

# COLLECTION OF PAMPHLETS

by H.H. Snell

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*A collection of articles and writings by H.H. Snell from Collection of Pamphlets, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.*

12 Chapters

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## Collection of Pamphlets

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## Is a Believer a Child of God, or a Miserable Sinner?

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Short Papers for Believers — First Series, No. 2.

The question is whether Scripture speaks of a person, who believes with the heart on the Son of God salvation, as a sinner, or as a child of God? Scripture says, “When we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Further on in the same epistle we are told, “The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God” (Rom. 5:8, 8:16). Nothing can be clearer, for we were sinners, we are children of God. As sinners we practically evil in God’s sight, with a in which dwells “no good thing,” which is capable only of sinning, and is “without strength.” Hence we were characterized in Scripture as “sinners,” and, blessed be His name, it was such Jesus came into the world to save. We were, as we sometimes say,

“By nature, and by practice far,

How very far from God!”

But those who have received the Son of God as their Savior are born of God; they are children of God by a new birth; for

as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons [children] of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12, 13).

Moreover, they have remission of sins, “are justified from all things” — God being the Justifier — and have received the Holy Ghost to dwell in them as God’s seal, and the earnest of the inheritance — all of God’s grace surely, and to the praise of His glory. Such, and more, is true of every one who has been thus drawn to the Son of God as a sinner to a Savior (see Acts 10:43; 13:38, 39; Rom. 3:24; 5:5).

It is this present blessing, and most endearing relationship of children in which the believer stands toward God our Father, which Christendom so practically ignores. It is being effected in two ways —

1st, By every one claiming to be a child, and addressing God as Father, without being really born of God; and

2ndly, By those who are truly God’s children dropping the relationship as a known and enjoyed reality, and calling themselves miserable sinners. Thus God is dishonored, His word let slip, the platform of the new creation, on which in marvelous grace He has set us, refused; and, instead of praising God as the continual fruit of our lips, for what He has so marvelously done for us in Christ Jesus and through His blood, think it humility to say, “Lord have mercy upon US miserable sinners!”

What relief it gives the heart to turn from these doctrines of men to the pure word of God. To the newly converted ones at Colosse, the Spirit, by an apostle, wrote, exhorting them to be

Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins” etc. (Col. 1:12-14).

It may be said, Is not a child of God also a sinner? No doubt a child of God is capable of sinning, and, as a matter of fact, children of God do sin, but they are tenderly enjoined not to sin; and if they are told “to sin not,” how can they be characteristically spoken of as “sinners?” When Paul spoke of sinners, and said “of whom I am chief,” no doubt it was exceptionally true of him, and that there never was such a sinner; but the next words clearly prove that he thus spoke of himself as before his conversion. But are the epistles addressed to sinners or to saints? Look at John’s first epistle. Is he not most careful to tell us that he writes to “little children,” “young men,” and “fathers” in the faith? Even babes in Christ know the Father, that is, know that they are children of God, and have their sins forgiven (1 John 2:12-14). Did he call them sinners, or miserable sinners? Nay, he lovingly said, “My little children, these things write I unto you that ye sin not.” But knowing the possibility of even a child of God sinning, and thus losing his communion with the Father, he graciously adds, that “if any man [any child of God] sin, WE [observe we] have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” Thus the spotless righteous Man in the glory, who had been the propitiation on the cross for the very sin we have done, and is before God in all the virtue of that work, takes up our case as our “advocate [and observe it is] with the Father”; because it is a question of a child having dishonored the Father, and thus of his COMMUNION with the Father being interrupted. Through His advocacy the Holy Spirit works in us, makes us conscious of our having sinned, produces self judgment in us, so that “we confess our sins,” know we have our Father’s forgiveness, and communion is restored (see 1John 1:8-10; 2:1, 2). Now, is this a sinner in his sins? Certainly not; but a child of God who has sinned, and the divine way in which his communion with the Father is restored when he has lost it.

Until a sinner approaches God by the one sacrifice of Christ for salvation, he is looked at in Scripture as in his sins, far from God, and condemned already. He is away from God. But so simple, and yet so blessed, is God’s way of present peace and eternal salvation, that He assures us that the sinner in his guilt and ruin that comes to Him by the one offering of the body of Jesus Christ, is entitled to know that he has remission of sins, a purged conscience, is sanctified by the blood, and perfected forever by that one offering; that he has received also the Holy Spirit, has liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and will be saved to the uttermost, or right on to the end (see Heb. 10:2, 20; 7:25). If I receive these precious testimonies of divine truth as to my present blessing, how can I say that I am a miserable sinner, though I may, however, truthfully say I am a weak, erring, and sometimes sinning child of God?

We would add another word. No one hates sin like a child of God; and only those who are born of the Spirit know that they have two natures. But the child of God having an evil nature — “the flesh” — in him, need not hinder his communion with the Father, because God assures us that He has set it aside in judgment with Christ in the death of the cross — “Our old man is crucified with him” — and has given us life in Christ. Thus the believer is spoken of in the epistles now “in Christ Jesus,” “accepted in the Beloved,” “complete in Him,” and the like. How can I be enjoying these truths by believing them, and say “I’m a miserable sinner?” The truth is, that the child of God knows that if he should sin, distressing as the thought is, he need not be desponding; for He who

was our sin-bearer on the cross is now our Advocate with the Father. He was a Savior for sinners on the cross; He a Savior for God's children while He sits on the Father's throne, before He comes to take us to sit with Him on His throne.

## Peace: What Is It?

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Scripture speaks of the Son of God as “having made peace through the blood of His cross.” Peace, then, has been made, and the One who did it “has been raised from among the dead, and glorified in consequence.

Founded on this great work is “peace with God,” of which we read in Rom. 5:1. We understand by this “peace with God” the removal forever of everything which could make the believer uneasy in His holy presence, because He justifies us from all things through our Lord Jesus Christ, and reckons us righteous on the principle of faith without works, What love! Peace with God, then, we repeat it, is founded on the blood of the cross, therefore, when Jesus was risen from among the dead, He said to His disciples, “Peace be unto you”; and “He showed unto them His hands and His side.” He “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification,” therefore we who believe have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace with God is now known — we have it, but only in believing God’s testimony concerning Christ’s finished work. It is to God {that} the Holy Spirit brings us. We have “joy and peace in believing,” not in feelings, or experience, or ordinances, or religious works of any kind, but in believing. About this we cannot be too simple, for, as the apostle says, “It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure.” There is no other ground of assurance in Scripture as to our eternal salvation than God’s testimony to the abiding efficacy of the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Will the reader turn to Rom. 4:3, 5, 18-25; 5:1; 15:13; Heb. 10:9-22, and believe what God says? But some may say,

### WHO ARE BELIEVERS?

When you speak of believers, what do you mean? What is a believer according to Scripture? The question is of all importance; for we read of the believer having everlasting life, of his being justified from all things, and having joy and peace in believing, so it surely is a matter about which we should have divine certainty.

There are not a few who try to persuade themselves that they are believers, because, as they say, they believe the whole Bible, by which they mean they believe it to be a true book. But where has God said He will save a sinner because he assents to the Bible being true There are others who say they are believers because of what they have felt, while many more take the place of believers because they believe they are believers. But where, we ask, does God say that a man shall be saved if he feels this or that, or because he believes he is a believer? There are also many sincere souls who are looking at the work of the Spirit in them, instead of the work of Christ for them; and if they can trace what they suppose to be the Spirit’s work in them they conclude they must be believers. But perhaps the commonest deception in our day consists in persons taking the place of believers because they believe some things about Christ, instead of believing on the Son to the saving of the soul.

Now these and similar wanderings of the human mind do not agree with what Scripture teaches about believing. Such ideas (alas! how common) not only damage souls, but bewilder those who desire to be right with God. They give shelter to empty professors, and hold fast in carnal security those who care only for the present, and are not exercised before God about their eternal future.

In turning to such Scriptures as set forth the grace of God, we find the Lord Jesus Christ presented as the object of faith, while the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, is given as the sole authority for faith. The believing soul receive God's testimony, and knows it to be the truth. "He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal, that God is true" (John 3:33). He is certain that God means what He says, that His word is forever settled in heaven, and will never pass away, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Nothing can be more simple or profoundly grand, for all the glory is thus secured to God, and the blessing to us; and assuredly so, because it is given, not on the principle of law, but on the principle of faith, and flows from the loving heart of the God of all grace through the sacrifice of His own Son.

As to the Lord Jesus Christ being the object of faith, the gospels and epistles abound with instruction and examples. Jesus Himself said,

This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6:40).

Observe, it is not believing something about Jesus, but believing on Him — making the Son of God the object, the blessed Person to whom our hearts look, and His precious blood our only way of approach to God. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). Did not our Lord explain to Nicodemus, by the illustration of the brazen serpent, that He, when "lifted up," would be the only object of saving faith?

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14, 15).

Thus, as the Israelite who was dying from the serpent's bite looked to the object presented to him and "lived," so the sinner now who looks away from himself to the Lord Jesus Christ has eternal life; for "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life" (John 3:36). It is not said, if you try, or if you feel, or if you turn over a new leaf, or if you reform and strive to get better first; no, nothing of the kind; but "whosoever believeth in Him"; or whoever puts his heart's trust in Him, knowing that He died for sinners, that He bids us come, and would have us drop into His open arms that He might have the joy of saving us. Oh yes, He delights to save every sinner that thus looks to Him. His word is, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved."

"He makes no hard condition,

Tis only, Look and live."

But perhaps the reader will say, "I look only to the Lord Jesus as a sinner to a Savior, and approach God only by His precious blood, and yet I cannot say I am sure that I am saved." Now why is this? Is it not because you do not make the written word of God your sole authority as to salvation? It may be you are trying to determine by your own thoughts and feelings whether or not your sins are forgiven. You reason about it and say, Could a true believer have such thoughts and feelings as I have? Should I not be happier than I am if I were truly a believer? Such reasonings

however are not of faith but are the activities of unbelief, and should be treated as false and delusive. The whole question is, What does God say in His Word of one who truly looks away from himself to the Lord Jesus Christ as a sinner to a Savior? Does He say such an one will perish? Nay; He declares they “shall never perish.” Does God say that the sinner must do good works before he can be justified? Certainly not. Quite the contrary. He declares he is justified on the principle of faith without the deeds of the law; that he is saved by grace without religious works of any kind. And further, as he looked out of himself to Christ, and received eternal life, so now he knows that he has it on God’s testimony in His Word. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life” (1John 5:13). When he hearkens only to God’s testimony, he will say, like another —

“I dare not work my soul to save,  
That work my Lord has done;  
But I will work like any slave  
From love to God’s dear Son.”

Again. Perhaps the soul is perturbed as to whether he has the right kind of faith. But Scripture speaks of the faith of God’s people as that which worketh by love. “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” This love, when believed — not merely known, but “known and believed” — causes confidence to spring up in our hearts; so that we love God who has so loved us, and we trust Him, and take Him, according to the word of His grace, as “a just God and Savior.” The point, then, of all importance is not the quality and measure of our faith, but whether we are looking to the right person. Is the Lord Jesus Christ the One we trust in as having saved us by His work of eternal redemption? If so, God declares that “by Him all that believe are justified from all things” justified by His blood, justified on the principle of faith, and have life eternal in Him. Yes, it is God that justifieth; “for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”; and says, “Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” All this, and much more, we know on the authority of God’s unerring word.

Every one who believes on the only-begotten Son of God is then entitled to say, “He loved me, and gave Himself for me; all my sins are forgiven; I am cleansed from all sin, and I am before God whiter than snow; I have passed from death unto life, shall not come into judgment; I know that I have eternal life, and am a child of God.” Sure he is now that if death takes place he will at once be present with the Lord; or should the Lord come, he would be caught up to meet Him in the air. He knows, too, that every step of his earthly pilgrimage God has provided for in the present offices of Christ in heaven on his behalf.” He is able also to save them to the uttermost” (or for evermore) “that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25). Let the reader, if not quite sure of eternal salvation, ponder and mix faith with such Scriptures as are here referred to, and give glory to God: Gal. 1:4, 2:20, 3:26 Acts 10:43; 1 John 2:12; Rev. 1:5; 1 John 5:13; John 5:24; 1 John 3:1, 2, 14; 2 Cor. 5:1; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; 1 John 2:1, 2. When these words are believed to be God’s truth, and to have been written for our present comfort and hope, how can there be either question or fear left? As we sometimes sing —

“Our doubts and fears for ever gone,

For Christ is on the Father's throne.”

We may be certain that God will be as good as His word, and that the Spirit leads us to rely upon it, for He is faithful that promised. “God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” How then can He possibly act contrary to His own word, or deny the eternal value of the work of His own Son?

It is generally the sinner's guilt and burden of his sins which compel him to take refuge in the Savior's open arms. Thankful indeed, and often joyous too, is he when he finds, through the atoning sacrifice of God's Son, that his sins are for ever blotted out, that God is the Justifier and has justified him from all things, given him eternal life, and made him His child for ever. His burden is gone, and he is a happy soul. He delights now in prayer and praise, and in knowing and serving the Lord. He loves the brethren. He finds increasing interest in the written Word, and his heart goes out in ways which are according to the truth. He knows he is an object of divine grace, and flatters himself that he will never be unhappy again. But he knows little of the state of the world as it is in God's sight, or of Satan, who goeth about like a roaring lion, or of the desperate wickedness and deceitfulness of his heart. If, however, he tarry on earth, he will learn in some measure, by the Spirit's teaching, according to the truth of God, what he really is after the flesh, as well as the character of his surroundings. He will find out, to his inexpressible joy, that peace with God is never founded on experience, but on Christ's finished work.

## Peace Founded on Christ's Finished Work

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Peace, then, through the exceeding riches of divine grace, is founded upon a work done for us, a redemption which is accomplished, and made sure to the heart and conscience of the believer on the Lord Jesus Christ by the word of God, brought home to him by the Holy Spirit's power. Both the work and the Word are unchanging and eternal in their efficacy; so that amidst all the tossings and temptations to which a child of God is exposed, his peace rests on that which changeth not. Moreover it is his sweet privilege to turn to the unchangeably loving heart of God his Father, and to His testimony to the infinite value of the work of His own Son, who has "made peace through the blood of His cross," and has assured us that "Christ is the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4).

## Standing and Experience

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But while the ground of the believer's peace with God is unchangeable, it is evident that those who are born of God will have a very different experience from what they could possibly have known before. And it is just here that soul-trouble often comes in; not so much from outward circumstances (though there may be that too), but from what they now discover in themselves. This so occupies their minds, that until they know that deliverance has been wrought for them in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as peace made, they cannot cease from self-occupation. They recognize that there is working within them that which they know to be totally opposed to the holiness of God. Moreover, they resolve and make efforts to overcome this bad self; but, learning their helplessness either to improve self or to overcome self, they are obliged at last to give it up, and cry out for a Deliverer. All this is experience; and let it be again noticed that these humbling and painful lessons as to what we are "in the flesh" and "under law" are turned to good account, so that we may enjoy the deliverance which God in infinite grace has entitled us to have. And this deliverance is through the redemption work of His own Son, by which we are set in a totally new place before Him in Christ in cloudless and changeless favour. If it be a question of peace with God, it is "through our Lord Jesus Christ." If it be how we have deliverance from sinful self and the law, it is "through Jesus Christ our Lord," with a new life in the Spirit in Him risen, so that henceforth we are "not in the flesh," but "in Christ Jesus."

Before looking into the teaching of Scripture as to our deliverance, from "the law of sin and death," it is important that we should distinguish the Christian's standing from his own experience. Our peace and also our standing in Christ are wholly of God, and we have the comfort of both on simply believing God's testimony concerning His own Son. This calls out our hearts in praise and worship. When we have not the realized blessedness of these things, it is because we are taken up with our own thoughts, and have let go God's word about peace and standing; for we have "joy and peace in believing."

But experience is another thing. Here self, reasonings, unbelieving thoughts, and even Satan may come in, and this is why a soul who is unduly taken up with experience is never a bright and joyous Christian. Some one said, "I have never known a person reason himself into peace with God; but I have known many who have reasoned themselves out of it; The truth is that the experience of every Christian is sometimes bright and sometimes dark. We often change, but God changeth not. His word is forever settled in heaven; and Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Look at Paul; as to his peace and standing it was wholly of God, and through Christ and in Christ; but as to experience, he was at one time in unspeakable delight in the third heavens, and shortly after buffeted by a messenger of Satan on earth in indescribable humiliation and distress. But though his experience so changed, his standing and true ground of peace were entirely unaltered. Was he more in Christ when in the third heavens than when under such an attack of Satan on earth? Was Paul less secure in Christ when humbled and tempted by Satan's messenger than when in the third heavens? Certainly not. Let us not fail then to hold with strong confidence that which nothing can shake or alter — the ground of our peace and standing in Christ

Jesus; for it is wholly of God. Our experience may be joyous one day or hour, and very distressing the next. Children of God therefore are not called to live upon their experience (happy, indeed, as it sometimes is, and when otherwise, often turned to profit), but to live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave Himself for us. Happy those who can say —

“My hope is built on nothing less

Than Jesus Christ, God's righteousness;

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,

But wholly lean on Jesus' name

On Christ, the solid rock, I stand,

All other ground is sinking sand.”

## Deliverance: What Is It?

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Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (Rom. 7:24).

Deliverance is a very different thing from overcoming. The truth is, believers need a Deliverer because they cannot overcome “sin in the flesh,” but practically find that it overcomes them. We do overcome the world by our faith, and also much activity of evil doctrine and practice around us, but not “sin in the flesh.” Even those who know deliverance are not told to overcome “sin in the flesh,” nor to crucify it, but by the Spirit to “mortify the deeds of the body,” and not let sin come out; to reckon themselves to have died with Christ. In fact, no one is on the Scripture ground of deliverance so long as he is trying to master the “old man”; for this shows he is not reckoning himself “dead with Christ” as leaving thus been crucified with Him. We surely do not contend with any one we reckon and hold to be dead. Hence the Holy Spirit not only says to believers, “Ye are dead” (or have died) “with Christ,” but He also says, “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:6-11).

### DEAD TO SIN

Many who are painfully sensible of the inward workings of “sin in the flesh” are in bondage and distress, fighting against it, and praying and longing to overcome it. A believer once said to the writer, “I prayed a hundred times a day, Lord, help me to overcome this and overcome that, and got no relief,” because he did not know or receive what Scripture teaches as to this. However, as such find out the incurable badness of the flesh, and are so often brought into captivity to this law of sin which is in their members, they thus learn their own helplessness, and find the need of a Deliverer. Then they cry, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Such then learn that God has wrought this deliverance for them. Blessed be His name!

But a common and more serious mistake is the supposition that “the flesh” is capable of being made better. Those who think so have not received the divine verdict, that “they that are in the flesh cannot please God,” or that “the carnal mind is” (not at, but is) “enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. 8:7, 8). Such is the divine testimony; and the oldest and most devoted believers know that “sin in the flesh,” unchanged in its moral qualities, is still in them, and gets no better. It is “only evil,” and that continually, and, when active, it is in continual and unchanged opposition to God. Its activity is stirred too by God’s commandment, so that the exercised yet undelivered soul, vainly trying to overcome it, finds it too strong for him, and has painfully to say, “When I would do good, evil is present with me.” More and more he becomes self-occupied, becomes increasingly distressed at being led into captivity to the thing he hates, and is really a wretched man (Rom. 7:8, 9, 13).

Perhaps among the most serious blunders of the day are the statements that “sin is rooted out,” “extirpated,” and that there is “entire sanctification through faith.” Such notions are opposed to every principle of the gospel, and set aside the truth as to the believer’s new position or standing in the full favor of God. That every child of God has “sin” in him — that sinful nature which is born of

the flesh and is flesh — there can be no doubt, as he often painfully proves. To imagine that being born again is the changing of a bad nature into a good one is entirely contrary to the truth; for our Lord Himself, when speaking of the new birth, says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). Moreover, the aged apostle John, when inspired to write to babes, young men, and fathers. in Christ, says, “If we say that we have no sin” (observe, not sins, but “sin” — that evil thing “sin in the flesh”) “we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8). Can any statement be more solemn as to the unsoundness of the doctrine of the sinlessness of the flesh? First, those who hold it are self-deceived; secondly, the truth is not in them. How this admonishes us to be subject to God’s word, subject to God’s Son, and subject to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, if we would please the Father as His dear children whom He loves as He loves His Son!

The delivered soul has been set free; but not by “sin” being “rooted out” of him, or “extirpated,” or there being “entire sanctification through faith,” expressions not known in Scripture, or by being “made better,” or by “overcoming” it; but by knowing, on the authority of the word of God, that he is cleared from it, by its having been judged in the sacrifice of God’s own Son, Our Substitute. “For what the law could, not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin” (or by a sacrifice for sin),” condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). We therefore are no longer looked at by God as in the flesh, but as “in Christ Jesus,” “alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” On this account the consciousness of sin dwelling in us is now no excuse for sinning, and no bar to communion with the Father, because we know God has judged it, and bids us so to reckon; and it is no hindrance to our saying, “Come, Lord Jesus!” for He is our life and righteousness. Moreover, we filed our springs of joy and strength, and all our resources, in the risen and ascended Son, who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

The doctrine advanced of late years, that dead with Christ means that our old man is actually dead, and therefore incapable of stirring, is so totally opposed to both Scripture and experience, that it seems unaccountable that any child of God can listen to it for a moment. The passage we have already quoted from. 1 John 1:8 is directly to the point, and most decisive; and the sixth of Romans and other Scriptures are equally so.

That all believers on the Son of God for salvation are entitled to know from the word of God that their “old man” has been crucified with Christ is unquestionably true, but it is “with Christ,” so that we are not actually dead (though we were actually dead in sins, which is another line of truth), but we are substitutionally and judicially dead with Christ. But we are actually alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord, hence we are spoken of in Scripture as in a totally new position, not in the flesh, but “in Christ Jesus.” But as to fact, the flesh is in us, and ready to act through the members of our body if its “lusts” are yielded to. Therefore those who have died with Christ are told not to “obey it” (observe, it is sin, not Satan, here), “in the lusts thereof.” We are not to yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but to yield ourselves unto God as those who are alive from the dead. (See Rom. 6:11, 12, 13, 16.) Is it not evident there would be no sense in such language, if those who are alive to God in Christ had not sin dwelling in them?

But further; that there might be no mistake as to this solemn matter, when the apostle Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live,” he is most careful by the Spirit to add, “Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me”; that is, the life he now actually has is not an improvement or alteration of the

first “I,” for that, being too bad to be made fit for God, could only be judicially put out of His sight by the crucifixion of Christ. “I am” (that which is born of the flesh), “crucified with Christ” — substitutionally and judicially set aside, yet have I actually a new life which is totally distinct from the first “I,” for it is “Christ liveth in me.”

Those who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit have therefore to find, all through their earthly pilgrimage, that “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh and these are contrary the one to the other.” (See Gal. 2:20, 5:17.) The doctrine then that “sin” is not in the true believer, or that it is “extirpated,” or “actually dead” and incapable of stirring; is very contrary to the truth.

Many dear souls are in cloudiness and uncertainty, because they have not received from Scripture-teaching God’s mind as to these things. They may have been quite sure as to the forgiveness of sins, but finding evil desires, pride, self-will, and other workings within, which they hate, and know to be contrary to the holiness of God they become full of fear (no doubt aided by Satan) that, after all, they are deceiving themselves, and do not belong to the Lord. They are terrified at what they discover in themselves, and thus become self-occupied, miserable, and sometimes despair of ever being happy again. The only bit of comfort some have is in finding that others are as miserable as themselves.

That such experiences are often turned to great profit there can be no question, but such persons, though truly converted, have not yet known deliverance; they are occupied with themselves instead of with Christ, where He now is. How can they know their need of a Deliverer unless they have found out that sin in the flesh is too strong for them? Besides, as long as we think we can overcome and deliver ourselves, how can we truly look for a Deliverer?

God will have us learn experimentally that “the flesh profiteth nothing,” and that “in me” (that is, in my flesh) “dwelleth no good thing.” It is a corrupt tree, and cannot bring forth good fruit; and our finding it to be so is very humbling. Old theologians might speak of it as “the plague of our own heart,” and as a necessary kind of law-work before liberty is enjoyed, which is generally, perhaps, but not always, the case. But sooner or later most have to learn that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” and so unsubject to God, so opposed to His will, that self-occupied and undelivered souls are brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. Such cry out for a Deliverer, and to their great relief find God delivers them and sets them free by the death of the cross, and, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, has given them power against the perverse will and activity of sin in the flesh. They are now set free from “the law of sin and death.” They have consciously a new standing, not in the first Adam, but in Christ Jesus; a new state of soul, for instead of bondage and fear as to the law of sin, they enjoy the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free; a new experience, for, knowing they are objects of God’s perfect love and cloudless favor, in and through Christ Jesus, their hearts respond in love to God, and manifesting love to those around. They have also new relationships; for they know they are children of God, members of the body of Christ, and indwelt by the Holy Ghost, who shall also quicken their mortal bodies. They have a new Master, and their great concern is to please Him. Is it any marvel then that such give God thanks? No doubt all through our pilgrimage we learn more thoroughly the good-for-nothingness of ourselves, and the divine grace and divine power that has thus given us deliverance; and though the more spiritually-minded we are the deeper may be the consciousness of sin in us, yet, knowing God has condemned it and judicially set it aside for us forever in the death of His Son, faith finds its

presence no bar to communion with the Father, and can rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Thus we go forward, and, knowing we have two natures, we have to say, "So then with the mind I Myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." Looking off unto Jesus the Lord, as alive to God in Him, the delivered soul Call sing

"Nothing but Christ, as on we tread,  
The gift unpriced — God's living bread;  
With staff in hand, and feet well shod,  
Nothing but Christ — the Christ of God."

"Everything loss for Him below,  
Taking the cross where'er we go;  
Showing to all where once He trod,  
Nothing but Christ — the Christ of God,  
"Nothing save Him in all our ways  
Giving the theme for ceaseless praise;  
OUR WHOLE RESOURCE along the road,  
Nothing but Christ — the Christ of God."

Let us now look a little more particularly at what Scripture further teaches as to this in connection with the law.

#### DEAD TO THE LAW

God is spoken of in the Scriptures as the Justifier of the ungodly who believe, the Reconciler of His enemies, and the Deliverer from the law of sin and death; and all founded on the death of the cross. We are justified by the blood of Christ, "reconciled to God by the death of His Son," and delivered "through Jesus Christ our Lord." All too on the principle of faith, and not by the deeds of the law.

The law instead of justifying condemns; instead of reconciling gives the knowledge of sin; (and instead of delivering brings in all who are under it guilty and under the curse. Yet the law is "holy," because instead of excusing sin it exposes sin; the law is "just," because it judges even the motions of sin as well as sins committed; and the law is "good," if a man use it lawfully. The law also hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth, but has nothing to say to a dead man.

Our sins are forgiven on the ground of Christ's having "died for our sins"; but we are delivered from the distress and power of that evil principle in us "sin in the flesh," by death; for Christ having died, not merely for our sins, but "unto sin once," we have died with Him, and are alive unto God in Him who is alive again, and that forevermore. We are thus "dead to sin" and "dead to the law by the body of Christ," that we might be to Another, who has been raised from among the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God; to whom be everlasting praise for such marvelous deliverance.

The doctrine of the believer, who knows the law, being dead to the law, and of his being now to Another who has been raised up from among the dead as the only source of fruit-bearing, is set forth in the first six verses of Rom. 7. Then follows a supposed case, in which is described the experience of a quickened soul under law trying to obey, struggling to answer to God's just claims, and at length, finding himself powerless, cries out for a deliverer — "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This deliverance is set forth by one who has been delivered. Practical righteousness follows the consciousness of deliverance.

It is clear that the person supposed in Rom. 7 to be speaking and crying out in distress of soul for deliverance is quickened — this is, has life — for

1. He knows that "the law is spiritual"; that is, that it is not merely applicable to outward conduct, but to the inward feelings and desires, and that he is fleshly, sold under sin — the slave of sin.
2. He owns that "the law" is "good," and he resolves to be good, and to do good, but finds that he cannot.
3. He delights in "the law of God," after the inward man, and allows that the commandment is holy, and just, and good. His understanding is enlightened, so that he consents to the law that it is good; his will is changed, for to will is present with him for good; and he has a heart now that can love according to God, for he delights in the law of God after the inward man. These things show that he is born of God; but the context shows also that he is not occupied with Christ, but with self, for it is "I" and "me" all through. He learns, too, his powerlessness against "sin in the flesh." Hence his wretchedness; and the more conscientious the more wretched such must be. But this experience is turned to much blessing through finding out the incurably bad and insubject state of that which is born of the flesh, and then looking away from self to God, and what He has done for us in the death of His Son.

Though the one brought before us in this passage has life, he is not delivered till the end of the chapter, but goes on struggling with the law, because he has not given himself up as thoroughly bad and powerless, through which exercises he learns experimentally

1. That in him — that is, in his flesh — no good dwells.
2. That sin dwells in him. He finds he has a nature which is opposed to God, and that its opposition is provoked by God's holy commandment. This is a terrible discovery for a tender conscience; for with all his resolves, all his good desires and struggling he is conscious of the appalling fact that sin dwells in him — that corrupt tree which only brings forth evil fruit; an active principle of evil ever opposed to God, and always ready to war against the law of his mind. Such is "sin in the flesh."
3. That he has no power to perform the good he would, so that he is brought into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members, With all his good desires and efforts he finds himself unable to overcome indwelling evil, and to work righteousness by law-keeping. He is now consciously "without strength," and has no resources in himself. He looks for good in his flesh, and finds none. He would have no evil within; but finds evil thoughts, lust, pride, self-will, continually rising up, even if nothing come out. Though he seeks to do good, evil is present with him. He tries to have a better experience of himself, to answer to God's just claims, and finds he has no power; so that if he be delivered at all, it must be by another, for he has the sentence of death in himself.

These are profitable lessons, but often learnt through deep distress and humiliation. When a soul has to do with an infinitely holy God, and finds out so painfully that his Adam nature is incurably bad, with no good in that thus sin dwells in him, and is his master, so that he has no power over it, can he be otherwise than truly “wretched”? Hence his cry, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

And how does he get deliverance? By efforts? No. By religious duties? No. By bodily inflictions, sacrifices, and self-denial? No. Not even by earnest prayer; but by simply looking out of self straight to God, and believing His testimony concerning Christ’s work on the cross. Then he finds that God, who knew how bad and helpless he was, has gone before him, and wrought condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). This is not “sins,” but our evil nature, “sin in the flesh.” Thus divine grace in the way of righteous judgment has set us free by death with Christ, and by a new life in Christ risen. When this is known and believed, we can praise and thank God. We have now soul-deliverance, and wait for the deliverance of the body; for “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

God’s purpose is, that we shall be conformed to the image of His Son.” We are set free from the law of sin and death, our old man having been crucified with Christ; so that we are dead to sin, dead to the law, dead too as to the world, dead with Christ, and thus judicially set aside by God Himself as to any standing in the flesh, and brought into another standing; so that God can now say to us, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.” What a deliverance! What freedom! The flesh in us, but we not in the flesh; so that we are to think of ourselves not as in Adam, but as in Christ Jesus; to reckon ourselves to have died indeed unto sin, but alive unto God in our Lord Jesus Christ. What a gracious deliverance, founded on righteousness too, because that evil thing has been condemned and judicially set aside for ever when God condemned sin in the flesh in our spotless Substitute, His own Son.

From the time the believer knows deliverance he has a new experience. Is he not, then, sensible that sin dwells in him? Most certainly, and he may be more so than ever. He has learnt also that neither experience nor self-occupation in any form can give peace, but that faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ always does. He is delivered from himself, “so that as long as the truth engages his heart he dare not give way to self occupation, but he knows that in a Glorified and triumphant Savior all his blessings are forever settled. He lives by the faith of the Son of God who loved him and gave Himself for him, and goes on in service to Him, knowing that he has two natures one that is of God, “and the mind which serves the law of God”; and the other, “the flesh which serves the law of sin.”

#### THE EXPERIENCE OF A DELIVERED SOUL

As to the experience of a delivered soul, then, we may observe that

1. His eye is off self and the law, looks to God in Christ, and becomes occupied with what divine grace has accomplished for him in the death of the cross. He knows (not feels, not hopes for, for him, by the death of His Son, the very deliverance he longs but on the authority of God’s truth he knows) that his old man has for; and, believing God’s word as to this, he is delivered, so that he gives God thanks — “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Observe, his distress was not about the things he had been crucified with Christ, and that he has thus died to sin and to the law

by the body of Christ, and is now alive to God in Him who is risen from the dead. Before he knew deliverance, it was done, but about what he was. He might have long known the forgiveness of his sins; but it was not forgiveness he now sought, but deliverance from the distress and power of an evil nature, which he had proved in his experience to be too strong for him, and only evil, and that continually; in-subject to God, and incurably bad. As the law could not make it better, and as, as it has been often said, offences can be forgiven, but an evil nature can only be dealt with judicially; therefore we are told, "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, self-occupation — "I" and "me"; but now he is before God thanking Him for the deliverance wrought for him through our Lord Jesus Christ. The enjoyment of this new standing in Christ is connected with an amazing change in the state of his soul.

2. He is, now occupied with God's thoughts from God's word, instead of his own feelings and thoughts about himself. He knows that he has two natures of very opposite qualities — "that which is born of the flesh" and "that which is born of the Spirit"; the former he knows God has judiciously set aside by the cross; the latter he knows is that in which God now always views him. He is aware, too, that both these natures are unchanging in their moral qualities for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," and "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Both these natures are in the believer; the one, when it is active, acts out what is "only evil," the other what is for the glory of God. Therefore, in thinking of himself now, he, having believed God, takes sides with God, and recognizing these two natures, he concludes, as we have before noticed, "So then with the mind" (or new nature) "I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh" (or old nature) "the law of sin" (v. 25).

3. He has power over sin. By the gift of the Holy Ghost he now knows that he is connected with a triumphant and glorified Savior. He is conscious of being set free, and that SIN is no longer his master; so that looking up he can say, "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). All his resources now are in Christ. He draws on Him for all he needs. He lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave Himself for him. If he feels sin in the flesh, which he often will, the workings within of evil thoughts, lust, pride, self-will, and unbelief, he remembers that "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" {Rom. 8:3}. It is gone thus for ever to faith under the judgment of God. He is not in the flesh, though he is painfully conscious that the flesh is in him. If he looks within, and learns again and again, as he will all through his sojourn on earth, that in his flesh no good dwells, he looks up again, and knows that his standing now before God nothing can alter, for it is not in the flesh, but in Christ Jesus.

Thus having a new life or nature, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, the two righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in him — love to God, and love to man; though he is not under the law, but under grace, and his practice is, that he walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Rom. 8:1-4).

How gladly his heart can now sing —

"For me, Lord Jesus, Thou hast died,

And I, have died with Thee.

Thou'rt risen, my bands are all untied,  
And now Thou liv'st in me.  
The Father's face of radiant grace,  
Shines now in light on me."

#### THE FIVE LAWS OF THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH OF ROMANS

It may be well to observe that between Rom.7:5 and 8:2 we have five laws brought before us.

1. "The law" is many times mentioned, and refers to the law which was given by Moses, and is often in the same chapter called "the commandment."
2. "The law of God," or the revealed will of God, which a quickened soul delights in, and with his mind seeks to obey but before deliverance finds himself powerless to carry out (vv. 22, 23 , 25).
3. "The law of my mind," or the resolve and purpose of a quickened soul to obey God, against which he found another principle working within him. (v. 23)
4. "The law of sin and death" the principle of antagonism and enmity of the natural man to God, of insubjection to His law or will. As another has said, "That deadly principle which ruled in us before as alive in the flesh."
5. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," the principle and power of that new life which is given us in Christ by the Holy Spirit, who now dwells in us. We are in Christ Jesus, and Christ is in us; and we know it by the Spirit which is given unto us, and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

#### IN WHAT SENSE ARE DELIVERED SOULS SET FREE?

Delivered souls are set free —

1. As to sin in us, by having died to sin, having been crucified with Christ, when God in richest grace to such "condemned sin in the flesh." We know we have thus died with Christ.
2. As to position, we have a perfect and unalterable standing. We are "not in the flesh," but "in Christ Jesus."
3. As to the law, as having died with Christ to it, we are not under it.
4. As to state, Christ liveth in us. Christ is our life. The Holy Spirit has been given to us; so that we are so set free from the law of sin and death that we worship the Father in the sweet consciousness of being His children, and have no confidence in the flesh.
5. As to practice, we "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4).
6. We have a new Master, and are become servants to God.
7. As to relationship, we are children of God, and members of the body of Christ; relationships which can never change.

What a deliverance! What praise and worship the sense of it produces in our hearts! What unceasing thanksgiving to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ it calls forth! What gratitude is manifested in the few words of the delivered one, "I thank God through Jesus Christ!"

Is the reader in the enjoyment of this wondrous deliverance? While you may be often painfully conscious that sin is in you, do you in faith "reckon yourself indeed dead unto it, and therefore have nothing to say to it, but go forward knowing that in God's sight you are in Christ, and not in the flesh? If so, you will go on, in the power of the Holy Ghost, worshiping the Father, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, bearing fruit unto holiness, and waiting for His return from heaven. Surely we can say to the self-occupied, and therefore disconsolate, believer —

## **“Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more.”**

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The comfort then of this deliverance we have in believing God’s testimony to the work of Christ as dead to sin upon the cross. The power for godliness and enjoyment is the Holy Spirit; and we are told that if we are led of the Spirit we are not under the law, and if we walk in the Spirit we shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh (Gal.5:16, 18). Before deliverance it was all “I,” “me,” and “my”; but after deliverance Christ is the object of the heart and the indwelling Spirit the power for holiness, who is the Glorifier and Testifier of the Son. In the consciousness of being God’s children, being in Christ and Christ in us, in a groaning creation yet to be delivered, with a body yet to be conformed to the image of His Son; and often called to resist Satan by being steadfast in the faith, yet, knowing that God is for us, God is our Justifier and our Glorifier, we are entitled to go on waiting for the redemption of our body, being fully persuaded that nothing “shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

### THE HOLY SPIRIT

Before the subject of deliverance is brought out in this epistle to the saints at Rome, the Holy Spirit is only once mentioned in the whole of the first seven chapters; but when deliverance is known, the personal actings and operations of the Spirit dwelling in us are over and over again presented to us; and this is important to notice. As to this we may observe

1. That the Holy Spirit gives us life in Christ Jesus, and sets us free; for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. 3:18).
2. As a divine Person — the Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead — He dwells in us, and shall “quicken your mortal bodies” (v. 11). The Holy Spirit Himself dwells in our bodies. (See 1 Cor. 6:19.)
3. He is our power against all evil and for all fruit-bearing. It is by the Spirit we have power to mortify the deeds of the body. Observe here it does not say “the body,” but “the deeds of the body,” for in this way sin in the flesh comes out (Rom. 8:13).
4. He is in us not as a spirit of bondage, but as “the Spirit of adoption,” to make us know that we are really God’s children. He communicates intelligence, and strengthens affections and motives suited to such an endearing relationship, “whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” He also leads us, “for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. 8:14, 15).
5. He is given to us as the “firstfruits of the Spirit,” because by-and-by the Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh. (v. 23)
6. He is the Helper of our infirmities in prayer, and makes intercession according to God, “with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom. 8:26).
7. He shows us that the whole creation groaneth, and will be delivered and brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God; and He teaches us to wait for the redemption of our body (Rom.

8:23).

Thus we have brought before us something of the power that works in a delivered soul. Ought we not then to “abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost”?

## Concluding Remarks

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But be it remembered that, though so blessedly delivered as to be walking in the liberty and joy of the Holy Spirit, and waiting for God's Son from heaven, we can never forget that the flesh is in us; but the flesh is not us; for before God we are in Christ, and not in the flesh. Yet we never lose the sense that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing, or that the two natures are opposed to each other. We find too that our communion with the Father is interrupted when we trust the flesh and walk in it, though our relationship to the Father never can be altered, for which we adoringly praise and give thanks.

It is also true that the delivered soul groans as having a mortal body; "for we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." In this he groans, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven — his glorified body. He is often painfully conscious that he has a mortal body liable to disease and death (2 Cor. 5; Rom. 8:11). The delivered soul has also groanings within; for being born of God, and having the Holy Spirit, his affections and thoughts are according to Christ, who was the suffering Savior, and is still the rejected One, who is coming, not only for the redemption of our body, but to bring even this groaning creation into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. "Ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). The Lord was a Man of sorrows, and knew what it was to groan in Himself. By the Spirit also believers know what it is to have unutterable groanings in prayer, for "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

How many groans the Lord Jesus will hush when He comes again! How blessed is the thought that when Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, we shall be manifested with Him in glory! (Col. 3:4). Meanwhile may our hearts be taken up with Him where He now is as our eternal treasure, while we stand fast in the liberty wherewith He has made us free, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

## Safety Through the Blood; or, Israel in Egypt

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For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. 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 (Ex. 12:12, 13).

God's sentence of judgment had gone forth. Death was declared against the firstborn throughout all the land of Egypt. His testimony by Moses had been again and again rejected; and now God's hand must smite and cut off. His long-suffering had run its course. He had repeatedly manifested His displeasure, but it had been unheeded. His patience could no longer endure. He said, "All the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die . . . and there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt." Thus death was threatened throughout all the land. God declared it should be. This was enough. His word must stand. The result we know.

And so now the word of God speaks of coming wrath and judgment. God's message of abounding grace in the gospel has been sounding for a long time in men's ears. Many have rejected it. Few believe the record God has given of His Son; and inevitable judgment is pending. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness." The solemn verdict has been announced, "Now is the judgment of this world"; and the Executioner is coming. "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 Thess. 1:7-9). It is certain, then, that the wrath of God is coming, and that it is only a question of time as to its execution. Then surely will be sudden and everlasting destruction, and they shall not escape.

Nor could it be otherwise; for men are not only by nature unclean, but practical transgressors, rebellious, unfit for God's presence. Every trial has only proved their unclean and insubject condition. God tried man first in innocence; then as having a conscience and without law; then under law with many privileges, priesthood, prophets, kings; after this by the personal ministry of His beloved Son; and now by the ministry of divine grace by the Holy Ghost. But all have proved man to be evil and insubject to the will of God. Early in man's course God's testimony was, that

"the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man are only evil, and that continually"; and still the divine declaration is, that the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:7, 8).

This is God's verdict, and the sentence is final. Whether men agree with it or not, it is God's righteous estimate of fallen man. And if men in their natural state do not and cannot please God, how can they be fit for His holy presence? The ways of men invariably prove the willful and insubject state of their hearts; for if God commands, he disobeys; if God loves, man hates. If God sends His Son to bless and save, they hate Him without a cause; they reject Him, saying, "This is

the heir; come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours.” If God preaches peace and remission of sins, they will not believe. As, therefore, the judgment of God upon the Egyptians could no longer be withheld because of their hatred of God and His people, and rejection of His word, so the coming wrath is inevitable because of man’s enmity, and willfulness, and continual insubjection to God and His truth.

But let us not fail to notice that before the judgment actually came upon the firstborn in Egypt, God did, in His great love and pity, proclaim by His servant the way of safety. So He does now by the gospel, blessed be His name! The people of Israel were told to search for and take a lamb without blemish. This was the first thing. It must be without a spot, in order to be a fit type of Him it was intended to represent, who would hundreds of years after this be found here as the holy, pure, and perfect Lamb of God. Then, observe, this spotless, unoffending lamb must be killed, because nothing could meet our need less than the death of the holy Son of God. Most pure and perfect as His life was, yet had He stopped short of death, whatever other sufferings He had endured, no one could have been saved. It was absolutely, imperatively necessary that Jesus should die; for the wages of sin is death; and, blessed be God, Jesus did die — He “died for the ungodly.” This was His perfection, He “was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” For this, too, He came down from heaven; for He “was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.” Then, on the cross bearing sins, and forsaken of God because our sins were upon Him, He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. However precious the life of Jesus was — and most precious it was to God, and is to us — yet His death, the shedding of His blood, the laying down of His life, became necessary to meet the holy and righteous claims of a just God against sin to deliver us from its guilt and condemnation, in order, too, that “we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

Lamb without spot, and according to His own purpose and counsel

He has been slain. He died that the might live –

“The Prince of life in death hath lain,

To clear me from all charge of sin;

And, Lord, from guilt of crimson stain

Thy precious blood hath made me clean.”

And it is the death of Jesus that the apostle Paul first calls attention to when speaking of the gospel which he preached — “I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3).

But true and blessed as it is that Christ has been delivered for our offences, died for our sins, and shed His blood for many, it may now be asked what benefit has it been to us? Many will tell you that they know that Christ died, and shed His blood; but if you press them as to what it has done for them, they will perhaps be unable to say. Why is this? Because they only know these points as historical facts, and have never availed themselves of that precious blood for their own soul’s safety. Hence we are further told that the Israelites used the blood. This was their faith. God told them to take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood, and sprinkle the lintel and the two side-posts of their houses with the blood, and then to go inside and rest in perfect peace. This is

the vital point in this most beautiful narrative. We should not fail to notice the places where the blood was to be sprinkled — the lintel and side-posts of the doors. It was to be exalted by them, looked up to as is certainly the case now with all who really value the blood of Christ. We know that mere professors would put it on the threshold, because, with all their boasted profession, they practically trample under foot the Son of God, and count His precious blood unsanctifying. The Israelite had to place it as it were between him and God, and to know its protecting power also, both on the right hand and on the left. And what can be more assuring to the true believer now, than knowing that he looks to the blood of Christ as between him and God, and that God looks upon him as under its precious sin-cleansing and justifying safety?

But suppose they had said, "The blood is not enough," or, "It cannot be expected that they would be sheltered only by it," would it not have betrayed rank unbelief? But they believed God. They availed themselves of the blood. They gratefully took God's way of shelter. Their safety was in the blood. They sprinkled the lintel and door-posts of their houses, and were safe — unquestionably, perfectly safe. However sinful, ignorant, and unworthy, yet being underneath the shelter of the blood they were safe. However pious they might have been, their safety was not in their piety, but in the blood. Kind and benevolent acts and self-sacrificing ways, however commendable in their place, did not in the least help their security; for it was only through the blood. For God had said, "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." Thus their safety was wholly in the blood; it was to be to them "for a token." And God declared that when He saw the blood He would save all who were under its blessed shelter. How charming and how simple this is! God did not say, when I see your doings, or feelings, or hear your prayers — no; but "when I see the blood." No bars or locks, however numerous or powerful, could the lintel and side-posts was enough. The people might have been young or old, moral or immoral, learned or ignorant, but, having taken refuge beneath the blood-sprinkled lintel, they were perfectly safe. How anxious every believing Israelite must have been to get all his household inside the house marked with the blood! Cannot you imagine some of them asking why they might not go outside the door? and the loving parents saying, "Because God's terrible judgment is coming, and He has promised safety to those only who are in houses which have been marked with the blood of the lamb."

Again, you may easily conceive there were some inside the blood-stained door-posts who were the subjects of doubts and fears, and otherwise lacking comfort. Why? Because they forgot that all their safety was in the blood. If they were taken up with self, their own doings, feelings, fitness, and the like, they would surely be unhappy; but if their minds and hearts rested on the two things God had given them — the blood for a token, and His word for assurance — they would find it an effectual remedy for all doubts and fears. Trusting, then, wholly in the blood, and relying only on what God said about it, would be enough to keep them in perfect peace. And so now, God declares that Jesus has made peace by the blood of His cross, and He now proclaims peace to every one that believeth. And those who do believe, trusting only in the blood of Christ, and relying on what God says, that "whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish," they have peace with God. Oh yes, God's testimony to the all-cleansing virtue of the blood of Jesus is the remedy for all doubts and fears. That precious blood withers up all fleshly confidence, and silences every accusing of conscience; for it tells of sins judged and cleansed. The blood speaks to us of God's

perfect love, even when we were dead in sins; it tells us of peace made, of redemption accomplished, of a new and living way into the holiest, of title to everlasting glory.

Being sheltered by the blood is the vital point. Many stumble here, and the mistake is fatal. They are lost, forever lost, because they reject the blood of Jesus as the only ground of peace and safety; for

“Nothing can for sin atone,

But the blood of Christ alone.”

They say they are sinners, and that Christ is the Savior; but they do not avail themselves of the value of His death. They do not take shelter in His blood as the alone way of safety. This is unbelief. It is refusing to hear Him that speaks from heaven. God has declared that “without the shedding of blood is no remission”; that “it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”; that “in Christ we have redemption through His blood”; and that “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Therefore it is clear that no sin is too black for that precious blood to wash away. Oh no; “it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul”; and happy indeed are those who, taking shelter before God in the blood of Jesus, so rely on His testimony to its perfect efficacy as to be unquestionably assured of perfect safety. Oh the blessedness of God saying to us, Ye are “NOW JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD!”

Remember, then, what God said to those who took Him at His word, and relied on the sheltering power of the blood of the their feelings, nor opinions, nor even prayers, but the blood), and the blood only, was to be the token to them of their perfect safety. Come what might, they were to think of the blood, and be in peace, because they were sheltered by it. “The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are.” This is most blessed. It is the perfect cure for every doubt, or question, or suggestion of the enemy. The divine assurance was of perfect safety, because of the blood. Secondly, God said, “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.” Thus God acted in virtue of the blood. He did not say, when I see your feelings or doings. Oh no; but “when I see the blood, I will pass over you.” Thus we see that the blood answers every claim of God, as well as meets every need of our souls. They were not only in their houses perfectly safe, but they were also entitled to know it, and to be in perfect peace about it.

And what then? Did God leave these people thus safe to do their own will, follow their own opinions, and live as they liked? Or did He prescribe occupation for them as thus secure and separated off for Himself by the blood? Most assuredly He did. He set three things before them, all of which have a solemn voice of instruction to us.

First, they were to put away all leaven out of their houses. Now leaven in Scripture will always be found to represent what is evil. They were thus to separate themselves from all evil. They were to hold to nothing that was unsuitable to God. His word is, “Be ye holy; for I am holy.” So now, being purchased by the blood of Jesus, we are God’s; to be for Him always; to show forth the characteristics of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We are to depart from iniquity, to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all for the glory of God.

Secondly, they were to “eat of the flesh of the lamb roast with fire.” This was their happy occupation, and it loudly admonishes us as to the need of communion with Him who “loved us, and gave Himself for us.” Nothing can go right with us if communion be neglected. We are called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. They might have remembered the sufferings, death, and bloodshedding of the lamb, they might rejoice in their present safety, but they were to be occupied with and feed on the lamb that had been slain. Particular parts of the lamb were specially noticed as provided for them — “His head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof” (Ex. 12:9). And we cannot fail to notice in these words of the Holy Ghost, that it is our privilege to have communion with our blessed Lord as to His mind, as we understand “his head” teaches us. Thus should we be not ignorant, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Intelligently entering into His counsels, purposes, and thoughts, as revealed to us in the word and by the Holy Ghost, is one of our highest present privileges. To be able to say, without fear of contradiction, that “we have the mind of Christ,” and “know the things that are freely given to us of God,” because “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God,” was what an apostle was wont unhesitatingly to pronounce as characterizing the saints of as to His mind and will!

By “his legs” we understand His walk. This also, by the Spirit, through the word, it becomes us to enter into; for He hath left us an example that we should follow His steps — walk as He walked. And I ask, Can any exercise exceed the blessedness of tracing the steps of the blessed Son of God while here? At one time we see Him in a solitary place, or spending a whole night in prayer; at another preaching early in the temple.

Sometimes we behold Him disputing with doctors, or in controversy with rationalistic Pharisees, or infidel Sadducees. Again, He is found by the side of the lake of Gennesaret or walking Jerusalem’s streets, exposed to the temptations of Satan or the hatred of wicked men; He is sitting down in a Pharisee’s house to meat, or talking to a crowd of thousands; or sitting alone on Samaria’s well with an enquiring sinner, or sailing along the sea of Galilee in a boat. In public or in private, every step was obedience to the Father’s will; every word that escaped His holy lips the Father gave Him to say; every act was such a manifestation of the Father that He could say, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Ah, this was true and perfect; all was fruit in due season; but to enter into it, enjoy it, and gather comfort and strength from the believing contemplation of it, is a privilege indeed!

But they were to feed on the “purtenance” also — the inward part. And so the affections of Christ are laid open to us in the precious word of God, and the Spirit delights to take of the things of Christ and show unto us. We know that He did love indeed; that whom He loved when He was in the world, He loved them unto the end; that He loved the Church, and gave Himself for it; and that it was when we were enemies, ungodly, sinners, that He so loved us as willingly to die for us. We know that His heart is so set upon us that He is always in spirit with us, and will never leave nor forsake us; that the same loving heart, though now beating on the throne of God, is ever and unceasingly occupied in ministering to us and caring for us. And so ardently does He long to have us in the glory with Him, that He has not only promised to come again to receive us unto Himself, that where He is we may be also, but His heart still says, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory” (John 17:24). It is thus entering into the affections of Christ, and enjoying His love, that our hearts are lifted up in adoring worship, and rise superior to all the distressing circumstances which may cross our path. Let us

not fail to see, then, that during this present time, before the coming of our Lord, it is our happy privilege to be occupied with the thoughts, the walk, and the love of that Lamb who is now in the midst of the throne as it had been slain.

Thirdly, there is also another point of deep practical importance. They were to eat it in haste; not as those who were settling down in Egypt. On the contrary, they were to be ready to move at the Lord's command. Their position was to be one of entire subjection to the will of God, ready to go at His bidding. We read: "Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's passover" (Ex. 12:11). They had to feed on the lamb with girded loins, staff in hand, and shod feet. They were a distinct and practically separated people from the Egyptians — consciously the Lord's, and in a position ready for whatever He pleased. True it is there was no singing in Egypt as there was afterwards on the other side of the Red Sea, nor was there fighting as when beyond Jordan; but there was conscious peace, shelter from judgment, separation from evil, feeding on the lamb, and the expectation of leaving Egypt forever and dwelling in the land flowing with milk and honey.

And how is it, dear fellow-Christians, with our souls? Are we peacefully enjoying the shelter of the blood, and resting on the precious assurance of God's unerring word? And in the sweet comfort of this, is Christ everything to our hearts — our strength, our joy, our never-failing resource? Are we truly realizing that because we are the redeemed of the Lord we are ready to go, to stay, to wait, to serve, to be wholly and unreservedly His? Oh the blessedness of this rest of soul! nay, more, the enjoyment of the thoughts, the love, the ways of Christ Himself! And though all our joys here, however pure and spiritual, are mixed with human elements of bitterness — bitter herbs — yet we must find Him to be the spring of joy, the strength of life, the true never-ending source of all that is pure and blissful. Thanks be unto God for "the precious blood of Christ!"

"The perfect righteousness of God  
Is witnessed in the Savior's blood;  
'Tis in the cross of Christ we trace  
His righteousness, yet wondrous grace.  
God could not pass the sinner by;  
His sin demands that he must die  
But in the cross of Christ we see  
How God can save, yet righteous be.  
The sin is laid on Jesus' head;  
'Tis in His blood sin's debt is paid;  
Stern justice can demand no more,  
And mercy can dispense her store!  
The sinner who believes is free,

Can say, 'The Savior died for me';  
Can point to the atoning blood,  
And say, This made my peace with God."

## Deliverance; or, the Red Sea

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The Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore (Ex. 14:30).

To be safely sheltered from the judgment of God by the blood of the lamb, was the precious lesson taught by the passover. But many a soul has great distress, and becomes subject to the assaults of the adversary, even after having taken refuge in the blood of Jesus as the only shelter from the wrath to come. To be really trusting in the atoning work of Christ, as the alone foundation of peace and safety, is one thing; to know deliverance from self, and the world, and Satan, is another. Hence many souls have deep conflict, and are longing for deliverance, as they say, from the plague of their own heart, because they do not see how wondrously God has wrought this for them in the work of Jesus on the cross, as their substitute. It may be through much soul-conflict and distress that some are brought so entirely to look out of self as to fix the eye of their heart only upon the Lord Jesus; but this very sorrowful experience is usually turned to good account. All who are taught of God must surely be instructed according to the divine word, that "the flesh profiteth nothing," and sooner or later learn in their experience something of the truth, that "no flesh shall glory in His presence, and he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Conscious shelter then from the wrath to come some have, who know not the enjoyment of the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. It is this latter subject which this chapter brings before us, and it is of the deepest importance to our souls to learn clearly from Scripture the Lord's own mind concerning this great deliverance. It is most remarkable that the place of the occurrence of this scene should be Pihahiroth, for it means "the entrance into liberty"; and the end of this chapter, and the singing which followed, tells us what a time of unprecedented happiness and rejoicing it was.

They had learned in time of deepest trial the safety afforded them by the blood of the lamb, according to the word of the Lord. He had indeed passed over them. While death, with its attendant miseries, by the messenger of God's judgment, was in every other house, yet in virtue of the blood of the lamb they had been preserved. Thus kept in safety by the blood, and brought out of Egypt by the power of God, under His peculiar guidance, the pillar of cloud over them by day, and pillar of fire by night, it was not till they came to the borders of the Red Sea that their fears and anguish appear to have began. What immediately gave rise to it was lifting up their eyes and seeing the hosts of Pharaoh, his mighty men with their chariots and horses hotly pursuing them. The waves of the Red Sea rolling before them, and the king of Egypt with his armed soldiers immediately behind them, they found themselves in such circumstances of peril and distress as they never expected, and for which they were totally unprepared. At once their minds became occupied with themselves, their dangers, and their enemies; in fact, their circumstances. Their misery was intense. They wished they had never left Egypt. They murmured against Moses. We read,

When Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the Lord. And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness" (Ex. 14:10-12).

Such were the expressions of distress and misery which the children of Israel now gave forth, and it reminds us of another utterance of later date, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" Their case seemed to them so hopeless that they contemplated dying in the wilderness, and regretted they had ever left Egypt; they said that they actually preferred the cruel bondage of serving the Egyptians, to their present fear and anguish at the prospect of being wholly exterminated by Pharaoh and his hosts. But is it possible that these are the same people who only a short time before had personally experienced that they were objects of divine favor, and before whom went to lead them, the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night? Yes, they are the same people; and though they called unto the Lord, when they lifted up their eyes and beheld the vast multitude of Egyptian soldiers marching after them, they murmured against Moses, despondently spoke of dying in the wilderness, and wrongly judged themselves worse off than when made to serve the Egyptians with rigor at the brick-kiln. In short, they never were so miserable before. It is a vivid illustration of what many a soul passes through now. The picture is not overdrawn. It is a life-like delineation, for it is drawn by a divine hand, and abounds with most instructive lessons.

The fact is, that what at first usually brings a soul to realize its need of the Savior is the sense of guilt on account of sins committed. The burden of known transgressions, and therefore of deserved judgment, is so intolerable that the distressed heart cries out, "What must I do to be saved?" and is rejoiced to find shelter in the blood of Jesus shed for the remission of sins. The joy is often very great at finding in the cross of Christ that God is both "a just God and a Savior," and hope therefore of eternal salvation lights up the dark scene where before only gloom and despondency had occupied the soul. Like the children of Israel in Egypt, they happily experience the sheltering value of the blood, and flatter themselves with the idea that they will never be unhappy again. So on they move in their Christian career. They tread a new path. They realize, too, that God is with them. Their backs are turned upon this Egypt world, and with their faces toward the promised rest — "the land flowing with milk and honey" — they go onward, according to their knowledge of the will and guidance of God, little suspecting what is so soon and so deeply to try them.

A question, as yet unknown to them, must sooner or later exercise their consciences before God. Hitherto it was the transgressions they had knowingly committed against an infinitely holy, sin-hating God, as we have noticed, that had distressed them; and this they knew had all been met for them, and their souls were happy in believing in the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus. But now the question is about the flesh (prefigured by the Egyptians, men of flesh), the nature from which all transgressions spring; or, as Scripture calls it, our "old man." The fact is, the old nature, that which is born of the flesh, is totally unfit for God's presence or His service; and to learn this experimentally cannot but be very distressing. To accept the doctrine because we see it in

Scripture is simple enough; but to work it out in God's sight, that "in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," is very humiliating. This was not in the least suspected by many of us when we first gladly accepted the shelter which the precious blood of the cross gave to our sin-stricken souls. Still, it has to be learned that the nature that did the sins, the old man, is so totally and irremediably bad — not subject to God, neither indeed can be — that the only way which God could deal with it was to judge it, and put it thus away out of His sight. The distress connected with this second lesson is often far greater than the distress of the first. Still, it is the way of learning deliverance, and the only way, as I judge, of entrance into the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

When the soul that has known remission of sins through the blood of Jesus finds within, every now and then, an innumerable host of lusts, and pride, and murmurings, and complainings cropping up, and even if they do not break out, are ready at any moment to do so, the heart is ready to say, "Am I a Christian? Am I not deceived? I thought Christianity would make me always happy, and yet I am so miserable! I never supposed a real Christian could have known such abominable and unclean workings within as I have. Surely I am worse now than when I was in bondage to sin, and Satan, and the world. Besides, resolutions do not drive these things out. Neither do ordinances eradicate them. They recoil after the severest bodily mortifications and self-denial. They boldly intrude in my prayers and holiest exercises. Now and then they lie dormant, but spring up again on the smallest occasions. No one knows this but myself and God; for I am speaking of workings within. I cannot overcome them. So that, distressed and almost ready to give up my profession of Christ's name, I cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Now, observe here, this is not, "O wicked sins that I have done!" but, "O wretched man that I am!" It is "the flesh, with its affections and lusts" the nature that did the sins. And when our souls realize these evil workings within, headed by the power of Satan, threatening to have dominion over us, it becomes to us as clear and formidable an host as Pharaoh and his horsemen and army were to the timid and distressed children of Israel. And as nothing could pacify them but deliverance from this mighty power which was against them, and contrary to God, so nothing less than the setting aside in judgment of these hosts of evil within could meet the requirements of our consciences, because we know that nothing less could satisfy an infinitely holy God. And this, as we shall see, is what Scripture teaches us has been done. Blessed be the God of all grace!

Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace (Ex. 14:13).

Here we see that God Himself would deliver them from this mighty host of flesh, and from Pharaoh its leader, and that by His own power, without any help whatever, or struggle, or interference of man, He would do it all completely, and forever. It should also be their comfort and blessing to look and see what God did; and so when a soul has learned its thorough helplessness for overcoming flesh and Satan, and mastering self with its ten thousand forms of deceitfulness and desperate wickedness, and at last gives completely up, and cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" {Rom. 7}. He is taught by the Holy Spirit that God has delivered him through Jesus Christ our Lord. And looking back upon Him when hanging on the cross, and viewing Him now as risen from among the dead, he is led triumphantly to reply to his own question, I "thank God through Jesus Christ." He really knows what it is to "stand still" to "see"

by faith a risen Savior, who was crucified, and he gives praise to God.

It is well to see how fully God has met our need in the accomplished work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only did Jesus once suffer for sins the just for the unjust, but He, the holy One, was made sin for us; and we are told that God condemned "sin in the flesh" in Him. So that not only sins, the fruit unto death of an evil nature, have been suffered for, in that Jesus shed His blood for many for the remission of sins; but "sin in the flesh," the nature that did the sins, has been so judicially "condemned" by God, and set aside as no longer to have a place before Him, that the Holy Ghost declares that our "old man" (observe here it is not old sins, but old man) "is crucified with Him." And so completely is this recognized in Scripture that believers are now said to be "not in the flesh," but "in Christ Jesus." But what I want now to trace in Scripture is, that God has not only judged sins on Jesus on the cross, who purged them by His blood, but that He has judicially set aside as only fit for judgment our "old man" in Jesus our substitute, as truly as He swept away in judgment Pharaoh and all his hosts, so that the children of Israel might see them dead, and for ever after reckon them dead, and no longer living.

In tracing the narrative in our chapter, we shall see that all is accomplished by the power of God. It is redemption by power. In Egypt it was redemption by blood. In Christ crucified, risen and ascended, we have both.

In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

The blood must be the basis of all our blessing. "Without the shedding of blood is no remission." But we want more than remission of sins; we need to be brought to glory, and it is the work of Jesus to "bring many sons to glory." It needed the power of God to bring those who had been sheltered by blood, not only clean out of Egypt, but to deliver them from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, by bringing them through death and judgment on entirely new ground. Just as we are now, in Christ risen, not only rescued from this present evil world, but delivered from the dominion of sin and Satan, and put on entirely new ground, the other side of death. Looking back upon the cross, we see it has all been accomplished through death and judgment; so that death and judgment are now behind us; risen life in Christ possessed by us, for we are risen with Christ; and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We, who were of the world, in our sins, in the flesh, and it may be under law, are now spoken of in Scripture as "not of the world," "washed from our sins," "not in the flesh," "not under law," but "in Christ." All this may be traced in this scene of the Red Sea, the waters of death, forming to man's eye an insuperable barrier to his ever entering the land. But by the power of God the waters of the Red Sea were divided so as to form a dry path, with a liquid wall on either side. The children of Israel were commanded to "go forward." All now that was needed was faith, in order to avail themselves of the value of this work of God, to pass through according to His word. This they did. "By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land." They gladly accepted God's way of deliverance. "The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on the right hand, and on the left." Thus they crossed the Red Sea. But what of their enemies which they so feared? The very work of God that was to His people their deliverance and salvation, was the very work that forever put away through death and judgment their enemies from their sight, so that they never saw them living afterwards. And does not all this bring home forcibly to our soul's remembrance the

accomplished work of Jesus? When we think of deliverance from sin and Satan, death and judgment, where do we look? Did He not “through death destroy him that had the power of death,” which is the Devil? Was not our “old man” — the flesh, with its mighty hosts of affections and lusts, crucified with Him? And now, having life in Him who is out of death, risen with Christ, cannot we ‘ see death and judgment behind us, as surely as Israel saw the tumultuous waves of the Red Sea rolling behind them instead of before them?

But let us never forget that God judged Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the men of flesh. With hearts filled with bitter enmity to the things and people of God (for such is the flesh — see Rom. 8) the Egyptians hotly pursued after Israel. Like the carnal man still, they rushed madly and unconsciously into the very jaws of God’s devouring judgment. So fatally ignorant and dark is man. They appeared to succeed for a little while. The counterfeit of faith in those men of flesh seemed, too, to prosper for a moment. But, alas! alas! God was against them, and not for them. They had not believed God. They had not the shelter of the blood. God marked their evil ways, and, as usual, He took the wise in their own craftiness; for God will save His own, and He must judge the wicked. How awfully solemn this is! We read, “God looked unto the host of the Egyptians”; God “troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels,” until they said, “Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.” We also read that “the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.” Thus God wrought.

How very blessed is the contemplation of this double aspect of the work of Christ, in executing judgment upon all our enemies, and bringing us out by His mighty power in raising Christ from among the dead, and giving us life and liberty forever in Him. Glorious triumph! All is of God; to Him be all the glory!

It was indeed the salvation of the Lord. This is the first time, if I mistake not, that the word “salvation” occurs in Holy Scripture. It was a salvation from death and judgment, from Pharaoh and all the Egyptians. They saw the salvation of the Lord. And we read — “Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.” They were now looking at these great enemies of their souls as dead upon the sea shore, set aside forever by the judicial hand of the living God. And so, believing what God says, that “our old man is crucified with Christ,” we are enjoined to reckon ourselves to have died indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in our Lord Jesus Christ. As long as we reckon the old man to be living, and strive against him and his actings, we give him importance; but when, in virtue of the substitution-work of Jesus, we see that we have died, we give the flesh no place, no importance, we do not recognize it, have no confidence in it, so that our eyes are taken off self altogether, and fixed upon a risen Christ; or, if we think of the old nature and its actings, we only see it dead, we reckon it to have died in the cross of Christ, as having been under divine judgment. As long as a believer is thinking of old self and its lusts, watching against, and providing against it, he is reckoning the old man to be living, and not dead, and fear, and distress, and weakness, and failure of various kinds come out in consequence. We read that “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts.” And when? Was it not when they accepted God’s judgment of it in the cross? We are therefore never told in the epistles to crucify the flesh, or to mortify the flesh, and for this reason, because God in His abundant grace has condemned it already — it has been crucified with Christ. But we are told to mortify, or put to death, the members of our body — the unclean actings of this old nature still in us, which we are to reckon to have died. We are also

taught to mortify, or put to death, by the Spirit, not the flesh still in us, but its actings, “the deeds of the body.” All this is known only in the way of faith. Faith sees that God has done it, and believes God when He says He has done it. This is simple enough. To the apostle it was such a reality that he said, “I am crucified.” And if you ask, “When?” he replies, “with Christ.” And lest we should suppose it to be an alteration merely of the old nature, he adds, “Nevertheless I live; yet not I (not the old nature improved), but Christ liveth in me.” It is a new nature that lives; it is Christ his life living in him; for he is a new creation in Christ Jesus.

We do well then to remember the wide contrast in Israel’s experience when they looked at the Egyptians as living and when they looked at them as dead. So we may be assured that if we look into the workings of flesh in us, and be occupied with it as if living, we must not expect to be otherwise than very wretched. The most miserable people on earth, perhaps, are Christians who have given themselves up to self-occupation, and the more so because they are God-fearing and conscientious; for, having learned the folly of the world’s resources, they have nothing to lift them outside self, or to keep them from being occupied with it; and surely the happiest people on earth are those who “rejoice in Christ Jesus, worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Blessed are those, who, knowing they have risen life in a risen Christ, do reckon themselves to have died indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in our Lord Jesus Christ. Such worship and adore God as their God and Father, and praise Him for all His wondrous grace to them in Christ Jesus, and through His precious blood.

We therefore find when Israel had got the other side of the Red Sea how happy they were. It was a joyous moment; for they were entirely occupied with God, and what He had done. They were not occupied with self, nor with circumstances, but, I repeat, with God. “Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. . . Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.” What a burst of triumph this is! And what a change from the sore distress they were in such a short time before! But now they had seen God’s salvation, and His great deliverance from the formidable host of the Egyptians, which threatened to swallow them up in their wrath. They were thus in liberty and on new ground. God had delivered them, God had given them the victory; and now they are taken up with Him, praising Him, and giving the glory due unto His name, ascribing all the power and glory of their deliverance to Him. How simple, and yet how very blessed, this is! What secrets are unfolded, what resources are opened up to us, in the contemplation of a crucified and risen Savior!

And where, dear Christian friends, do we take our place before God? Is it on the Egypt side of the Red Sea, or the other? You cannot be happy in the former position. There was no singing in Egypt, though perfect safety; for they were sheltered by the blood of the lamb. But after that, when they arrived at Pihahiroth, perhaps they never had such fear and distress of soul. And yet, if you had asked them, Have you not been under the shelter of the blood? they would have replied, “Yes.” Have you not been brought out of Egypt, and into the wilderness, by the direct power of God? “Yes.” Is not the token of God’s care and presence in the cloudy pillar by day, and the fiery

pillar by night, continually with you? “Yes.” Then why this deep, this bitter distress? The inquirer would immediately be directed to Pharaoh and all his hosts, who were so hotly pursuing them, shut in as they were by the Red Sea. Deliverance, they would say, we want; and nothing but a mightier power than any they had ever known could effect it. Oh the misery, the self-occupation, the lack of joy and gladness of those who take their place, though secure no doubt, on Egypt’s side of the Red Sea!

And, oh, how rich the blessing, when assured by the infallible word of God, and we see the accomplishment in the finished and triumphant work of Jesus through death, of deliverance judicially from the “old man,” from the world, from Satan, and know we have the present possession of eternal life in Christ risen! We praise and give thanks. We rejoice in Christ Jesus our life. We look back upon the Egypt world as a long way off, and as knowing that the waters of death and judgment, which have swallowed up all that was against us, roll between us and it. Thus have we peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; we are consciously objects of divine favor, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. If when in Egypt we were met, through the grace of God, by the blood of the Lamb, it is at the Red Sea we have to do with Christ risen out of death, who is our life. And this makes all the difference. Blessed as it is to know the shelter of the blood, it is more blessed to know that we have resurrection life — a life that lives the other side of death and judgment, an imperishable life, a life that naturally springs upward and onward, a life that has tastes, feelings, joys, and habits suited to God, and cannot rest the sole of her foot in the region of sin and Satan. Of such, too, it is written, “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then ye also shall appear with Him in glory” (Col. 3:4). We may joyfully sing

“O Lord, Thou now art risen!

Thy travail now is o’er;

For sin Thou once hast suffered –

Thou liv’st to die no more!

Sin, death, and hell are vanquished

By Thee, who’rt now our Head;

And, lo! we share Thy triumphs,

Thou First-born from the dead.

“Into {unto} Thy death baptized,

We own with Thee we died;

With Thee, our life, we’re risen,

And shall be glorified.

From sin, the world, and Satan,

We’re ransomed by Thy blood;

And here would walk as strangers

Alive with Thee to God.”

## Possession: or, the Other Side of Jordan

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Joshua 5, 6

It was by the power of God that the people of Israel were brought into the land. The only way for them out of Egypt to Canaan was by the blood of the lamb, and by the mighty power of God bringing them through death and judgment, as set forth by the Red Sea, and Jordan. Their feet are now in the land where God's eyes and God's blessings always are. All is of God. They now possess what they had so long desired. They did not hope to be in the land, for they were there, and every inch they stood upon was for their own enjoyment. This is to us like the truth of Ephesians, where we are looked at as now made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. This is beyond being dead and risen, it is ascension truth — in Christ, who is in the heavenlies. This is where the grace of God has set every believer. He may not know it, but He is accepted in the beloved, blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and sitting in heavenly places in Christ. To know this as a divine reality gives true rest of soul. We are then, as to spiritual life and standing, in Christ in heavenly places, or, according to the type, in the land now. To know it as a doctrine of Scripture is one thing; for our souls so to believe it as to enter into the holiest, inside the rent veil, and thus joyfully possess the good land, so to speak, is quite another thing. But we fall short of the blessings God would have us now embrace, if we do not enter upon, possess, and enjoy this blessed nearness to God now; for He who is ascended into heaven, and sitting on God's right hand, being our life, righteousness, and sanctification, we are alive for evermore-righteous as He is righteous, and as near to God as He is, because of the abundant grace and power of God to us-ward in Christ. When consciously near, entering where God has set us, we do not try to get near, and strive to be there, but rejoice that He has set us there. It is all His own doing, by His almighty power, and the exceeding riches of His grace. There is no effort in this; we see Jesus our Lord, our Head, our Life, our Righteousness, and rejoice that we are in Him there; yea, filled to the full in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power. As we sometimes sing with reverence and joy —

“So near, so very near to God,

Nearer I cannot be;

For in the person of His Son

I am as near as He.

“So dear, so very dear to God,

More dear I cannot be;

The love wherewith He loves His Son,

Such is His love to me.”

Such is the height to which the grace and power of God in Christ, through His precious blood, have brought us, so that we wait for nothing less than the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, at the coming of our Lord. It is more than being sheltered by the blood of the Lamb, as Israel in Egypt sets forth; more than deliverance from the power of flesh and Satan, through death and judgment, and having risen life in the wilderness; it is being already in the possession and enjoyment of heavenly places by faith, in spiritual life and power. Every Christian is there; but how few seem to know it! We may say all Christians are in some sense in all three places. As a fact, we are still in this Egypt world, though! not of it; as to experience, we are passing through a wilderness, a region which is dry and barren, and can yield nothing for our souls; and as to faith, we are in spiritual life, and standing in Christ Jesus in heavenly places. Only notice in Joshua, that after they entered the land it was not all peace and joy, but, on the contrary, conflict; for they had to fight hard in order to stand where God had brought them, and enjoy what God had given them. And so with us, for we who have entered upon our present possession in the heavenlies have to wrestle with wicked spirits in heavenly places in order to stand there, and enjoy the blessings given to us of God. And such only, be it observed, know this sharp and terrible conflict — a conflict “not against flesh and blood,” but “against wicked spirits in high or heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

The first thing the children of Israel were enjoined to do, after they had passed through Jordan, carried twelve stones into the land, and set up twelve in the midst of Jordan, to the praise of God, was to make “sharp knives,” and to circumcise again the second time. It is an injunction of all importance; for “the flesh” cannot be used in the service of God, cannot be recognized as having any place in the heavenlies. It must be wholly and decidedly renounced. Whether it be the flesh in its moral, intellectual, or religious phases, (alas, how deceitful it is, and desperately wicked!) it must be wholly denied. Its wisdom as well as its righteousness, its ways of refinement as well as of violence and corruption, its iniquity, both ecclesiastical and social, must be entirely set aside — its claims, its pretensions, its pride, its lusts, in short, the “old man” must be completely “put off.” It needs a sharp knife; but it must be done. The attempt to be something in the flesh denies the work of Christ on the cross, and that we have died with Christ. To set it up in Christians in any form is to undermine the real value of the cross, and sooner or later to lose the present enjoyment of that work in the soul. In short, to reckon ourselves to be living in the flesh, instead of having died with Christ and alive in Him, is to deny that we have either crossed the Red Sea or Jordan, and practically to confess that we are still in Egypt among the “hoppers to be saved,” instead of possessing and enjoying our true place and new relationships and privileges as seated in Christ Jesus in heavenly places.

Secondly, they celebrated the ground of their deliverance and present blessings in keeping the passover. The Passover was never forgotten; it was celebrated in Egypt, in the wilderness, in the land. So with us, it should be and will be had in everlasting remembrance, that the death and blood-shedding of the Lamb of God is the alone foundation of all our blessings. If now we have entered inside the veil, it is by the blood of Jesus. Our title to be there forever is, that Jesus has entered into heaven itself by His own blood. This is never to be forgotten, for

“Our every joy on earth, in heaven,

We owe it to His blood.”

The Passover then was celebrated by them after they entered the land. Now we are told that Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us; and do we ever enter into the real purport and value of the Lord's supper, unless we eat it as those who are already in Christ in the heavenlies, and therefore look back upon His death upon the cross? that is, we see Him now crowned with glory and honor, and remember Him as He was in death for us on the cross. We remember Jesus, and show His death till He come. And, seeing that we owe all our present and eternal blessings to the never-ending virtue of His precious blood, how can we ever forget such rich, such abundant mercy, in thus loving us, washing us from our sins in His own blood, and making us kings and priests unto God and His Father? (v. 10).

Thirdly, they feasted; they ate of "the old corn of the land" (v. 11). They were no longer dependent upon the ministry of a daily supply morning by morning, faithful and unailing as it was; but they now had a continuous unceasing supply always at hand. So, now, souls who are consciously in heavenly places in Christ can feed unceasingly on Him; they enjoy not merely a living Christ who came down to die, but a risen and ascended Christ gone up on high. They feed on a triumphant, glorified Christ — the true corn of wheat that belongs to heaven. They know the fullness of Christ is theirs. They can now enter into God's thoughts, God's estimate of Him, who raised Him from the dead, and said, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." They see Him crowned with glory and honor. He is the object of their desire, as well as the accomplisher of their eternal salvation. They see in that Man in the glory, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, the all-worthy One, to whom angels, and principalities, and powers are made subject. They gaze by faith on Him, are attracted to Him, commanded by Him, satisfied with Him, rejoice in Him — their strength, their sufficiency, their righteousness, their glory. They find Him enough to fill their hearts and minds; and so ardently do they long for unbroken fellowship with Him, that the fervent utterance of their hearts is —

"O fix our earnest gaze

So wholly, Lord, on Thee,

That with Thy beauty occupied,

We elsewhere none may see!"

They feed, then, upon "the old corn of the land," the fullness of an ever-living, ever-loving Savior in the glory. It is on Christ Himself they now feast, and draw their strength and comfort in blessed consciousness that they are in Him who is their everlasting life and righteousness.

Fourthly, this life of faith qualifies us for the fight of faith. Feasting first, then fighting. This is the divine order; and for this the captain of the Lord of hosts appears as their strength. They had to take possession of what God had given them, and all on which the sole of their foot rested, and only so much could they enjoy. Conflict, then, sharp conflict with the enemies in the land, was before them, and it would have been overwhelming did they not know that the Lord of hosts was with them. Joshua, when near Jericho, "lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man with a drawn sword in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come" This was a most affecting reply to Joshua; for he fell on his face and worshiped, and said, "What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy

shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And he did so.” And what is this but the Lord appearing to His servant as the Commander and strength of His people? How forcibly it reminds us of the divine injunction by the apostle: “Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” And besides these points, do we not see what exercise of soul we need in order to fully place ourselves in the hands of the Lord, and realize that He is for us and with us? Thus we should encourage ourselves in Him, and lean not on fleshly energy, but on His almighty arm, and faithfulness and love. It cannot, I believe, be too strongly impressed upon our souls, that we need divine energy to take possession of, and to enjoy our blessings in heavenly places in Christ — that Satan’s chief aim is to keep us from being inside the veil, the true ground of worship and communion, and the true power for all service. Severed from Christ, we are perfect weakness; we can do nothing. Abiding in Him, we can do all things through His strength; so that to be “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,” we must have to do with the Lord Himself, as those who “reckon ourselves to have died indeed unto sin, and to be alive unto God in our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then we look to the Lord for all, trust in Him about all, see Him in all, and lean on Him concerning all. True Christian life is, therefore, living a life of faith upon the Son of God, abiding in Him, having all our resources in Him. Then, like in Israel’s history, the victory will be ours; and when fleshly confidence is relied on, instead of the strength of the Lord, we shall bitterly feel that the enemy will triumph. May we know, beloved, day by day, more the constant practical reality of being strong in the Lord; for it is written, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee.”

“Though numerous hosts of mighty foes,  
Though earth and hell our way oppose,  
He safely leads His saints along:  
His loving-kindness, oh how strong!”

Thus far we have considered the enjoyment and exercise of soul Godward in those who had crossed the dried-up Jordan and taken possession of the land. Of necessity their feelings and experiences are different from what they were in Egypt, or in the wilderness. But having traced a little their exercises and ways Godward in the fifth chapter, let us now look at their ways manward as set forth in the sixth chapter.

Firstly, notice the distinct place of separation they necessarily took before men, because of their having been separated unto God. The two will doubtless always go together, for the sense of nearness to God will throw us off from that which we know to be contrary to God. They were outside the Jericho-world, for it was doomed; it was exposed to judgment, and only waited for the time of execution. This the men of Jericho did not believe; but it did not alter the fact, any more than people saying the world is getting better does not alter the verdict passed upon it — “Now is the judgment of this world.” But, observe, this is not all; they were outside with the ark — type of Christ. A Pharisee or a monk can separate himself from society; but to look at this world as a great system reared up by men and Satan, and see people too (unbelievers) exposed to the judgment of God, having rejected Christ, and to take a place with Christ, outside of it politically, religiously, socially, is the true path. It is because we are in Christ up there, and forever united to Him by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, that we are necessarily linked with Christ down here, and that must be in separation from the world, for they have rejected Him, and still reject. The answer was,

and still is, "We will not have this man to reign over us." No marvel, therefore, that the Holy Ghost enjoins us, when speaking of unbelievers, to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor 6:17, 18).

Secondly, they took the, place of obedience. And how can it be otherwise with us, if we realize the fact that we are united to Him in the heavenlies? When Paul, going up to Damascus, unexpectedly caught a sight of Jesus in the glory, and heard from His own precious lips, "Why persecutest thou ME," was not the immediate response of His deeply-moved heart, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" for he surely felt at once, that nothing less than full surrender to the Lord's claims would be consistent with the exceeding grace that He had manifested. If we then are really conscious of our nothingness in the flesh, as having died with Christ, and enter into and possess the blessing and enjoyment of being one with Him who is in the glory, how can we have lower thoughts than that

"Love so amazing, so divine

Demands our soul, our life, our all"?

All this is beautifully set forth in the charming picture we are contemplating. It is a divinely-illustrated scene. The people now standing on the promised land, now enjoying the long-promised, long-looked-for region flowing with milk and honey, having feasted on the old corn, and conscious of the captain of the Lord's host being with them, they surrender themselves entirely to the appointed guidance, and take the place of obedience so plainly marked out for them, whether to walk or rest, to be quiet or to shout, to sound the horn or not, according to the word of the Lord. And this proved to be the path of blessing. Their testimony was simply owning the Lord, hearkening to His word, doing His will, though it were to manifest to the people of Jericho a spectacle of weakness and folly. But if the priests made a long blast with "rams' horns," and for six days all the men of war compassed the city once each day with them and the ark, and on the seventh day seven times, it was according to the word of the Lord; and what could be a truer testimony? If they neither shouted, nor made any noise with their voice, neither let any word proceed out of their mouth, until Joshua bade them shout, according to the word of the Lord, it was in obedience to the will of the Lord. We know what success followed. And surely the path of obedience must always be with us the path of blessing. We are sanctified unto obedience. "We realize the presence of the Lord with us only in the path of obedience. To speak of union with Christ in the heavens, and our present blessings and standing in Him, while our hearts are unexercised as to obedience to the Lord in our present circumstances, is only to show that we traffic in high-flown doctrines, and know little of their true meaning in our souls. Or, it may betray the solemn fact that the natural mind has been amusing itself with an intellectual gratification on the doctrines of Scripture, without the heart in any way grasping their precious heaven-born, unfathomable, eternal realities. The great proof of love to our Lord Jesus Christ now is, that we keep His commandments, prize His sayings, and treasure up His words; and to such, and to such alone, He has promised to manifest Himself, and make them know that He and the Father have taken up their abode with them. Precious, profoundly precious realities for our enjoyment! and suited surely to such as have been rescued from this present evil age, who have died with Christ, and now live in Him, and who are characterized as not walking after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It is this entire consecration to the will of the Lord, which is so needed in these times of laxity and

carelessness — whole-hearted dedication to Him, full surrender to His never-failing guidance, and the paramount authority of His holy word at all cost. Such hearts can truly sing

“While here, to do His will be mine,

And His to fix my time of rest.”

Thirdly, let us look at their service. What was it? Was it to do what they could to improve Jericho? Was it to endeavor to elevate the masses of the inhabitants of this strongly-fortified and well-built city? Was it to tell them that the world was getting better? Certainly not; for none of these things would be true. But it was to save sinners out of this already doomed city. God’s testimony had gone out against it. The city, the king, and all the men of valor were given to Joshua for destruction; but there were some to be saved out of it — some who would not come into judgment, and the faithful servants of God were intent on saving them. A harlot among them there was; but she was a woman of faith, had shown it by favoring the people of God, and openly confessed her faith by putting the scarlet line in the window. Little could the wise and mighty men of this famous city suspect for a moment what the scarlet line meant, even if they had seen it. Not so, however, with God’s people. For when the wall had fallen down flat, the city was taken, and the process of utter destruction was about to begin, at Joshua’s command “the young men that were spies went in, and brought out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her kindred, and left them without the camp of Israel.” And they burnt the city with fire. We are told that “Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father’s household, and all that she had, . . . because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho,” at whose command she had bound the “scarlet line” in the window. (See Josh. 2:18; 6:22-25.)

And does not this exquisite picture again read a further lesson of precious instruction to us? For if the world through which we are passing is under condemnation, if Jesus meant what He said when He uttered the solemn verdict, “Now is the judgment of this world,” and if there be not one line of Scripture enjoining us to improve it, what is our position toward it, but as separated ones by the grace of God to minister to souls, and seek to bring them out? to do good to people in it, and expect no good thing from it? Hence the Holy Spirit pointedly marks out the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus as those who “went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles for His name’s sake.” And surely, if our place now is oneness with Christ in the heavenlies, what can our position here be but separation unto the Lord in fellowship with every member of His body (the only membership in the New Testament), as those who warn men of their danger, and seek to save believing Rahabs? Thus God’s way has been, and still is, in judgment to remember mercy. And how blessed this service is to

“Call them in” — the Jew, the Gentile;

Bid the stranger to the feast;

Call them in — the rich, the noble,

From the highest to the least.

Forth the Father runs to meet them,

He hath all their sorrows seen;

Robe, and ring and royal sandals,

Wait the lost ones — “call them in.”

But here is also a solemn word of warning against lust and covetousness; for we are beset with snares on every hand. One of those who had professed faithfulness to God saw a Babylonish garment and a wedge of gold, and coveted them. Accordingly, he took them, and hid them in his house; but God saw him, and His judgment fell heavily in consequence. And the common baits of Satan to professing Christians now we all know to be love of dress — “the Babylonish garment,” and the possession of wealth — “the wedge of gold.” And it is very remarkable that corrupted Christianity, the Babylon of the Apocalypse, is likened to a woman arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls. Joshua warned the people to keep themselves from the accursed thing, lest they made themselves accursed; but Achan heeded it not, and by his sin brought misery and defeat upon all the people, as well as swift destruction upon himself. May the Lord graciously keep us true to Himself in heart and purpose, and from loving the world, or the things of the world. But, for this, we need to have our souls happily occupied with Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

And now, beloved fellow-Christians, let us see how far we have entered into this place and character of blessing and testimony into which God has so mercifully brought us. Do we habitually take our place before God as those who are already brought nigh to Him in Christ Jesus in heavenly places? Are we struggling to get near through the workings of a spirit of bondage and unbelief? or do we bless and praise God that our “old man was crucified with Christ,” and that we are a new creation, and have life, standing, righteousness, and nearness to God in Christ ascended? We have it, I say; for God has given it to us; He has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Blessed rest for our souls! solid and abiding peace too! Well, being then in all the acceptance of Christ Himself, in whom we are made accepted, do we know what it is practically to put a sharp knife to “the flesh,” and to rejoice in Christ Jesus, in the precious remembrance of His body given and His blood shed for us? Do we know what it is in God’s presence, in the holiest of all, to feast on an ever-living, ever-loving Christ — “the old corn of the land”? and, having feasted, do we realize strength to fight against Satan and his hosts for the possession of those heavenly blessings which God has given us in Christ now to enjoy? And, as to our position here before men, do we maintain the place of separation with Christ as not of the world, because it is doomed to judgment? And do we seek to tread the path of obedience, and bear the testimony of the Lord, whatever reproach and censure it may bring upon us? Do we labor to bring souls out of it, by the power of the precious blood of Jesus, the true “scarlet line”? And do we steadfastly decline the fashionable and costly attire, and the will-be-rich spirit of this present age? These are solemn, all-important questions for our consciences, beloved fellow-Christians, on which our present joy or sorrow, as well as the glory or dishonor of the Lord, hang. May we unhesitatingly grasp and delight in our present blessings, in the spirit of communion and worship, in Christ inside the veil, and know them as deep and unfading realities, so that we may be found in the true place of separation and faithfulness before men as to bring praise and glory to God.

Many conflicts the children of Israel had to encounter, and trials of various kinds, before the glory of Solomon dawned upon their land; still, having been sheltered by the blood, redeemed out of

Egypt by the power of God, brought right through the Red Sea and Jordan, they were now standing upon the inheritance which God had given them, and could rejoice in hope of glory in their land, and the subjugation of all their enemies. Nay, more, according to the teaching of Moses, for “the days of heaven upon earth,” when a greater than Solomon will rule.

The children of Israel were no doubt a people taken up by God in the flesh, and blessed as a nation on the earth; but without doubt they remarkably set forth in type many things both for our instruction and warning. But believers now are actually redeemed, delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. We are safe for ever, because of the eternal efficacy of the blood of Jesus. Having life — eternal life — in Christ risen and ascended, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Him, it is for us, as before noticed, to enter upon, take possession of, and with worshiping hearts abide in this place of wondrous blessing in Christ which God has given to us; and also, thus blessed and made known to us by the Holy Ghost, to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Thus enjoying our present standing and relationships in Christ, how can we but obey the will of God, and wait for His Son from heaven?

“Ascended now in glory bright,  
Life-giving Head Thou art;  
Nor life, nor death, nor depth, nor height,  
Thy saints and Thee can part.  
Then teach us, Lord, to know and own  
The wondrous mystery,  
That Thou in heaven with us art one,  
And we are one with Thee!  
And soon shall come that glorious day,  
When, seated on Thy throne,  
Thou shalt to wondering worlds display  
That Thou with us art one.”

## The Unreasonableness of Rationalism

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Rationalism is not faith; and “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Faith believes what God says, and because He says it. If we believe because we prove it, or because it is sanctioned by others, it is not faith in God. Faith is subjection of the heart to the testimony of God. Such do not say, we will not believe till we understand, but they say, “By faith we understand.” We believe on the authority of God, and want no other sanction. “He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true” (John 3:33).

That man has reasoning faculties capable of arriving at correct conclusions about natural things no one questions, but “the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit God.” If men were unfallen and unalienated, or if God had not spoken, and the Holy Spirit had not come, there might be some excuse for men forming their own opinions, and reasoning out conclusions as to divine things; but, as we have in the written word a revelation from God (and all Scripture is give by inspiration of God), every attempt at reasoning about it instead of receiving it and obeying it, only shows the unreasonableness of such a course; the insubjection of the mind to the will of God. We shall find that such activities, if closely examined, not only manifest pretension and unbelief, but undermine the foundations of the truth, and give nothing — absolutely nothing, on which a sin-burdened soul may rest.

1st. The unreasonableness of Rationalism comes out in man’s assumption that he is competent to judge what God will do, or ought to do; and that he is capable of deducing opinions about Scripture instead of bowing to its divine authority. He thus fatally errs in sitting upon a judgment-seat, and arraigning God and His word before it, instead of coming as a creature before the judgment-seat, and receiving the divine verdict. Is it not a totally unreasonable course for men to pursue? Besides, does not Scripture plainly say that “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor. 2:14). Is it to be wondered at that such persons never know present “peace with God”? A true Christian has joy and peace in believing not through reasoning. We never knew anyone reason himself into peace with God, but we have known many reason themselves out of it. The Christian is admonished again. to cast down “imagnations,” or reasonings, etc. (2 Cor. 10:5).

2nd. The unreasonableness of Rationalism is manifest in ignoring the fact that man is a fallen sinner in Adam, thus “under sin,” and exposed to death and judgement. Why is man exposed to death and judgement? We are told because of sin. How came sin into the world? By one man. We read, “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Thus through man, Adam, all are fallen, all are sinners, all are by nature children of wrath, and therefore exposed to death and judgement. This is why the natural man is not spoken of in Scripture as competent to deduce opinions, and form conclusions in divine things, but is pronounced to be “dead in trespasses and sins,” and that he “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” The rationalist’s idea, therefore, that God having given him reasoning powers, he ought not to believe anything he cannot reason out and understand, will not

avail, for, since our nature's fall in Adam, "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and man is so alienated from God that his will is opposed to God, his mind "not subject to the law God, neither indeed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7, 8). Where then is his competency to judge and to receive the things of God? Besides, how came man with the knowledge of good, and evil? And further, Is it reasonable to suppose that God would bring in atonement for sin at the costly price of His own Son, if men were not guilty and helpless sinners? Is not the thought wholly unreasonable that God would send His Son into the world to accomplish eternal redemption, if we were not under sill, fallen sinners in Adam? And if men were not lost, would He have given His only-begotten Son; to save? Redemption from what? Whom to save? If men could have become righteous by their own doings, Christ would not, need not have die for sinners; for "if righteousness come by law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

3rd. The unreasonableness of Rationalism is also apparent in the active search by antiquaries, in history, geology, and other sciences, for proofs as to whether the Scriptures are true or as if God's thoughts and ways must be cast into in molds which a always according to men's notions of science. Were the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ according to scientific principles, or not? To an upright exercised soul before God, Scripture needs no further proof and witness of its truth than itself. If Moses spake of the commandments which he gave to the children of Israel as the commandments of Jehovah their God, and warned them against adding to, or diminishing from that word, their divine authenticity was abundantly confirmed by prophets who were raised up after him, by our Lord Himself, and by the apostles, who quoted freely from the writings of Moses. As to the imperishable certainty of the word, we find Isaiah saying, "The word of our God shall stand for ever." David said; "For ever, O Lord, the word is settled in heaven." Prophets so uttered the words of God that they boldly exclaimed, "Thus saith the Lord": or "The word of the Lord which came unto Jonah, Micah, Zephaniah, and others. Our Lord also spake of "the Scriptures," and declared that "the Scripture cannot be broken"; and so endorsed the divine authenticity and authority of the books of Moses, that He said, "If ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Again, after His resurrection from the dead, He so taught the divine authenticity of the Old Testament that He said unto His disciples, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning me" (Luke 24:44). As to His own ministry He authoritatively said, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day"; and, "heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The apostle Paul teaches us that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable," etc. Peter says, "The word of the Lord endureth for ever," and he ranks Paul's epistles with "the other Scriptures." John so recognizes the canon of Scripture as the word of God, and now complete that he says,

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of I the holy city, and from the things which are written ill this book (Rev. 22:18, 19).

Is it not then most unreasonable, in the face of such manifold testimonies of inspired prophets and apostles, and also of the Lord Himself, that men should still labor to form opinions and to deduce conclusions from the Scriptures, instead of being subject to them as the word of God? Besides, the difficulties of geologists about various strata, and marine shells and boulders being found at

great depths and heights, and the antiquaries' fossils and remains showing as they say gigantic beasts once existed not united to this globe, are still answered by the remarkable silence of Scripture as to what might have occurred between the first and second verses of the first of Genesis. In Gen. 1:1, we are merely told that God in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, and we reckon that what God created must have been perfect. The second verse describes a chaotic state, hence the conclusion that some great overthrow must have taken place between the first two verses. The present state of the earth began to be formed in the 3rd verse, not the chaotic state found in v. 2. Whether thousands of years intervened between vv. 1 and 3 or not, or what existed then we are not told, only the earth seems to have been submerged; for on the third day God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so." Between the first and second verses the divine record leaves abundant room for vast changes to have taken place. The truth is that a divinely-wrought faith bows to the word of God because it is God's revelation; whereas unbelief is busy with excuses for relying on its own opinions and conclusions. What will men's opinions and traditions be worth when they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory?

4th. The unreasonableness of Rationalism is further exhibited by its advocates caviling with the word of God, without reading and examining it carefully and continuously; hence the ignorance of Scripture manifested by most of their champions. It is evident that they who merely look at the Bible as a compilation of historical facts, of which the writers were witnesses, and which they recorded as their memory led them, have not the word of God at all; but only a collection of men's opinions and writings. The truth however is that the prophecy which came in old time was not by the will of man, but what "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." It is certain also that instead of giving their own opinions, or relating what they knew, they did not fully know the meaning of what they were inspired to communicate; hence we read, they inquired and searched diligently . . . searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and glories which should follow." (See 1 Pet. 1:21; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11.) In the New Testament also we find that though John was in the garden of Gethsemane with Jesus, when in an agony He fell on His face and prayed, "and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground," yet John makes no mention of it in his gospel; whereas Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who were not present, record it fully. It is certain then that both in the Old Testament and the New we do not find the authors merely writing, what they knew and personally understood, as men generally write their books. We are told therefore that "God" not only "spake" in time past unto the fathers in the prophets," but hath in those last days spoken unto in His Son." We have then the inspired word of God.

5th. The unreasonableness of rationalism reaches its climax in the rejection of the only way in which God in grace, holiness, in truth, and justice, could save a sinner. That which makes the strong man shrink from death, dread the Lord's coming, and tremble at the thought of Judgment, is the fear of God's dealing with him in strict justice; whereas in the cross—the death, and shedding of the blood of Christ — sin is judged already, righteousness established, truth fulfilled according to holiness, God vindicated, satisfied and glorified, and all that believe are justified from all things, set free, and brought into new and everlasting relationship with God as His children. Oh, the unreasonableness of disputing instead of receiving this great salvation! What utter folly for men to be arguing instead of fleeing from the wrath to come! What can be more foolish than to refuse

Him. that speaketh from heaven — who brings salvation to us in Christ, and through His blood, to be had at once on the principle of faith, without money and without price? How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”

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