one evidently and necessarily implied. And what else have we? The coming of the Lord. "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." If it should be said that this is figurative, I ask for the evidence of this. Should it be urged that the Lord is everywhere, and everywhere alike, and that therefore it must be a figure to say that "the Lord cometh out of his place," my answer is, that the objection proves just the contrary of what it is urged to prove. As God, the Lord is omnipresent, and so to him in that sense all places are alike; he fills both heaven and earth. But the Lord Jesus Christ is man as well as God. And it is specially as "the Son of man" that he is spoken of in many passages, with respect to his second coming. And is there not a place where the glorified humanity of Christ now dwells? And will he not come out of this place whenever he comes to judgment, whether at the commencement of the millennium or at its close? I conclude then, from the very language employed; that the coming here spoken of is a real personal coming, a leaving one "place" and coming to another; and the whole context proves that it is at the time of "the harvest," at the close of the present age and the introduction of the millennial period, that this coming takes place.

2. Let us now turn to Isaiah 59:16,60 If you glance at chap. 59, down to verse 16, you will see that it describes an evil state of 'things? I have no doubt myself that it is the Jewish nation during this their long dispersion that is thus described: but the passage is only too applicable to a vast number of professing Christians. We are all agreed, however, that evil continues up to "the harvest." So we are taught here. In verse 15, the Lord is displeased because there is no judgment. In verses 16, 17, he undertakes the work himself in the garments of vengeance. In verse 18 we read, "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence." And is this action of his in judgment and vengeance at the time of "the harvest?" Let us see whether the distinguishing marks of that crisis are not found here. The first we have already seen. It is at the close of the period during which evil is permitted to remain. But is it followed by the millennium? Let us examine. What says verse 19, the verse immediately following the one last quoted? "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." And the whole of chap. 60 follows on in the same connection, and it has long been known to the Church as one of the most magnificent predictions of millennial blessedness to be found in the Word of God. Thus, have we the three distinguishing marks of "the harvest." It is at the end of this age. It is at the commencement of the millennium. It is a desolating judgment inflicted at that time on the enemies of God. "According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the sun." But have we anything of the advent here? Yes, for it immediately follows: "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." The apostle

quotes this passage in Romans 11 And with what period does he connect it? Any past period? No; but with the future conversion of the Jewish nation. Is that at the consummation of all things? No; all agree that it is at the commencement of millennial blessedness. So that in this passage, applied and interpreted by the apostle in Romans 11, we have a plain proof that the advent of our Lord is at the time of "the harvest"—that it is in connection with the judgments which close the present period, in which good and evil are mixed together, and which introduce the period of universal holiness and joy.

36. Let us now turn to Isaiah 66 The fifth verse shows us that the events spoken of are at the end of that state of things in which the righteous and the wicked, good and evil, are mixed together. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." The result of this appearing is the thorough separation of the righteous and the wicked. "The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies." (Verse 14.) It is by terrible judgments on the wicked that God thus— discriminates between them and the righteous; "for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh; and the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Verse 16.) This terrible judgment, which thus concludes the present state or age, is also introductory to the millennium. (See from verses 20 to 23.) And have we not also in this passage a most distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord? of his coming, too, in connection with this judgment, which terminates the present and introduces the millennial age? Not only are we told in the verse already quoted, "He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed," but in verse 15 we read, "For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire." You may say perhaps, as has been said, that "any signal and evident interposition of Christ, as governor of the world, for the accomplishment of his purposes, is called his coming, and his day;" and you may thus seek to evade the force of all the passages, however plain, which may be brought to prove the pre-millennial advent. But ought we not to beware, dear brother, how we thus set aside the plain and evident sense of Scripture? Let me ask you, if the coming of the Lord here spoken of is not a real personal coming, where is there a passage which can prove a real personal coming at any time? Take the passages uniformly brought to prove it, and place this, and others like this, beside them, and say whether the one be not as plain and literal as the other. I will place, on one side, two passages universally understood to refer to the real advent of Christ, and which, you would say, will be at the consummation of all things. On the other side I will place the passage we are now considering, and another of like import, and standing in a similar connection, and you shall judge yourself whether, if the one be figurative, the other is not also—whether, if the one be literal, the other is not so likewise.

All Christians are agreed, that the following scriptures. speak of the actual personal coming of Christ to judgment: And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.)

Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly

committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. (Jude 14,15.)

The following passages are proved, by their contexts, to be at the harvest—the end of the present, and the commencement of the millennial age: The hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. (Isaiah 66:14,15.)

Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.... And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. (Zechariah 14:3-5.)

Consider these passages, dear brother, and say, if these in the one column can be proved to be mere figures, whether those in the other are not mere figures also. And if all these be figures, where can you find a passage which speaks of a personal advent of Christ at all? Is the Lord Jesus to be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire, according to 2 Thessalonians 1? The passage in Isaiah 66 declares that the Lord will come with fire. Is the Lord Jesus to be attended by his mighty angels, in 2 Thessalonians 1? In Isaiah 66 he comes with his chariots, like a whirlwind. And we are told, in Psalms 68:17, that “the chariots of God are twenty thousand, thousands of angels.” Do we read in 2 Thessalonians 1,

“To you who are troubled, rest with us?” In Isaiah 66 we are told that “the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants;” and, in a former verse, “he shall appear to your joy.” Does he come, in 2 Thessalonians 1, to take vengeance on them that know not God? In Isaiah 66 he makes known his indignation toward his enemies, and renders his anger with fury. Does he, according to 2 Thessalonians 1, punish the wicked with everlasting destruction? In Isaiah 66 he renders his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. And in the last verse of that chapter, after describing the state of universal blessedness which is to succeed this terrible judgment, after speaking of all flesh coming to worship before the Lord, it is said, “And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.” These are the words employed by our Lord himself to set forth the eternity of the punishment of the wicked. So as to the other two passages. Does the prophecy of our Lord’s second advent, recorded by Jude, speak of his coming with ten thousands of his saints? And all acknowledge this to be his real, personal advent. We read, in Zechariah 14, “The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” And in this passage the very spot of earth on which he shall stand is specified; the very place where the angels said to his disciples, “Why stand ye here 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.” This very place is here named as that on which he shall again appear on the earth. “His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives.” And how anyone who reverences the Word of God can attentively read this chapter, and not see that the judgment therein described is identical with that termed “the harvest” in Matthew 13, I cannot tell.

4. But let us examine this chapter (Zechariah 14), and see whether the three marks by which “the harvest” is distinguished are not to be found in it. Is it not at the end of the present age or period, during which the wheat and the tares grow together, the period in which good and evil, the

righteous and the wicked, are mixed together? Verses 7-9 of the preceding chapter, which are evidently connected with this, treat of a period commencing with that all-important transaction in which the sword of Jehovah's justice awoke against the man who is Jehovah's fellow, in which, the Shepherd being smitten, the sheep were scattered. It speaks of fearful sufferings on the part of the guilty nation who were the instruments of his death, and of a remnant being brought through the fire. "It shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein." Chapter 14 opens with the circumstances of this remnant, this third part, just prior to their deliverance. "Behold, I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity; and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Here I pause to make two remarks. 1. This cannot be the assault of Gog and Magog on the beloved city (in Revelation 20), just prior to the consummation of all things. There is not a word there of the city being taken; but as soon as the nations of the earth came up against the camp of the saints and the beloved city, fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys them all. Besides, the Gog and Magog of Revelation 20 make their assault after the loosing of Satan at the end of the millennium. The conflict here, in Zechariah 14, is, as we shall see, introductory to the millennium. 2. Much less can it be any past event that is foretold in Zechariah 14. The only past event which any have supposed to be indicated by it, is the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. I would put it to any simple-minded Christian, who, when he reads God's Word, trusts in God to teach him by his Spirit what it means, whether this passage can possibly be made to mean the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? 1. It is well known, that when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the city was completely demolished: a plow was passed over the foundations, and the miserable residue of the Jews, who were spared from the sword, went all of them into captivity. But Zechariah 14 speaks of a siege of Jerusalem, in which the city shall be taken indeed, and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, but the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the residue, that is, the other half, shall not be cut off from the city. Was this the case, I ask, at the destruction of Jerusalem, by Titus? 2. When Jerusalem was taken and pillaged and destroyed by the Romans, the victors returned in unmolested triumph to Rome, and the Roman empire continued to flourish for centuries afterward. But in Zechariah 14 all nations are gathered against Jerusalem to battle: the city is taken, half of the inhabitants go into captivity, and the other half are not cut off from the city; and "then" —, while half of the inhabitants remain in the city," then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." Did this occur to the Romans at the destruction of Jerusalem? In verses 12-15, where we have a more detailed account of the judgment on those nations, what do we read? "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass, that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance. And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague." Was all this fulfilled on the Roman armies which destroyed Jerusalem? Did they, and their horses, and camels, perish by this plague? Did their flesh consume away from their

bones, and their eyes from their sockets, and their tongues from their mouths? Were the Jews also instrumental in destroying the Roman armies, after those armies had completely vanquished them, and reduced their city to ashes? "Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem." In chapter 12., where the same events are unquestionably treated of, we read: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all people round about, when they shall be in the siege, both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stare for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." (Verses 2, 3.) "In that day will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left; and Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem." (Verse 6.) And if anyone should call in question whether these are the same events as are foretold in chapter 14., the ninth verse is a full answer. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." Compare this with verses 3 and 12 of chapter 14, and I think you can hardly have a doubt that they both treat of the same events. And were all these predictions fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? 3. But again, it is not only said, "Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle;" but also, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley." Now, did this take place at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? It avails nothing to say, that Christ sat and taught his disciples on the mount of Olives. This was forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem. And how could Christ, sitting on the mount of Olives, telling his disciples that Jerusalem should be destroyed, be the same thing as Christ standing on the mount of Olives to fight against those nations who took Jerusalem? Besides, did the mount of Olives cleave in the midst and form a valley, either when Christ sat upon it teaching his disciples, or at the destruction of Jerusalem forty years afterward? Has this disruption ever taken place to this day? 4. Did the Lord my God come, and all the saints with him, at the destruction of Jerusalem? The literal coming of Christ in humiliation was seventy years prior to this event. And, should it still be said that his coming here is a strong figure of speech, or that it was his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, I ask, in what sense did all his saints come too? Is that a figure likewise? And as to his coming to set up his spiritual kingdom, did he do that at the destruction of Jerusalem? Was not his spiritual kingdom set up long before? At least, so long before as the day of Pentecost? The living waters flowing out of Jerusalem are often explained as the going forth of the gospel from Jerusalem. But was it never till Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans that the living waters flowed out in this sense?

Nay, did they ever, in this sense, flow out of Jerusalem after it was destroyed? 5. Finally, did the millennium commence at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? Has the Lord been King over all the earth since then, and has there ever since been but one Lord, and his name one? (Verse 9.) Was all the land turned to a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem? Has it been lifted up and inhabited in her place, ever since that time, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's wine-presses? (Verse 10.) Have men dwelt in it, and has it been safely inhabited, ever since its destruction by the Romans? Has there been no more utter destruction since then? (Verse 11.) Alas! what else has there been from that day to this? And what is it now? A scene of desolation and ruin, as all bear

witness who have beheld it. And yet to suppose, as some do, that this chapter begins with its destruction by the Romans, and that the remaining predictions find their fulfillment in the course of the present dispensation! Has it been ever since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans that every pot in Jerusalem has been holiness to the Lord, and all they that sacrifice and seethe therein Has there been since that day no more Canaanite in the house of the Lord? (Verse 21.) Alas I my brother, the fulfillment of these predictions is not to be found in the past or present, but in the future.

It is not the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but “the harvest,” the end of this age, that is pointed to in this prophecy— “the harvest,” which ends the prey sent period of evil and of sorrow, and introduces the millennial age, when all the blessed things here foretold shall be actually fulfilled. And if language has any fixed, determinate meaning, we are told in this chapter, that at that time, “the harvest,” the end of this age, the commencement of the millennium, “the Lord my God will come, and all his saints with him.”

5. Let us now turn to Daniel 7, and see if we shall not there also find all the distinguishing marks of the crisis termed “ the harvest,” in Matthew 13, and whether we have not there a distinct prediction of the coming of the Lord. Daniel sees four great beasts, which are interpreted to him as follows, in verse 17: “These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.” The fourth beast, as he describes it in verse 7, “was—dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly... and it had ten horns.” I am not aware that any sober-minded Christians, who have considered these things at all, doubt the general meaning of this to be, that these four beasts represent the same four empires or kingdoms which, in chap. 2, are represented by the image in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream. That the fourth kingdom is that of Rome, and that the ten horns of the beast, like the ten toes of the image, represent the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms or states. But here we read of a little horn who does great things; and the divine interpretation of this, in verses 24, 25, is as follows: “And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most. High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” All who pay any regard to the prophetic scriptures are, I suppose, agreed that this little horn is Antichrist, whether, as some believe, that be Popery, or, as others believe, that Antichrist is a person yet to come. This little horn is Antichrist. And what does the apostle John say? (1 John 2:18.) “Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.” So that the period had commenced in John’s day, of which the distinguishing mark was, that Antichrist should come in it. The great Antichrist had not come, but there were many Antichrists, many enemies similar in principle and working to him, whereby, says the apostle, we know that it is the last time. Just as Paul, speaking of the same subject—the coming of Antichrist—says, The mystery of iniquity cloth already work. And just as, in the parable of the wheat and tares, the tares are sown by the wicked one, they were to grow on till the harvest, thus characterizing the whole period from the moment when they were sown to the harvest, when they are gathered in bundles to be burnt. Well, it is of the close of this period that Daniel 7:26 treats. After speaking of the actings and blasphemies of the little horn that should arise, and of its continuance through a certain specified period, the passage thus proceeds: “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall

take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end.” Can this be anything but “the harvest” in Matthew 13? Is not the judgment here spoken of at the close of the present age or period described by John as the last time, and known to be the last time by this very mark, that in it Antichrist has his existence and reign? And this judgment is to destroy Antichrist. Is it not followed, too, just as “the harvest” in Matthew 13, is by the millennium? Read verse 27: “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” Surely this is language too plain to be mistaken. Even to minute details, there is a most marked parallel between the judgment in this chapter and “the harvest” in Matthew 13. What becomes of the tares in the latter passage? Are they not cast into a furnace of fire, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth? And what becomes of the body of the beast in Daniel 7? “I beheld then because of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld, even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” And what occurs besides, at the time of this judgment? “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” (Verses 13, 14.) This passage is quoted by our Lord himself in Matthew 24:30, and 26: 64. It is evidently referred to by him in Luke 19:12-15.) It is quoted in Revelation 1:7: And in every one of these instances it is his coming that is spoken of.

6. But let us examine Luke 19:11-27 a little more particularly. The three marks by which we have seen that “the harvest” is distinguished from everything else are, that it is at the end of this age, that it is at the commencement of the millennial period, and that a destroying judgment is at that time inflicted’ on the wicked, by which all who offend and do iniquity are gathered out of Christ’s kingdom. Have we not all these marks in the passage before us? Have we not the end of this age or period? The disciples thought that the kingdom of—God was immediately to appear, and our Lord spake a parable to correct this idea: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.” And what occurs during his absence? His servants occupy, some faithfully, others unfaithfully, till he comes; his citizens hate him, and send a message after him, saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us.” Can anything be more. evidently descriptive of the present period, during which the tares and the wheat grow together? What takes place at the close of this period? The unfaithful servant is punished, the faithful are rewarded, and the enemies of Christ, who would not that he should reign over them, are slain. Is not this just what takes place at “the harvest?” And what follows? Clearly the time when the kingdom of God appears, for it was to show what must occur up to that time that the parable was spoken. Yes, the kingdom—not in mystery, as at present, with tares and wheat growing together, but in open manifestation, according to the testimony of Daniel 7, already considered—is what follows upon this judgment. And it is worthy to be observed, that while Daniel 7 gives us the general fact that the saints shall possess this kingdom—not Christ only, but his saints along with him—Luke 19 shows us that the degree of authority and honor which each one shall have in the kingdom is in proportion to the faithfulness with which he now occupies in the Master’s absence. And when is it that the judgment takes place? When is it that the faithful servant is made ruler over ten or five cities, as the case may be? When is it that the enemies are slain? It is when the nobleman returns. It is when Christ descends from heaven with clouds, as all the passages we have considered with

one consent declare. And thus is it indubitably established that the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is at the time of “the harvest”—at the end of this age—at the commencement, not at the close, of the millennium.

7. Many other passages might be brought forward, in addition to those which have been adduced. But let me solicit your attention to one point in the parable of the wheat and tares. You distinctly allowed the other evening, that the kingdom of the Father, in which the righteous shine forth as the sun, is the millennial kingdom. But have you considered the meaning of those words, “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun?” If Scripture is to be the interpreter of Scripture, where must we look for the meaning of this passage, but to such other passages as the following? Matthew 17:2, where we read of the Savior that he “was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun.” Also, Revelation 1:16, where we read of the same blessed person, when he appeared in his glorified body to John in the isle of Patmos, that “his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.” And is it not said, “that when he shall appear, we shall be like him?” (1 John 3:2.) Is it not said, that “as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly?” (1 Corinthians 15:49.) Nay, are we not told that Christ “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?” (Philippians 3:21.) And when is it that we shall thus be changed into the image of our glorified Lord? All Scripture declares, and all Christians agree, that it is when the sleeping saints are raised, and that both the resurrection of those who sleep, and the transformation of those who are alive and remain, take place at the coming of the Lord. “When he shall appear, we shall be like him.” “Every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” (1 Corinthians 15:23.) “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body,” &c. (Philippians 3:20,21.) “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 be ever with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.) And how exactly this harmonizes with Revelation 20:4-6: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again till 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 they shall reign with him a thousand years.” Now simple and conclusive is the testimony of God’s Word, when we allow it to speak for itself, and compare one part of it with another! And who does not see, that if it is in the sense these passages point out that the righteous are to shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (which you allow to be the millennium), then Christ’s coming must be at the commencement of the millennium for it is at his coming, and by his coming, as all allow, that the saints, whether asleep or awake, are changed, and made to resemble in the radiance and incorruptibleness of his glorified body, yours in him, W. T. more passage on this subject which must touch upon, and it will show you that the proof just advanced does not rest—merely upon the sense attached to the Words “shine forth as the sun,” in Matthew 8 no, nor even on the plain statements of Revelation 20 These are certainly sufficient, amply sufficient, to support the

argument based upon them. But turn for a moment to 1 Corinthians 15:51-54: "Behold, 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." Now, let me ask you, where is this saying written, and in what connection does it stand? It is only in one place, and that Isaiah 25:8, that this saying is written. The context proves beyond controversy that the fulfillment of it is in connection with what is called "the harvest," in Matthew 13 Isaiah 24 contains throughout predictions of a most awful, desolating judgment, such as has never been inflicted on the earth from that day to this, and such as answers to nothing but "the harvest," as portrayed in the several passages we have been considering. It concludes thus then the moon, shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in. Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." I suppose it will be allowed that this is the millennium. Chapter 25:1-5 seems to be a song or strain of thanksgiving offered up by the prophet in anticipation of these wonderful events; verse 5 resumes the prophecy, where it breaks off at the close of the former chapter. There we read of Mount Zion, and of the Lord of hosts reigning there, and here the prophecy proceeds: "And in this mountain (Mount Zion) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth for the Lord hath spoken it." The swallowing up death in victory is thus connected here with the removal of the vail that is spread over all nations—the making a feast for all nations of fat things, &c. —and with the taking away the rebuke of God's people Israel from off all the earth; in other words, with the introduction of the millennium. And the apostle tells us when this prophecy shall be fulfilled. 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. And it is only at the coming of the Lord, as all admit, that this corruptible puts on incorruption, and this mortal puts on immortality. How then can the conclusion be evaded, that it is at the commencement of the millennium that the second advent of our Lord takes place, Yours in him, W. T.

Brother, referred you to eight distinct passages of Scripture, in which I have shown you every distinguishing mark of what is termed "the harvest" in the parable of the wheat and tares; and in every one of these it is connected with a plain—prediction of the second advent of our Lord, or, as in the last case, with events which we all know and agree will take place at his coming. And it was admitted, when we last conversed, that "the harvest" is at the end of the present age or period, and at the commencement of the millennium. If so, the coming of the Lord is at that crisis also. Let me entreat you to weigh these passages. Let me remind you, too, that there has not been one single passage adduced to prove that the Lord will not come then; or that the world will be converted before his coming. The passages last touched upon may serve also as one answer to the question you proposed, what good would the Lord's coming do? Surely, the resurrection of all who sleep in Jesus, the change into his glorious image of both them and the living saints, to say nothing of the restoration and conversion of God's ancient people, and the filling the whole earth

with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, are events desirable enough to make us long for the coming of him, at whose coming all these things will be accomplished. But I hope to answer this question more at large in another communication, as also to furnish further proofs from Scripture of the pre-millennial advent.

Meanwhile, with sincerest respect and affection for you as a brother in the Lord, I remain,

Yours in him, W. T.

## The Judgments on the Wicked Which Attend the Second Coming of Christ

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MY DEAR BROTHER, —I have to thank you for your kind note, in which you express your intention “prayerfully to weigh over the passages referred to” in my last. I would beg to remind you that each of these passages is a separate, distinct proof of the coming of our Lord at the commencement of the millennium. If I connected them all with “the harvest” in the parable of the wheat and tares, it was only because on that we were pretty nearly agreed. Leave that out altogether, if you choose, and the passages adduced in my last are still as good proofs of the pre-millennial advent as they are when viewed in connection with that parable.

(Of course, it will be understood by this that I mean each passage adduced in proof of the pro-millennial advent.)

My remarks in this communication may perhaps be of a more desultory character; still, I hope you will find them bearing strictly on the question before us.

If I recollect aright, while you admitted that “the harvest” in Matthew 13 is the end of the present age or period, and that the righteous and the wicked will then be separated from each other, the latter being destroyed by the angels, who gather them together and cast them into a furnace of fire,—while you admitted this, I say, you still suggested a doubt whether there would be any great destruction as to the number of those cut off; and intimated also, that the wicked being destroyed by angels, might simply mean that they would be taken away by death and cast into hell, as each impenitent sinner now is, when his mortal career is run. I would now solicit your attention to several passages, which show, first, that a great number will be destroyed; and, secondly, that the judgment by which they are cut off is a great public event; not the unnoticed death of individuals in the common course of things, but a calamity so fearful and notorious, as to be the object of universal attention, both in heaven and earth.

Let me here ask you to remember, that I am not now proving that the second advent will take place in connection with this judgment. Passages in proof of this were adduced in my former letter, and I may bring others forward, if space allow, in this; but what the following passages are alleged to prove is, that the judgment on the wicked at the period termed “the harvest,” in Matthew 13, is terrible in extent as to the number of those involved in it, and that it is public, moreover, beyond anything which has occurred since the days of Noah or of Lot. If there be such a judgment impending, it is surely to be desired that neither saint nor sinner should be unapprized of its approach.

1.—Joel 3:9-16. “Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause, thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and Come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there

will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel.” This passage is so plain as to need no remark; still, just by way of setting down what is in the passage, rather than giving any interpretation’ of it, I would remind you—1. That the period is the same, and described by the same terms as that in Matthew 13 “Put ye in the sickle, for ‘THE HARVEST’ is ripe.”

2. It is followed (as any one may see who reads from verse 16 to the end of the chapter) by the millennium. 3. The angels, who are the executioners of vengeance in Matthew 13, are here also spoken of: “Thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord.” 4. It is not the unnoticed removal of wicked men by death, in the ordinary course of things, but a gathering of God’s enemies into one place, and judgment executed upon them there; “Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen. round about.” Just as in Matthew 13, the tares are gathered together and bound in bundles to be burnt 5. It is not a small number of wicked persons who are thus judged. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision. 6. It is the abounding and overflowing of wickedness which brings on the judgment. “Come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.” 7. Every variety of expression almost is used to show the publicity of the event. The assembling of the heathen, the darkening of the sun, and moon, and stars, the Lord roaring out of Zion, the shaking of the heavens and the earth—can all this be the mere removing by death, in an ordinary way, of a few wicked persons? Impossible: If language’ can portray scenes of universal interest and observation, both to heaven and earth, surely it is the language here employed. And can anything be clearer than that all this is at the commencement of the millennium? “For, behold, in those days, and in that time WHEN I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.”

(Verses 1, 2.) Now, is it at the commencement or at the close, of the millennium that the Lord brings again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem? Ponder this question, beloved brother; and remember that the Lord, the faithful witness, says: “In those days, and in that time when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat.” What takes place here we have already seen; and what follows, any one may see by reading the remainder of the chapter. Would you not yourself say that it was a prediction of millennial blessedness? And, if so, is it not most evident that the harvest, which, as you admit, closes the present period and introduces the millennium, is a period of judgment, desolating and terrific beyond expression, and involving in sudden, unlooked—for destruction, not a little few, but vast multitudes of the human race? I would only ask further, whether such declarations as the following do not imply that the Lord is personally present amid these scenes of solemnity and terror? “For there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.”

“The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.” “The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem.” If language like this does not imply that the Lord will be personally present amid those scenes of judgment, I am at a loss to know by what language this could have been expressed.

2.—There is one point in the passage just considered which has not been noticed. It is this: the vintage, as well as the harvest, is used to represent the judgments foretold in it. “Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats— overflow; for their wickedness is great.” This evidently connects the passage with others in which the vintage and the treading of the winepress are spoken of. These passages, as we shall see, treat of the same period of judgment as this in Joel 3, and their testimony is in fullest harmony with what we have seen above, as to the character and extent of the judgment; and this, be it remembered, is the point to which our inquiry at present relates.

1. Let us consider Isaiah 63: 1-6. “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save., Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.” One remark here in passing as to the amazing accuracy of Scripture. In chap. 61, we have the memorable passage quoted by our Lord in Luke 4, and which he applied to himself in the synagogue at Nazareth “ The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God.” When our Lord quoted this in the synagogue at Nazareth, did he quote the whole of it? Read the passage in Luke 4, “and you will see that he breaks off in the middle of the sentence, leaving out the clause which I have underlined, “to preach the acceptable year of the Lord;” and he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down.... And he began to say unto them “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Now, could he have said that, if he had read the whole passage I did he come then to proclaim the day of vengeance of our God? No, he came then, not to judge the world, but to save it; to endure the wrath of God for sinners, not to execute the wrath of God upon sinners. But this latter is as much a part of this commission as the former. And though, when he was here before, it was but to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord; when he comes again, it is to usher in “the day of vengeance of our God.” And this is what we have in Isaiah 63 “The day of vengeance,” he says, “ is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” And what is it, let me ask, that is here described? The unnoticed removal by death, in an ordinary way, of some few wicked persons who have failed to be converted by the Gospel? Is this what we have here? No one can suppose so. The prophet beholds in vision a mighty warrior returning victorious from the slaughter of his enemies, his garments red with their blood, and he asks, astonished with the sight, who is this? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Can that be any but Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah? Could any other use such language, and not blaspheme? Hear him further. “I

have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine auger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” Some would interpret this of the sufferings of Christ when he was here eighteen hundred years ago. But could anything be more unlike a fulfillment of this prophecy than the sufferings of Christ? He was crucified through weakness. (2 Corinthians 13:4.) Here he travels in the greatness of his strength. It was his own blood (wondrous grace that was thus displayed!) which was shed for sinners, and by (0 sinners when he was here before. In Isaiah 63 he says; “I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.” He says further, “I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.” How anyone can look, one moment on Jesus suffering Without the gate at Jerusalem, like a lamb led unresisting to the slaughter, and the next moment look on this. prophetic vision of the vengeance he will yet execute upon his enemies—how anyone can look on these and say that they are the same, I cannot Understand. And I am so completely at a loss to imagine how anyone can read this passage in. Isaiah 63, so evidently descriptive of the same scene of judgment as Matthew 13:40,41, and Joel Hi., and yet maintain that it is only the quiet, unnoticed removal by death of a few wicked persons, that we are to understand as foretold in these passages, who is this that cometh from Edom? with dyed garments from Bozrah? And in chap. 34: 56 we read: “For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. In chap. 63 the Lord says: “The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” In this chapter, verse 8, we read: “For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion.” In Joel 3 we have read, “The sun and the moon shall withdraw their shining.” Here we read, verse 4: “And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree.” And what do we learn here, as to the character and extent of the judgment we are considering? Is it a mere taking away by death, in the usual way, of a very few wicked persons? Is it thus undistinguishable from what is passing around us continually? Read the first verse of this chapter: “Come near, ye nations, to hear, and hearken, ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all the things that come forth of it.” Surely, it is no ordinary, event to which universal attention is thus solemnly called hearken, ye people; let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all the things that come forth of it.” Surely, it is no ordinary, event to which universal attention is thus solemnly called this prophetic scene with that portrayed in the other passages we have been considering. It is obvious enough, on the very surface of them, that all describe the same period of judgment. Each one, it is true, presents this general subject in some particular phase or aspect, which distinguishes it from the rest. Still, the general identity of subject I see not how anyone can doubt who reads the passages with ordinary attention. The analogy between the one just quoted and that in Joel 3 is most striking. And what is the testimony of the one just quoted, as to the character and extent of the judgment? Need I give any other answer, then simply to refer you to the passage itself? The last verse, be it ever so figurative in style, surely indicates a most fearful slaughter of God’s enemies. The bare reading of the verse is enough to make one’s ears to tingle. And, be assured, the God of truth gives no false

alarms the event will not be found less terrible than the prediction. like saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace; but sudden destruction is coming upon the world of the ungodly, that I should tremble to hold out such a delusive prospect. God, who knows the end from the beginning, has not overstated the horrors of that day of darkness and destruction which is hastening on; and any one seriously examining the Word of God will be amazed to find how large a portion of prophecy relates to this subject, and portrays in colors so dark, that their gloom could not by any means be deepened, the sudden overwhelming destruction which shall overtake the wicked in that day. A few passages have already passed in serious review before us. Many more remain; so many, that all I can do is to select some of the principal among them this prophetic scene with that portrayed in the other passages we have been considering. It is obvious enough, on the very surface of them, that all describe the same period of judgment. Each one, it is true, presents this general subject in some particular phase or aspect, which distinguishes it from the rest. Still, the general identity of subject I see not how anyone can doubt who reads the passages with ordinary attention. The analogy between the one just quoted and that in Joel 3 is most striking. And what is the testimony of the one just quoted, as to the character and extent of the judgment? Need I give any other answer, than simply to refer you to the passage itself? The last verse, be it ever so figurative in style, surely indicates a most fearful slaughter of God's enemies. The bare reading of the verse is enough to make one's ears to tingle. And, be assured, the God of truth gives no false alarms: the event will not be found less terrible than the prediction and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." It would be superfluous to point out in detail the identity of

this prophetic scene with that portrayed in the other passages we have been considering. It is obvious enough, on the very surface of them, that all describe the same period of judgment. Each one, it is true, presents this general subject in some particular phase or aspect, which distinguishes it from the rest. Still, the general identity of subject I see not how anyone can doubt who reads the passages with ordinary attention. The analogy between the one just quoted and that in Joel 3 is most striking. And what is the testimony of the one just quoted, as to the character and extent of the judgment? Need I give any other answer, than simply to refer you to the passage itself? The last verse, be it ever so figurative in style, surely indicates a most fearful slaughter of God's enemies. The bare reading of the verse is enough to make one's ears to tingle. And, be assured, the God of truth gives no false alarms: the event will not be found less terrible than the prediction.

I would just remark besides, in passing, that the coming of one like to the Son of man, seated on a cloud, is a part of. this prophetic vision, as it was beheld by the beloved apostle.

4. Revelation 19:11-21 is another passage in which this treading of the winepress is brought before us. St. John sees heaven "opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

From the entire description of this heavenly Conqueror, there can be no doubt as to who it was that the prophet of Patmos saw. "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." He is followed by his saints. "The armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." The fine linen has been

explained, in verse 8, to be “the righteousness of saints.” Can anyone fail to be reminded by this of a passage referred to in my former letter? —” The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.” What is the object for which this rider upon the white horse and his heavenly armies appear? “Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” Need I ask here what is the character and the extent of the judgment foretold in these solemn words? Do not the words themselves supply the answer? If any further be needed, you have it in what follows: “And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all, free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” Make what allowance you please for the figurative language here employed, you can never persuade yourself to believe that this is the quiet unnoticed taking away by death, in the usual course of things, of a very few wicked persons who had failed to be converted by the gospel. Here is war, with mighty preparations for it on either hand, issuing in the utter dismal overthrow of the congregated enemies of Christ, who, like grapes in the winepress, are trodden under his feet; “he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” This is the end, beloved brother, of all this world’s greatness and glory; this is the event which is hastening on, and which must surely come to pass before the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

We have now examined five passages, viz. Joel 3, Isaiah 63, Isaiah 34, Revelation 14:14-20, and Revelation 19:11-21, to ascertain the character and extent of the judgment spoken of in Matthew 13 as the “harvest,” the end of this age, and which, as you allowed, is succeeded by the millennium. Two of those passages, Joel 3 and Revelation 14, speak of it in the very terms as Matthew 13; they describe it as the “harvest.” Another representation is used besides in those passages, viz., the vintage. This connects them with Isaiah 63 and Revelation 19, where we have the treading of the winepress. The distinct mention of Edom and Bozrah in Isaiah 63 connects that passage with Isaiah 34, where we have more in detail the judgment on Idumea, or Edom, and on Bozrah. It is connected with it by other marks as well, which have been pointed out. We thus have the testimony of five passages clearly speaking of the same general period of judgment as in Matthew 13 is termed “the harvest.” And what is their united testimony? Verily, it is of such scenes of slaughter and desolation as exceed in horror nearly all besides. I might easily have quoted as many more passages. Indeed, all those (or nearly all) quoted in my last, are as full and plain to this point as any others. Surely, it is not for us to be lulling the Church and the world to deeper sleep with dreams of continued peace and increasing blessing, when a crisis like this is to terminate the present age and introduce the period of millennial blessedness and joy. Bright days there are in prospect for this earth, and never would I forget the testimony of God’s holy Word to this. But a dark and dreadful day must intervene; and they entirely mislead the minds of men, who teach

them to look for the peaceful spread of truth and holiness till all, or nearly all, the human family are converted. No the harvest, which, as you admit, is the end of the present period or age, is itself a period in which Christ comes to execute vengeance on his enemies; and those enemies are at that time so numerous and stout-hearted, as to be gathered together to battle against the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Revelation 17:14.) And this is the scene towards Which the course of this world is fast tending. Surely, it must be a matter of no small importance for our souls to be awake to this, that we may be enabled, through grace, to stand apart from all that which is hastening on this final crisis, and on which the judgment of that great and terrible day will fall. The Lord grant us, even now, to act as becomes those called, and chosen, and faithful ones, who are to be with him in that day!

3.—We come now to a very important passage, which, with those inseparably connected with it, I have reserved for distinct consideration. I wish now to look at it, both as to the evidence it affords of a pre-millennial advent, and as to the light it throws on the character and extent of the judgment by which that advent will be attended. I now refer to 2 Thessalonians 2., and request your patient consideration of the following suggestions: —

It is worthy to be noted, that, in the first epistle, the coming of the Lord is named in every chapter; and so named, that no doubt can be entertained by any one as to what coming is spoken of. It is, confessedly, the second personal coming of Christ, which is so often referred to in the first epistle to the Thessalonians.

The apostle returns to the subject in the first chapter of the second epistle: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels," &c. This, I suppose, all will agree, is the second personal appearing of Christ. "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." This also, none will deny, refers to the second personal coming of our Lord.

The second chapter begins thus: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him." Is not this the same event that he had been speaking of throughout the first epistle, and the first chapter of the second? No one questions this, that I am aware of a certain term or phrase which occurs more frequently in these writings than in any other, and that this a falling away first, and the Man of Sin be revealed; he reminds them of what he had before told them, that there was something withholding or hindering the revelation of this Man of Sin, and that what was then letting would let until it was removed; "And then," says he, " 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." Now, is it another coming that he speaks of here, distinct from that of which he has spoken so immediately before? Throughout the first epistle, and three times already in this, he has spoken of the coming of Christ. In all these instances it is confessed he speaks of the actual personal advent of our Lord. He has not changed his subject; so far from this, he begins this second chapter by beseeching them, by the coming of Christ, and our gathering together to him; and then, in the same paragraph, in the unfolding of the argument which he thus introduces, he speaks of " that wicked whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Now, can it be another coming, and another kind of coming, he speaks of here? Would it not be doing the utmost violence to

Scripture to suppose such a thing? Could we understand any other book, if it was to be interpreted on such principles as would lead us to an interpretation of Scripture like this? Suppose a mere human author to write two treatises, the latter intended to throw further light on the subject of the former. Suppose that the phrase is always used in one fixed determinate sense. Suppose that it has been thus used twelve or thirteen times without one exception, and that this is acknowledged by all who read the writings in question. Here is, however, a fourteenth instance in which this phrase occurs. There is no intimation on the part of the writer that he uses it in a different sense; there is nothing in the immediate context to require that it should be understood in any different sense. Nay, so far from this, it is used in the usual sense at the commencement of the paragraph in which it again occurs in the instance supposed: now, what would you think of anyone who would contend, in a case like this, that the phrase is to be understood in a different sense the fourteenth time of its occurrence, from that in which it is used in all the other instances? Would you not say that his mind was warped, and that, for some reason or other, he did violence to the sense of the writer? And if you would shrink from thus reflecting on the consistency of a mere human author, ought not reverence for the Word of God to make you shrink from attributing such obscurity and inconsistency to it? Reverence for the Word of God to make you shrink from attributing such obscurity and inconsistency to it?

5. The case before us is even stronger than that just supposed. And it is stronger as read in the original than in our translation. The word translated "coming," in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, is  $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\sigma\sigma\alpha$ , and the sense of this word will best appear from the invariable rendering of it in those passages where it is not the Lord's coming at all that is spoken of, but where it is used in reference to others.

The following is the list:

I am glad of the coming of Stephanas. (1 Corinthians 16:17 Christ by my coming to you again. (Philippians 1:26.e only, but now much more in my absence. (Philippians 2:12.) Even him whose coming is after the working of.) Even him whose coming is after the working of)us

Christ by my coming to you again. (Philippians 1:26 only, but now much more in my absence. (Philippians 2:12.) Even him whose coming is after the working of.) Even him whose coming is after the working of: Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 6:14.) of these instances the word means an actual coming or presence? This word is used seventeen times in the New Testament with reference to the coming, of the Lord. It is the word translated "coming," in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, the passage under consideration: Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 6:14.) used in this passage. It is not only said "whom he shall destroy by his coming," but "by the brightness of his coming." Now the word here rendered brightness is  $\pi\iota\phi\alpha\nu\iota\alpha$ : it occurs five times besides, in the New Testament, and its force you may judge of from the following list of the passages:

Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 6:14.)

By the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Timothy 1:10.)

At his appearing and his kingdom. (2 Timothy 4:1.) And not to me only, but unto all them also who love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:8.)

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:13.)

Can anyone doubt, who calmly and prayerfully considers these things, that the coming, the appearing of Christ, spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2:8, is a real actual coming or appearing? It does seem to me that, if evidence like this is to be set aside as inconclusive, we have no marks left by which, in any case, the meaning of the sacred text. can be determined; or, indeed, the meaning of any writings or any subject whatever not be revealed, and have his day, and the millennium follow, and then the Lord come at the close of it? No; that cannot be, for it is by the second advent of our Lord, by the brightness of his coming, that that wicked is destroyed. Thus are we guarded by the apostle, as to both ends of this period. The millennium could not be at the former, for the mystery of iniquity was working then, and was to work till it issued in the revelation of the Man of Sin, the wicked one. It cannot be at the latter end of the period, for the wicked one, the Man of Sin exists to the end, and the period closes with his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming. Thus are we shut up to the conclusion that there can be no millennium between the time at which the apostle wrote and the second coming of Christ. The mystery of iniquity, the falling away, the revelation and blasphemies of the Man of Sin, fill up the whole period; and if there is to be a millennium, it must be after the second coming of our Lord. It cannot be before. The only way of evading this conclusion is, to say that the coming of Christ, by the brightness of which the wicked one is destroyed, is not his actual second, personal advent. But this I have already shown to be doing violence to Scripture, and adopting a principle of interpretation which, if carried out, would rob all language of any fixed, determinate meaning, and render it impossible to decide what was the import of any statement made by any writer, on any subject whatever. Surely, we cannot adopt such a principle in the interpretation of God's holy Word. Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." For the force of this phrase, "the breath of his mouth," in the Old Testament, see Job 4:9;15. 30 Isaiah 30:28 and 33; also Isaiah 11:4 least. The Man of Sin must not only be weakened, but destroyed, before there can be any millennium. And he is destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. But then, further, to consume is not to weaken. Αναλ■σκω, the word here rendered "consume," strictly means to take away, to destroy. It is the word used in Luke 9:54, where the disciples ask our Lord if they may command fire to come from heaven and consume the Samaritans. Surely, it means no gradual weakening there, but utter and sudden destruction. There is another word, δαπαν■ω, which is once rendered "consume," (James 4:3,) and it does signify to devour, to spend, to waste, and is so translated commonly. But it is not this word that is used here, but another, signifying to take away, to destroy. Neither does the expression, "spirit of his mouth," signify the Gospel or the influences of the Spirit. Πνε■μα, the word translated "spirit" in the New Testament, has for its primary meaning, as you are doubtless aware, wind, air in motion, a breathing, breath; and this is marked in the Lexicon before me as the meaning of the word in this passage. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom thethen, to that maturity of daring wickedness which is exhibited in the Man of Sin, the wicked one; and this wicked one is to be consumed by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming. The day of Christ cannot come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed. Well, but may there not be a millennium brought about by the gradual spread of the Gospel, and this falling away come after that—the Man of Sin be revealed after that? No; for he says the mystery of iniquity cloth already work, only he who now letteth will let till he be taken out of the way. And then—yes, what then? A millennium? No, then

shall that wicked be revealed. Well, but may he not be revealed, and have his day, and the millennium follow, and then the Lord come at the close of it? No; that cannot be, for it is by the second advent of our Lord, by the brightness of his coming, that that wicked is destroyed. Thus are we guarded by the apostle, as to both ends of this period. The millennium could not be at the former, for the mystery of iniquity was working then, and was to work till it issued in the revelation of the Man of Sin, the wicked one. It cannot be at the latter end of the period, for the wicked one, the Man of Sin exists to the end, and the period closes with his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming. Thus are we shut up to the conclusion that there can be no millennium between the time at which the apostle wrote and the second coming of Christ. The mystery of iniquity, the falling away, the revelation and blasphemies of the Man of Sin, fill up the whole period; and if there is to be a millennium, it must be after the second coming of our Lord. It cannot be before. The only way of evading this conclusion is, to say that the coming of Christ, by the brightness of which the wicked one is destroyed, is not his actual second, personal advent. But this I have already shown to be doing violence to Scripture, and adopting a principle of interpretation which, if carried out, would rob all language of any fixed, determinate meaning, and render it impossible to decide what was the import of any statement made by any writer, on any subject whatever. Surely, we cannot adopt such a principle in the interpretation of God's holy Word. Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." For the force of this phrase, "the breath of his mouth," in the Old Testament, see Job 4:9;15. 30 Isaiah 30:28 and 33; also Isaiah 11:4. The Man of Sin must not only be weakened, but destroyed, before there can be any millennium. And he is destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. But then, further, to consume is not to weaken.  $\text{Αναλίσκω}$ , the word here rendered "consume," strictly means to take away, to destroy. It is the word used in Luke 9:54, where the disciples ask our Lord if they may command fire to come from heaven and consume the Samaritans. Surely, it means no gradual weakening there, but utter and sudden destruction. There is another word,  $\text{δαπανῶ}$ , which is once rendered "consume," (James 4:3,) and it does signify to devour, to spend, to waste, and is so translated commonly. But it is not this word that is used here, but another, signifying to take away, to destroy. Neither does the expression, "spirit of his mouth," signify the Gospel or the influences of the Spirit.  $\text{Πνεῦμα}$ , the word translated "spirit" in the New Testament, has for its primary meaning, as you are doubtless aware, wind, air in motion, a breathing, breath; and this is marked in the Lexicon before me as the meaning of the word in this passage. "Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." For the force of this phrase, "the breath of his mouth," in the Old Testament, see Job 4:9;15. 30 Isaiah 30:28 and 33; also Isaiah 11:4.

8. I would consider this last passage a little more particularly. The prophet is speaking of the rod which was to come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and the Branch which was to grow out of his roots. It is of Him he says: "But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." This is obviously the passage which the apostle quotes in the chapter we have been considering. And what follows this destruction of the Man of Sin, the wicked one, by the breath of Christ's lips and by the brightness of his coming? Read the remainder of the chapter, Isaiah 11, and you will find that this overthrow of Antichrist is succeeded by the millennium, when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And

the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” Where, is there a child of God who has not rejoiced in the prospect of all this quietness, and harmony, and blessing, which are yet in store for this miserable world? But, how is it that this season of universal blessedness is introduced? “He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.” When does He thus overthrow his daring and blasphemous enemy? The apostle gives the answer. “Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy WITH THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS COMING.” Yes, it is the coming of our blessed Lord which destroys the Man of Sin, and which introduces that blissful period, of which we have such a glowing description in Isaiah 11. Thus, do the prophet and the apostle confirm and illustrate each other’s testimony. We begin with the apostle in his day, and he tells us that the mystery of iniquity was working then. He speaks of some hindrance to the full display of this mystery of evil, and of its continuance up to a certain time. He tells us of its being taken out of the way, and of that wicked being revealed, and of his destruction by the breath of Christ’s mouth and by the brightness of his coming. And there lie pauses. It is at this point the testimony of the prophet begins. He also tells us of the triumphs of Jesse’s Offspring, that “he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked.” But he leads us onward, and shows us, as the fruit of this victory, a peaceful, holy, happy earth, reposing beneath the scepter of him who is Jesse’s Root as well as Jesse’s Offspring. Can anything be more conclusive than the combined, harmonious testimony of these holy men, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?

9. I would notice, too, the harmony between all this and some of the other passages which have been considered. In the parable of the wheat and tares, we are told that he who sows the tares is the devil, and that the tares and wheat are to grow together till the harvest. In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul tells us the mystery of iniquity was working then. The tares had been sown. Were they to be plucked up? Was the mystery of iniquity to cease from working? No: it was to work on, and in the end, when the hindrance was removed, it was to issue in the revelation of the Man of Sin, and he was to continue till his destruction by the brightness of Christ’s coming; in other words, till “the harvest.” In my former letter, it was shown from Daniel 7 how the blasphemies of the little horn, or Antichrist, are the occasion on which the thrones are placed, the judgment set, and the books opened; and how, because of his great words, the beast is slain, his body destroyed and given to the burning flame; and how all this is connected with the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. So, in 2 Thessalonians 2, it is to consume Antichrist with the breath of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming, that the Lord appears. All this is followed in Daniel 7 by the millennium. The kingdom, and glory, and dominion, are given to the Son of man, and with him his saints take the kingdom and possess it. So, as we have just been seeing in Isaiah 11, when Christ has smitten the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slain the wicked (one) with the breath of his lips, he reigns in peace over the whole earth. So also in Revelation 19 and 20. What shows that these together form one strain of prophecy is this, that the destruction of the beast and false prophet in chap. 19: 20 is spoken of in chap. 20:10 as a past event. Let anyone read from the beginning of chap. 19. to verse 8 in chap. 21., and he can hardly doubt that it is one unbroken strain of prophecy, and ought so to be read. And when thus read, how marked the coincidence

between it and all the passages we have been examining! As has been already pointed out, we have the coming forth from heaven of the King of kings and Lord of lords, followed by the armies which were in heaven. Then we have the overthrow and destruction of the beast and the false prophet, and their followers. Then follows the binding of Satan and the reign of the risen saints with Christ a thousand years. And when is it that the saints rise? All Scripture answers what all saints subscribe to, At the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, to show that this is not the final judgment, the judgment of the great white throne, it is said, "The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." The thousand years expire—Satan is loosed from his prison—he deceives the nations of the earth—they gather together against the beloved city—fire comes down from God out of heaven, and destroys them—Satan, who deceived them, is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are—(observe this, where they are, for they had been cast there a thousand years before,) a great white throne appears—heaven and earth flee away—the rest of the dead are raised, and all whose names were not in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. I can conceive of nothing more plain, more straightforward, and more entirely harmonious with all the Scriptures we have been examining, than this comprehensive portion thus read. I say read, for I have not been interpreting or explaining it, but simply pointing out what it contains.

10. There is another point on which I cannot enlarge. A remark or two must suffice. It is allowed by all students of prophecy that the beast and the false prophet, who meet their doom amid the scenes portrayed in Daniel 7, 2 Thessalonians 2, and Revelation 19, are more largely described, as to their character and power and the number of their adherents, in previous passages of Revelation. And what is the testimony of those passages, as to the number of the followers of Antichrist? "And it was given him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (chap. 13: 7, 8.) So much for the beast. As to the false prophet, which is spoken of in chap. 13., as another beast with horns like a lamb, and speaking like a dragon;\* it is said of him that "he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he has power to do in the sight of the beast.... And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark," &c. (Verses 12-17.)

And it is this beast, and this false prophet that wrought miracles before him, that perish by the hand of Him who comes forth out of heaven on a white horse, in Revelation 19. And when they thus perish, they are at the head of the kings of the earth and their armies, who perish with them. See the passage. Surely, dear brother, this is not a few wicked persons cut off by death in the usual way! And depend upon it, with scenes like these hastening on, and the whole course of the world, the religious WORLD, as well as the civil and political, tending towards this point, it is a dangerous delusion to suppose that the world is improving and will improve, till only a few wicked

persons are left who have to be taken away by death, and that then there will be none but the righteous on the earth. No; what God has revealed of the closing scenes of the present age shows clearly enough, if we have but ears to hear, that his enemies will then be congregated in immense multitudes under one daring and impious leader, with a false prophet as his ally and his tool, who, according to 2 Thessalonians 2, as well as the passage we have been glancing at, will be permitted to deceive them by the miracles and signs he will be able to produce, they being given up to strong delusion, to believe a lie, that they all may be damned; and on this assembled host, gathered together in haughty defiance of God Almighty and the Lamb, will the thunderbolts of his vengeance fall; the two chiefs in iniquity will be cast ALIVE into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone, and the rest will be slain with the sword which proceedeth out of the mighty conqueror's mouth. If, instead of believing God's testimony, and anticipating those dreadful scenes, we are filling our minds with visions of continued and increasing peace, and blessing and prosperity, we shall be, doubtless unconsciously, yet not less surely, helping on those principles and systems which are preparing the professing Church, as well as the openly unbelieving world, for this maturity of wickedness and this ripeness for destruction. Let us remember that the mystery of iniquity precedes the manifestation of the Man of Sin; and if Satan, disguised as an angel of light, can persuade us that the spreading of the mystery of iniquity is the success of the Gospel and the prelude to millennial blessedness, it is easy to see how, with the very desire to—do good and to help onward the conversion of the world, we may be unconsciously promoting the designs of Satan, and preparing the way, for the open manifestation of the Man of Sin. The question before us is thus seen to be a solemn, practical question; and it is only as our expectations of the future are regulated by simple faith in the testimony of God, that our conduct in the present will be in harmony with God's mind. If we see where this world's course is tending, and what the end of this world's boastings and exultations will be, I shall not be found sailing down its smooth and rapid current, but in holy separateness from it; separateness from it which will seem madness to any one who is deceived by its fair appearances; I shall be found waiting and longing for its coming, whose return is as full of joy to those who look for him, as it will be of dismay and horror to those who have despised the testimony of his grace, and, are found amongst his enemies when He comes. It is not at all, dear brother, that we are to be always pondering on the gloomy side of the subject, and thinking of the thickening darkness and the approaching judgment. No; but knowing this to be true, because God has said it, we are to wait for him whose coming shall dispel every shade of darkness; and, while he executes these terrible judgments on the wicked which we have been considering, will do this, that he may purge the earth of its destroyers and corrupters, gathering out of his kingdom all that offends and them which do iniquity, that in the peaceful days of millennial rest and blessing which succeed, the righteous may shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And it is this, the light and joy and blessing of the age which 'follows, that should be uppermost in our thoughts; and yet the joy of anticipating this, chastened and sobered in our souls by the certain knowledge afforded us in Scripture of the dreadful events which intervene. There is a passage in Romans 8 with which I, would close this communication. We have seen in Isaiah 11 how the overthrow of the wicked (one) is succeeded by those blessed days in which the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, &c. In Romans 8 the whole creation is represented as groaning and travailing in expectation of this. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And when will the sons of God be manifested? "

Beloved," says John, " now are we the sons of God, and it cloth not yet appear (it is not yet manifest) 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." It is when Christ appears that the sons of God will be manifested. And it is for this that the earnest expectation of the creature waits. "For the creature (creation, literally) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same. in hope; because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Isaiah 11 is the exposition of all this. When the destroyers of the earth have been themselves destroyed, and Christ and his risen, glorified saints reign over the earth a thousand years, the curse will be removed, the bondage of corruption cease, all things, both in heaven and earth, be reconciled, and none shall hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain. "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 first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Thus, the Spirit of God in the saints makes them groan for the adoption—the redemption of the body. That takes place when Christ appears. It is then and thus that the sons of God are manifested. All creation waits for that. Why? Because creation itself shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Blessed, Joyful period 1 What effect has the anticipation of it on our souls? Does it give joy and gladness? Yes verily. But the contrast of all around us and all before us till Christ comes, with that blissful age—the contrast, I say, seen in the light of that glory, makes us groan. That we may all know more of those exercises both of sorrow and of joy, and that by the Spirit, and be more separate from all that will not bear the light of the coming day of Christ, is, dear brother, the prayer of yours in Him, W. T.

## Ephesians 6:10-18

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This Scripture shows both the power possessed by the believer for maintaining the spiritual conflict in which, while abiding in the wilderness, he is engaged, and the character of the enemies with whom he has to contend. He is exhorted to be strong in the Lord, because he alone it is who can give the Christian soldier ability to contend successfully against his opponents.

There is nothing more injurious to those who are called to fight the good fight of faith, than the forgetfulness of the strength and wiliness of the enemies with whom they have to contend. Because of the power possessed by his enemies, and of his utter incapacity to cope with it by any might of his own, the believer is directed to seek for strength adequate to his need, and to look to the only source from whence he can be supplied; in a word, he is to “be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

One man may be enabled to overcome another by the exercise of his own, strength; but in no other way than by the mighty power of God can a man be victorious over the devil, who is here so presented to our view, that we may discern the means by which he obtains victories over men.

There are two ways in which Satan is here presented to us—he has wiles, and he has fiery darts; as respects the children of God, the great object that Satan seeks is, to keep them from knowing their standing in Christ; their union with him in his death and resurrection.

But the Holy Spirit, through the apostle, shows that the victory of Christ is one in which every child of God shares. The ready answer to the doubts and fears suggested by Satan is this, “Christ is risen.” The shield of faith enables us to know that we are conquerors in Christ; and the most effectual way of combating successfully the enemy is to see the place to which we are risen, as being united to Christ—parts of his mystical body.

This wondrous standing is revealed to faith, which enables the believer to know himself united to Christ, who is raised “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:” therefore it is said to him, “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

A consideration of the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, and of the connection existing between it and the 6th chapter, will lead to a more correct understanding of this subject. In the first chapter, from the 3rd to the 9th verse, we see that all the blessings possessed by believers are bestowed on them by God, and are his free gift: originating in his will, they flow from the Father in the way of grace. And it is their—privilege not only to be conscious of this standing (that they are seen by the Father in Christ, and loved even as he is loved), but to live in the enjoyment of these things.

We are told afterward what these blessings are. Satan would fain prevent our enjoyment of them, by suggesting to us that they are too great, too glorious to be possessed by creatures so weak, so helpless and depraved, as all the descendants of fallen Adam are; but the believer sees them by

faith, and knows they have been freely given to him; and because he has a perception of them, 'in proportion to the clearness of that perception, he is regardless of the riches, honors, and pleasures of the world.

All Satan's objections are met by the consideration of the grace and good pleasure of God. If we believe not God's declarations, we rob him of his—glory, and Christ of his honor; and the doing this answers the object of Satan; it is acting as he would have us to do.

The whole armor of God is exactly fitted to the saint, whose blessing is to use it in the full apprehension of its value.

The power of all separation to God is, "ability to discern the greatness, the extent, and variety of the blessings which result from redemption, to the praise of God's grace and glory." The saint has all these blessings, and God has all the glory accruing from the saint's possession of them. The character of the conflict in which the saint is engaged is heavenly; indeed, the whole epistle relates to what is heavenly; thus the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd chapters give us the heavenly calling of God's children; the 4th gives (not the ablution of the flesh, as practiced among the Jews) but the heavenly ministries; the 5th gives us the heavenly creature's walk while in the wilderness; the 6th presents to our view the saint in combat with his enemies. And here we see that his calling is heavenly, that he is God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; and that his walk is to be (like his calling) heavenly, being strengthened in the Lord, for his calling, and having the power of his might; thus the heavenly creature is presented to us, as taken into a new condition, and sustained by divine power, in the circumstances in which he is graciously placed. We see him, throughout the epistle, in his call, walk, and combat.

The conflict, detailed in the book of Joshua, between Israel and the nations with whom they warred, is not our pattern, because the Lord is not now contending for the earth. David, armed only with a sling and a few smooth stones taken out of the brook, engaged in combat with Goliath the Philistine giant, gives us more the character of our conflict; for we are utterly weak, while our enemy is possessed of great strength: but though we have no might in ourselves, we may be stronger than all who are against us in the Lord's strength.

The power of God is ever exercised in behalf of his weak, helpless children, and their power consists in the perception of this truth; to be strong they must know their standing, portion, hope, and calling. When possessed of this apprehension, they are enabled to stand against the wiles of Satan; to contend successfully with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places. God shows them their strength in the use of the armor wherewith he supplies them; but Satan seeks to keep them from the knowledge of what belongs to God's armor.

The 10th verse of the 3rd chapter discloses to our view what the purpose of God is, as regards the enemies with whom his children have to contend. We are there told that principalities are learning by the Church God's manifold wisdom; with this wisdom those principalities become acquainted by the way in which he acts towards saints, and by what he has given to them. What is said in the 12th verse of the 6th chapter, respecting the believer's spiritual enemies, that they are the rulers of the darkness of this world, gives us a striking view of the awful power possessed by them over this world, and over those who are walking according to its course: it shows the fearful case of vast

multitudes around us. Now Satan desires to throw the saints off from God; to keep them at a distance from him; not to let them see their portion: and he seeks to attain this object by suggesting to them wrong views of Scripture. When a person's eyes are enlightened by the Holy Ghost (who alone can communicate a right apprehension of the truths revealed in Scripture—who only can impart a saving understanding of them), he from that moment ceases to be of the world, the moral world, which is blinded by Satan, whose lies tend to darken the minds of men in everything that relates to God. All who are in darkness are of the world, but when a sinner's eyes are enlightened by God to believe in Jesus, he is no longer of the night, nor of darkness, but is a child of light and of the day; he can then say, "I am not of the world;" he then becomes a heavenly man, and is enabled to enjoy heavenly things. Being Christ's, united to him in death and resurrection, he has crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts; and, being dead with Christ, he is to "reckon himself to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God." Satan often throws a man's thoughts off Christ on himself, and thus deprives him) of the peace which it is his privilege ever to have. —But the believer is continually to remember that God has blessed him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that what is Christ's is his portion, and that his combat is with him who is the ruler of this world. Carnality of mind arises from not having a clear perception of our wondrous standing—of the position in which grace has placed us.

Believers have only one person to encounter as their adversary, that is the Devil. The world and the flesh indeed are things which work against the believer if he does not walk in the Spirit, and they are means often used by Satan against us; but he is the only person, who is against us. God is never against us; but we are always able to say, "God is for us." (Rem. 7: 31.) This was not so with Jesus. Satan was his adversary, as he is ours; but besides this one adversary, common to us and Jesus, he had to meet God's justice and holiness, and God was not for him when he, through grace, was made sin for us. Believers have not to meet God as their adversary, because Jesus, to whom no wrath was due, has borne the wrath due to them, and God always acts towards them as towards children whom he loves. Jesus, when baptized, heard a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It was not until after this that he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. So all believers are declared to be the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26); to be loved by the Father even as he is loved (John 17:23), and they should see the existence of the relationship subsisting between him and them while they are engaged in conflict with Satan. The Epistle to the Ephesians discloses their union with Christ and God. And it is to be remembered that, as the only-begotten obedient Son he once bore God's wrath due to us that we might find God always for us.

The Church, when shown its standing, is made acquainted with the state and circumstances of the world—is taught to know that the present is an evil day, and that it has numerous and powerful enemies to contend with, even "the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places," but that God has provided an armor offensive and defensive, suited to its necessities; an armor of which he has also given a full description. The great question between God and it is settled: it is loved as Christ is loved; but its members have each moment to settle a question between themselves and Satan. In conflicting with him, they are put on the exercise of the love which they have to God; and are thus afforded an opportunity of showing the extent of it, and growing in it. It is the devil with whom they have to contend; they meet Satan in every circumstance in which they are at any time placed, and they can only conquer him when they are

clothed with God's armor. Satan, because of the dominion exercised by him over it, is called the god of this world; he is the spirit who now works or energizes in the children of disobedience, which all unbelievers are. The saints are in the evil day, yet they may obtain strength, enabling them to withstand the assaults of their enemies, and to overcome continually the devil, the world, and the flesh. They are called upon to be "strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Their standing in Jesus is shown in the previous part of the Epistle; by this standing, which is of grace, their conduct is to be settled, and NOT their standing by their conduct; for just in proportion as they have discernment of their standing (as they see what it is) they are strong. It is in the Lord they are strong: while they walk in the power of those things which they have in Him, they are more than conquerors. Jesus walked in the intelligence of sonship, and in the view of the glory; and thus should the saints ever walk in the consciousness of their high standing—in the apprehension of their relationship to God, and of what they shall be when mortality will be swallowed up of life. "We wrestle," says the apostle in writing to the Ephesians, "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities," &c.; "Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." Here we are taught to use, not a part of the armor only, but the whole of it, because we require all truth—the entire of the armor—to be enabled to contend successfully with Satan. God knows what we want that we may possess ability to conquer Satan, and he gives us an armor adequate to our need, designing that we should unceasingly use all of it. For the present is the evil day, throughout the whole of which it is necessary that we should be constantly clad in this armor: and it is very important that we should remember there will be no termination of the evil day until Jesus shall come again. We are to seek throughout the whole day to be strong, and to show the power of faith, manifesting it in overcoming temptations, and withstanding the fiery darts of Satan.

The armor, as here described, shows us what the suitable walk of a saint is; he should "stand, having his loins girt about with truth;" having all his energies upheld by the truth, by an intelligent acquaintance with what Scripture reveals; "putting on the new man, which, after God, is created in 'righteousness and true holiness,' or holiness of truth; truth should keep his affections, and guide the members of his body in practical holiness.

He should have on the breastplate of righteousness; his conscience, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit, should affect his heart and life, leading him to act righteously, though always in grace, towards others. Having, by means of an enlightened conscience, ability to distinguish good from evil, and to know what the will of God is, in the different circumstances in which from time to time he may be placed, he should yield the members of his body (as one possessing a consciousness that he is alive from the dead) as instruments of righteousness unto God.

And his feet should be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: wherever he goes he should bear about with him the gospel or message of peace. Not giving way to the lusts of the flesh, not yielding to its affections, but denying ungodliness, mortifying his members which are upon the earth, seeking those things that are above, and using the shield of faith to protect the whole man; the other pieces of armor being more local. The power of faith is especially needful.

The helmet of salvation is the assured—the confident hope of glory. We are to remember that when scripture speaks of salvation, we are not always to understand by it justification; for this term is sometimes used in reference to the glory which awaits all true believers; the undoubting

expectation of which is their helmet: and their thoughts should be occupied by the contemplation of what they are speedily to possess.

The sword of the Spirit is the word of God; this sword the Spirit alone can enable us to wield effectually in our conflict with Satan, who cannot be overcome by the word, unless when it is used by the energy of the Holy Spirit. The saint, though clad in this armor, is nevertheless to remember his own utter weakness; that he is entirely dependent for strength on God's power, and that unless upheld by him, he can do nothing against Satan: because of this, he is to be always in the spirit of prayer. His path is here shown, as is also the object on which he is to set his affections. He is to walk righteously, while he walks in peace. He can put on this armor, because he is a saint. The first and last chapters of this Epistle are connected; and that connection spews us that we do not enter into conflict with Satan as Christ did; but that it is in the power of his victory that we are enabled to conquer. He is above all principalities and powers; his engagement with them is terminated, and in him believers are raised up above them; in him they are more than conquerors.

In reference to the saint, we see in Scripture that two things are always presented as connected; one is, what he is as united to Christ, the other, what his walk through this wilderness should be. We cannot rightly engage in the conflict spoken of in the 6th chapter, until we see our standing as that is shown in the first chapter; there we learn that Christ's death is a life-giving death; there we see Christ's victory, and ours in him. He died that sin might be deprived of its dominion—that its reign might terminate. The perception of our victory over Satan, because of our being united to Christ, fits us for the conflict in which we are to be engaged with principalities and powers, &c. We enter into this conflict not to be made one with Christ, but because we have been united to him; we fight, not to attain a standing, but to evidence our thankfulness for such a standing having been given to us. The question of condemnation as to sin is at an end, because the flesh is judged, and we stand before God as children, and are seen by him in Jesus. Nevertheless, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth: the Father in love and in wisdom disciplines his children, and in doing so deals with them as with sons; "for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Believers are not to make light of their walk, but should walk as in communion with the Father, as in fellowship with him who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all, as witnesses for Christ, who has been rejected of the world. The moral power of the new birth is kept up by holiness. It would be well if the conscience of believers were kept tender, as well after they see their standing as before they discern it. While this epistle shows what the standing of believers is, that they are dead and risen with Christ, it also discloses the conversation which becomes the gospel; it informs us that we are not now to take carnal weapons, or to fight with them, but to use the spiritual armor which is provided for us: that we have not an earthly place to contend for, but that we are to fight for heavenly places with principalities and powers, and that the enemy who could keep us from earthly places is not the one with whom we have to contend.

The book of Joshua furnishes us with principles for the regulation of our conduct whilst journeying through this wilderness-world. There, in the capture of Jericho, a city strongly fortified and defended by a numerous and powerful army, while the Israelites were in themselves weak and powerless, we yet see them victors, because God fought for them: there, too, we learn principle in the discomfiture of the Israelites by the men of Ai, a place so small and destitute of strength, that the men who were sent to view it returned to Joshua, saying, "Let not all the people go up; but let

about two or three thousand go up and smite Ai, for the inhabitants thereof are few." Israel, however, fled before them, because evil was with them, Achan having taken of the accursed thing: "Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before them, because they were accursed, having taken of the accursed thing, putting it among their own stuff, and having also stolen and dissembled." From the record of these things contained in Scripture, valuable lessons are learned, and very important instructions are received; thus, the wily conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeon presents to our view the power of deceit, a deep evil which God only can unravel. The principles taught in the book of Joshua show that, in this dispensation, believers are not to go to war, because their calling is a heavenly one; each of them is now a new man, a new creation in Christ Jesus; there is neither Jew nor Gentile among them, but both are alike sons of God; they have their place and calling, as standing in that relationship to him, and they contend with an enemy whom they have already conquered in Christ.

The perfect security of believers is shown in various parts of Scripture; it is set before us in Hebrews 2:10, where it is declared that God is engaged in bringing his many sons to glory; and surely his purpose with respect to them cannot be frustrated. We see the security of believers also in 1 Peter 1:5, where the apostle tells us that the children of God are "kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time:" here we find the term salvation connected with the glory which awaits all the children of God; but in the 9th verse we see it in connection with the state of the soul; thus we perceive this word connected both with justification and with glory. While the saint has received the one, he is waiting for the other. The exhortation in Philippians 2:12, "Work out your own salvation," shows the intermediate state. This passage, in connection with the following verse, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do," though often wrongly interpreted, is a most comforting one to those who have a right apprehension of it.

In the previous chapter, the apostle says, "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ;" this shows the certainty of every believer's participation of eternal bliss and glory. "Christ being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him." So all who have died with Christ will live and reign with him.

In the 3rd chapter, we see Paul exhibiting the effect resulting from an apprehension of union with Christ in resurrection; humbling himself after his example, renouncing all confidence in the flesh, and despising all that it could glory in. He says, in the 12th verse of the 2nd chapter, "As ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling:" in speaking thus to them, he wanted to draw their thoughts to God away from men, and to throw them on the exercise of his power in their behalf; his design was, not that they should doubt their full acceptance, not that they should question their justification, but that they should, through strength imparted to them by God, manifest the relationship which existed between him and them, while they showed by their conduct in the eyes of men that they were the sons of God. Their fellowship in the gospel took them out of the flesh, which was crucified, and they became united to the second Adam, and he desired that they might be "blameless and harmless, living as the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked

and perverse people, shining as lights in the world.” By the “fear and trembling” with which they were to work out their salvation, we are to understand a fear, lest the flesh should come in and spoil God’s work: the flesh had no power either to will or to do in the matter of this salvation. Paul, in this passage, shows that the saint is possessed both of strength and security, though it is frequently so interpreted as to occasion fright and apprehension, rather than trust and confidence: he does not call on the Philippians to make themselves the sons of God, but to act as such; he tells them, for their encouragement, that God, who begins a good work in believers, will carry it on till the day of Christ: in order to strengthen them, while engaged in contending with their spiritual enemies, he tells them that God takes part with them in the conflict.

While we have, in Ephesians 6:10-18, a description of the conflict in which the believer is engaged, and of the armor which is needed by him for the contest, we have also a description of the soldier who is to fight; it is he who is in the Lord—who is a new creation in Christ Jesus; this armor can be used only by such. God’s children have two blessed things in him—infinite power, as seen in the first chapter of Ephesians, and boundless love, as shown in the third chapter: their array is to consist of both this power and love; and should they not see their perfect security, when almighty power and unfathomable love are continually exercised towards them? when, because of this, they are in an impregnable citadel, in a fortress so strong as to be capable of resisting all the assaults of their enemies? Paul first shows us the man in the Lord, and then this man engaged in conflict, clad in the armor provided for him. But we should ever remember that the standing of the believer is always above his experience; for God dwelleth in light which no man can see. The man who is in the Lord is to put on the armor provided for him: his is a heavenly fight; he is not to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, &c.; he is not to look for an earthly inheritance; being a new creation in Christ, he is to possess a heavenly inheritance; the throne, not the footstool, is his. He is to “put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Thus armed, he is to stand in the midst of the battle.

Jesus was the first person engaged in this battle, from which he returned victorious; and in his glorious triumph all believers, members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, are sharers.

Joshua acted rightly in taking a spear, as he had earthly enemies to contend with, as he had to wrestle with flesh and blood; but now our conflict is altogether different; a spear is not suitable for a saint, is not a part of God’s armor; we have to combat not with men, but with spiritual wickedness in high places. Our feet are to be shod, because we are to walk as dear children. If we patiently endure while trampled on by men, while subjected to mockery and violence for Christ’s sake, in this we show that we are victors, even as Jesus overcame by meekly submitting to reproach and enmity from the world—by walking in peace, though reviled and trampled on. The exhortation, “Above all, take the shield of faith,” throws us back on the consideration of our standing. We are to live in the consciousness, that being in Christ we are rooted and grounded in love, and blessed with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places. The Spirit values faith; and we here see the extent of the value which he puts upon it, by his saying, “Above all, take its shield.” In thus speaking of faith, he shows that it is valued by him above even the hope of glory.

The sword, which is a part of this armor, is an aggressive weapon; it is expressive of the advancement of him who takes it; he is to use not only what is defensive, but also what is offensive; he is not merely to withstand the attacks of the enemy, but to be often engaged in

assailing him.

He is, moreover, to “pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the spirit; watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints,” looking around him to see how his fellow-combatants are acting while engaged in their conflict; for they are all dear to the heart of God. “And for me,” adds the apostle, “that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my Mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.” He thus desired their prayers because he was prominent in the conflict, and therefore the eyes of the other combatants were directed to him.

This armor carries us beyond our standing, even into the combat in which we are to be incessantly engaged. While occupied in the conflict, mindful of the glory secured for us, we should be able to say in faith with one of old, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.”

To be trampled on is our victory; but if Joshua had been subjected to this treatment from his enemies, it would have been an evidence of his defeat: and herein we see the difference between the past and the present dispensation. Both faith and patience ought to be exhibited by every saint, exposed as each is while here to trial and suffering; indeed, for the manifestation of faith and patience, the Lord has left believers to sojourn for a fleeting period in this world. Faith enables its possessor confidently to expect admission into never-ending bliss and glory, and to look at Satan as a vanquished foe; but the power which he uses against the saint requires the exercise of faith and patience. The shield of faith enables us to know that Satan is a conquered enemy; that he has power only for a short time; and that the conflict in which we are engaged with him is not ours, but the Lord's. When we forget these truths, we are borne down easily enough.

If we wrongly imagine that Satan is no more formidable, no more to be dreaded than earthly enemies, he dwindles down into a nothingness similar to our own, and we, being deceived as to the facts of the case, do not feel our need of divine power to enable us to overcome him.

We should hear God saying to us, as he did to Jehoshaphat, in 2 Chronicles 20:15, “Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but mine.” We should always remember that we are God's children, and that, having conferred upon us great and distinguishing favors, he has put on us the responsibility of glorifying him, and of showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into marvelous light. We cannot walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, without constant prayer and communion, which are needful to enable us to keep up the apprehension of what our standing is: setting before us, while acquainted with that standing, the example of Christ: and as he, in serving the Father, had a knowledge of his worthiness, so we, in serving Christ, should have a perception of his worthiness.

As standing in the relationship to God of children, we are called upon to act consistently with our obligations, to walk worthy of God, and to maintain to the end a conflict not with the powers of earth, but with principalities in heavenly places; regarding as our directory through the wilderness that word which is given to us for a rule of faith and practice, just as the Israelites had the fiery and cloudy pillar to guide their steps, while they were journeying towards the promised land.

It is encouraging, when noticing the number and power of our spiritual enemies, to dwell on the fact, that the battle is not ours but the Lord's, and that therefore victory over them must be certain; to consider that God's object in dealing as he is doing with the Church, is by it to show in ages to come his wisdom, love, and power. Our Lord has two battles to fight, the earthly and the heavenly;

though he is now disowned and rejected by the world, yet the time is at hand when all shall call him blessed. These two battles are the Lord's; in each of them victory in the issue is certain.

The Christian warrior is here presented to our view, protected by the shield of faith, and sustained in conflicting with powerful foes by the confident hope of glory. But while belonging to the day, and waiting for it, he should be ashamed to remain on the defensive only, for the character of offensive war also belongs to him; he is called to use the sword of the Spirit in advocating truth and exposing error; being moreover linked to the body of Jesus, he is to look not merely to his own conduct, but also to that of others.

Believers are not contending for the life which they already possess, nor for the glory which is secured for them, but they are fighting with enemies for the maintenance of the Lord's glory. It seems strange that the same person can be a child and a warrior, and that though a warrior he should yet be employed in bringing to others the gospel of peace; that, though utterly weak in himself, he should nevertheless be successfully engaged in conflict with him who is the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), and who exercises all his power and wiles in endeavoring to overcome him.

It is solemn and important to consider eternity as connected with this conflict; to know that all in which the sinner had previously trusted must be thrown away ere victory can be obtained; to perceive God's strength revealed to aid the weakness of the children, and provided for that very purpose; to see that though the child of God may be occasionally overcome, yet this final victory is registered; that though he may forget God, yet he is not forgotten by God,—that the Lord is not ashamed of those who are poor and weak. If believers were acting consistently with their profession were exhibiting that entire separation from the world which they ought evermore to manifest;—if they were bold and uncompromising in testimony to Christ, they would now, as they formerly were, be subjected to the mockery and enmity of those whose conduct they would thus reprove; and if they followed the example of Christ, they would be regardless of the riches, honors, smiles, and frowns of a world, the whole of which lieth in the wicked one. To see a saint hiding himself in earthly splendor, veiling his real dignity with the reputation or rank of the world, is very grievous to those whose minds are spiritual. The only suitable place for the believer to occupy, during his abode on earth, is one of suffering and trial, for the disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his Lord. It is comforting to know that the name of every one of the Lord's warriors is written in the book of life (Philippians 4:3): unless we have this conviction as to our own names, we shall faint while contending with our powerful enemies. We are taught in Exodus 3 to know, that when any one is engaged in the Lord's work, all things are ordered for his advantage. The same comforting truth we see in 2 Timothy 4: 7, 8, where Paul says, " I have fought a good fight, ( have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there 'is laid up for me' a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

God settled everything with Moses before he sent him to Pharaoh for the purpose of delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt. 1st, He makes known to him his name, directing him to say to the Israelites, "I AM hath sent me unto you." 2ndly, He tells him of the hindrance which they should experience from the king of Egypt, who would refuse to let them go, exercising his great power to prevent them. 3rdly, He shows him his own interference in behalf of Israel, saying, "I will stretch

out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof, and after that he will let you go.” We, in the blindness of our understandings, would prefer passing along at our ease through smooth things, while journeying towards heaven, to being placed in circumstances of trial and difficulty; but these are always so ordered as to promote the advantage of the Lord’s children. So, we find him saying to the Israelites, “I will give you favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall come to pass, that when ye go ye shall not go empty.” Everything is settled for the saint before he begins the battle. Paul had to go into prison, that by means of his confinement there the conversion of the goaler should be effected: this shows that situations of difficulty, subjecting us to temporary suffering and sorrow, may be the most salutary for us, while, at the same time, they conduce most to the welfare of others and the glory of God. If we unreservedly obey the Lord, following fully the example of Christ, we may confidently rely on his power, repose in his love, and feel a peaceful serenity of mind, whatever be the trial to which we are exposed. The only place in the wilderness where manna could be obtained, was round about the camp of the Israelites, all of whose movements were directed by the Lord; but had they, regardless of the pillar’s guidance, pursued their own way, they would have been left destitute of the provision graciously made for the supply of their wants. Faith is manifested by placing an implicit dependence on God’s power, from whom it must have a warrant; and this world is the place where it is to be exercised: in proportion as we manifest it, we honor him who bestows it, and possess comfort and joy in our own souls.

“When Israel, by divine command,  
The pathless desert trod,  
They found, throughout the barren land,  
A sure resource in God.  
Like them, we have a rest in view,  
Secure from hostile powers;  
Like them, we pass a desert too,  
But Israel’s God is ours.”

## The Lamb of God

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It would be too wide a field to comment in succession on each instance in this book in which, in different aspects and varied connections, we are brought into contact with the Lamb. In tracing through, from the fifth chapter to the end, “the Lamb” is ever in the ascendancy.

The song of heaven is, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” (vs. 6-13.) It is from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, that the men of this world seek to hide themselves in fear. (6:15-16.) The palm-bearing multitude before the throne have “washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (7:9-14.) It is the Lamb that feeds them, and leads them (as a shepherd) “to living fountains of waters.” (7:17.) It is the blood of the Lamb that answers all the accusations of Satan, as the accuser of the brethren day and night, on high. (7:10-11.) It is in the book of life of the Lamb slain that the names of the faithful are found written amidst the corruptions of the beast.

(8.) It is the Lamb, also, on Mount Zion with the sealed ones, whose honor and privilege it is to “follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”

(14:1-4.) Again, whoever worships the beast or his image, and receives his mark in his forehead or in his hand, will be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

(14: 9-10.) It is the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb, that is sung with the “harps of God” by those who, in victory over the beast, stand on “the sea of glass.” (15:2-4.) It is against the Lamb that the beast and the ten kings make war; and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is “King of kings, and Lord of lords.” (17:12-14.) It is the marriage of the Lamb that strikes the note of joy in heaven; and to be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb is the mark of honor and blessing then. (19:7-9.) And after the seals are loosed, and the trumpets are blown, and the vials poured out—when Satan is bound, and the clangor of earth’s judgment is hushed, it is “the Bride, the Lamb’s wife,” that is the wondrously glorious spectacle on which the apostle is called to gaze. (21:1) They are the twelve apostles of the Lamb; whose names are in the twelve foundations of the “holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.”

(21:14.) Of this city the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple, and “the Lamb is the light thereof.” (21:22-23.) There is to be no inhabitant in this glorious city “whose name is not written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (21:27.) And onwards “the river of the water of life” flows out of “the throne of God and the Lamb.” (22:1.) And finally, there is to be no more curse, because the throne of God and of the Lamb are to be there. (22:3-5.)

“Rest of the saints above,

Jerusalem of God,

Who in thy palaces of love,

Thy golden streets, have trod

To me thy joy to tell,  
Those courts secure from ill,  
Where God Himself vouchsafes to dwell,  
And every bosom fill.  
Who shall to me that joy  
Of saint-thronged courts declare,  
Tell of that constant sweet employ  
My spirit longs to share?  
That rest, secure from ill,  
No cloud of grief e'er stains;  
Unfailing praise each heart doth fill,  
And love eternal reigns.  
The Lamb is there, my soul!  
There God himself doth rest;  
In love divine diffused through all,  
With him supremely blest.  
God and the Lamb—'tis well!  
I know that source divine  
Of joy and love no tongue can tell,  
Yet know that all is mine.  
But who that glorious blaze  
Of living light shall tell,  
Where all his brightness God displays,  
And the Lamb's glories dwell?  
God and the Lamb shall there  
The light and temple be,  
And radiant hosts forever share  
The unveiled mystery."

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