

PRESENT TESTIMONY VOLUME 14, 1865

by G.V. Wigram

A collection of articles and writings by G.V. Wigram from Present Testimony Volume 14, 1865, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

40 Chapters

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Either in Adam or in Christ

I HAVE thought, on weighing the request of some as to a paper on the great principles of our being dead and risen with Christ, that a review of the progressive character of the 'blessing connected, in scripture, with it might be profitable for all. I have not the expectation of satisfying myself in what I shall present; but, as my purpose is to follow scripture, I may be able, perhaps, in the Lord's goodness, to help others.

There are three great points to consider as regards sin, (and I speak and purpose speaking entirely in a practical way)-sins actually committed-involving us in guilt as regards deeds done in the body; the principle of sin as a law in our members, sin in the flesh; and separation from God. But in this last respect there are two aspects, separation of heart, and judicial separation. Both must be remedied. The root of all sin is not in the lusts in which it is so hatefully shown, but in having a will of our own, the departure of the will from God, the will to be independent, free to do our own will,- " who is Lord over us?" When we do thus separate from God-we must have something, we cannot suffice to ourselves, and we sink into lusts, lusts in which our will works. There is indeed another element which seems to me to have preceded both lust and will in man's fall, namely, distrust of God, which left him to the working of both. Happy, and confiding in God, he had no need to seek happiness in any other way; but Satan suggested to him that God had kept, the forbidden fruit back from him, because if he ate it he would be as Elohim. By this, lust got entrance. All this has to be remedied, and remedied according to the glory of God. Is that remedy a return to the old estate of man, a restoration or re-establishment of his original paradisaical state; or is it that which is new-new, that is, as regards man? The answer is simple: it is wholly new. It is blessing in a second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. Man remains man, and the individual remains the individual; all their responsibility in their previous state is recognized, and the glory of God provided for and vindicated as to it; but the state and blessing into which they are brought, as brought to God, is a wholly new one. It is God's way of doing, this, and what he has done, which we are now to inquire into, according to the true and blessed word of God, who only can reveal these things.

It may be well first to turn to the responsibility of man as such, though the thoughts and purposes of God preceded it all. But the revelation of them came after it, as we shall notice, with the Lord's help, further on.

Responsibility attaches to every creature who is placed in intelligent relationship with God. Wherever there is consciousness of such relationship, there is obligation to God in it. It may be in a holy nature, and obedience -delighted in; in an innocent one, and little else but thankfulness known, save so far, as we know it was in Adam, as obedience may be tested by commandment; or it may be in a state of sin, which does not alter the fact of relationship in which the fallen being stands, but his whole state is in such relative place. The first, is the condition of the elect angels preserved by God, so that they have not left their first estate. The second, was Adam's state before his fall. We may stay a moment to -contemplate a state which passed away as if it were one

intended only to give a lovely picture, that men might learn what it was, but incapable of lasting, the bright but peaceful freshness of morn for one who rises early to a busy and wearying day. Little is said of it, nothing of its joys. It was the true and real, but transitory, ushering in of that in which all moral truth has been brought out-of a scene which results for faith in a head anointed with oil, and a cup running over, favor that is better than life, and dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, our Father's house, but not in itself the green pastures and waters of quietness which are the natural effect of the hand and guidance of the Good Shepherd.

The knowledge of good and evil was not there, the enjoyment of a good conscience was not there in the exercises which keep it without offense. There could not be a bad one. The peaceful natural enjoyment of goodness was there and no thought of evil disturbed it.. God could be thanked and praised, His gifts enjoyed. Evil, sin, sorrow, conflict, passions were unknown. It was a peaceful scene and a happy scene, occupation in what gave natural pleasure, innocent pleasure. They were set to dress the garden and keep it, and all was pleasant there; no want was there, nor would suggest itself. One only moral point bore another character, and tested willing subjection to God, namely, the ready acceptance of the Divine will by a confiding soul. If man was to be a moral being at all, he must have obligation and responsibility somewhere: not in any object which supposed evil lusts,-for he had none. It was obedience that was required, and simply obedience. What was forbidden, would have been no sin had it not been forbidden. It did not suppose sin in man: confidence in God would have made it easy and a delight. A dutiful child assumes the goodness as well as the rightness of a command, and both as well as the duty to obey. In fact up, to the temptation all went on in peace. This was the difference of man's and Satan's sin. He abode not in the truth, for there was no truth in him. Man was tempted into the knowledge of good and evil. The destruction. of confidence, as we have said, lets in will and lust. It was dreadful to belie God's goodness in the midst of blessing, and trust one who could call it in question. All was really over then, for man was away from God, had ceased to believe What he said, had ceased to believe Him good. Alas, no uncommon case since. But will and lust brought in this transgression at once, when the heart was away from God, and trusted itself and Satan-the history of our hearts ever since. Man had departed from God, sin had come in, transgression, and (by the fall) conscience, or the knowledge of good and evil. Up to this, righteousness and holiness were unknown to man, they require the knowledge of good and evil. But thus, the normal relationship of man with God had closed. His responsibility could not, for he was a creature, and God his' creator: nor was that all. He had himself the knowledge of good and evil, or (to make it intelligible) of right and wrong. His responsibility had taken the form of conscience, and relationship to a God forsaken indeed, but known, so far better as conscience makes us know Him, as a judge.

Into God's rest, the fourth chapter of the Hebrews teaches us man in creation never entered. Such natural peacefulness without combat, as he may then have had for a moment, cannot be on earth now; there remaineth a rest for the people of God, where nature, then a new and divine one, will have it in fullness of blessing in God's own presence, where all will be according to the nature we have, without a disturbing element, yea, according to God's own nature, we enter into Gov's rest.

But on the fall, sin and responsibility ran on together in the place into which, man, who had fled from God, was drawn out by God; and the world as such began. But man was separated from God, though He overruled all things. That which God has wrought for us as regards this state, and the accomplishment of His own counsels in grace towards us, is this; perfectly meeting, according.

to His own righteous requirements, our state of sin connected with man's responsibility; closing as to our standing before Him, our whole Adam life; laying a foundation, according to His own glory, for our being with Himself in that glory, in a new state altogether; giving us the life in which we can enjoy it; giving us the energy, revelations, and power of the Holy Ghost, by which in this scene of combat and ruin, we may, (through what He has given and done) be in relationship with Him according to the place He has set us in, and look forward to the glory; and finally, introducing us into the rest with and like Him, who being our title, is also our forerunner in glory: All in and through the second man, the last Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As to responsibility and its effects I may be brief. The place in which man was set according to God, the only place he had 'according to Him, he has wholly lost; he had turned away from God in heart, had fled from Him, through his newly acquired conscience, and has been driven out, -that life and sin might not go on, forever, together in the world. Return was precluded. This state and standing was in itself that of one wholly lost. Man was away from God. Mercies might, and surely did, remain, but place and relationship were wholly gone. In the judgment on the author of the calamity, a promise was given, not to Adam, but on which faith might rest, that another should arise, and, through his once suffering, totally destroy the power of him who had brought in the ruin. The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. This was simple promise and grace in another than Adam.

The two great principles of responsibility and life-giving had been set up in the garden. Man had failed in the first; and, having failed, was debarred in that state, from perpetuating evil by the second. He could not be innocent and die. He could not be a sinner, and allowed to live forever, in the place of responsibility, in wickedness. It would have been a horror. Return to innocence is in the nature of things' impossible when good and evil are known.

But man was to be tested, having the knowledge of good and evil, and the 'pretention, with it, to be good and righteous. The result, though of all importance, I state rapidly, because it is surely familiar to most of your readers; I only, as necessary, recall it here.

Man has been tried: left to himself, though not without ample testimony and ground for faith: the earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence; and the judgment of God, in the deluge, closed a scene which had become intolerable' in every way.

But the world, yet again, would not retain God in its knowledge; and, in its various national divisions, worshipped devils; for some god man must have.

God then began the distinct history of grace.

Promises were given to one called out, who became the spiritual, and, to some, even natural head, of a race set apart to God: Abraham became the heir of the world. The great spring of hope being thus established, as the Apostle reasons in the Galatians, the question of responsibility, on the footing of revelation and special -relationship, was renewed, -first, on the ground of requirement, man's obligations according to the true and perfect rule of them; secondly, on the ground of promise and grace.

The law was given by Moses. Israel, God's called and redeemed people, undertook to inherit the blessing, on the footing 'of doing all that Jehovah said to them; and a just rule of outward relative

conduct to God and their neighbor, and that reaching to desire or coveting, was given to them. We know the result. The golden calf began, the Babylonish captivity closed, their path.

The second trial was on the ground of promise and grace, when Christ came and presented Himself in forgiving mercy and healing to Israel. It resulted in His rejection by His people; and they were finally cast off, to be restored only by sovereign grace, the grace of one faithful, at any rate, to his own promises. Isa. 40-48 treats one, 49.- 53. the other of these trials..

But this last proof of man's state went further. It was really a trial of man as man. As regards the law, the blessed Lord brought out a deeper essence than the ten words,-loving God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves; and as regards grace, He was the goodness of God manifest in the flesh, the light of men. It was not promise, it was the love of God, God present in love. But man's sin was thus fully brought out. For His love he had. hatred. As God in love, he was hated, instead of loved with all the heart; as man, in gracious goodness and righteousness, they were His murderers instead of loving Him as themselves; they hated Him without a cause. This was, too, in full grace; Gentile wickedness was full; law-breaking, in Israel, already accomplished. But though in the way to the judge, they would not be reconciled; and man's heart was fully tested by God's goodness.

The cross was the distinct witness of Israel's and man's sin. The mind of the flesh, of what man was in himself was enmity against God. It had been fully tried and tested and that by goodness. Its evil and will were only more and more brought out. It was manifested in its will (pure evil in the presence of pure good) not only by sins, though these abounded, but by the principle of sin, and hatred of God. Amiable creature qualities there might be but enmity against God, and self, was its root.

Was the flesh to be restored, or a new life and blessing to be brought in, by Christianity? Is it the restoration of the first Adam, or salvation in and by the second? Where is the place, the scene, in which the blessing is to have its result? To what does the life it is enjoyed in belong? To answer these questions we must look to the positive revelation of God, however that may be made good in the conscience when known.

I say, we must look to the purpose of God as revealed, to know fully what His mind as to this is. But we must look to the responsibility of man, too; to the guilt under' which he was lying as child Of the first fallen Adam.. For God's glory is affected by it.

I shall first call the attention of your readers to the purpose of God himself, as revealed in Scripture. Eph. 3 (as other passages) speaks of a mystery hidden from ages and generations, hid in God. But it adds, that now the manifold wisdom of God is known by the Church, " according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." There was, then, a plan, before ever responsibility began, of glorifying God by the Church, in and with Jesus our Lord. This precedes responsibility, which begins with creature relationship, and was dependent on it. Creation was the sphere of responsibility. Purpose belonged to God.

Nor is this all. Paul's apostleship (Titus 1:2) was " in hope of eternal life, which. God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." So, 2 Tim. 1:9, God "bath saved us, and called us with a holy calling according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us, in Christ Jesus,. before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."

The life which we have as Christians, new in us, is in origin before the worlds. " God bath given us eternal life, and that life is in His Son; he that hath the Son hath life"-that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto

us. This present world and time is but the scene where all this is developed and brought to light. Thus in Eph. 3, " to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God.' So in Titus, " but bath in due times manifested His word by preaching." So in 2 Tim. 1:10, "but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light by here, that there is a predestination of individuals, important as that may be in its place, but that the Church,-eternal life,-the promise of that life,--our present saving and calling, had their place before the world existed. The life itself had, in the person of the blessed Son of God. And though from Adam individuals may have been, and were, quickened, they differed nothing from servants, in their revealed standing. Life, the Church, incorruptibility, our salvation and calling, have been brought to light and revealed, yea, as to the Church, begin to exist since Christ came. But we must now inquire into the application of these truths, and how they are brought to bear on the child of Adam; how he has a part in the blessings contemplated in this purpose.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The blessed Son of God became son of man; the last Adam; the second man. He came as man before God, born of a woman, as under the law, Gal. 4:4. In both he perfectly glorified God; walked as the obedient man, in the midst of temptation; and, as the law in the highest sense required, loved God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself; victorious over Satan, as the first Adam had succumbed to him; he humbled himself in obedience instead of seeking to exalt himself by disobeying. In this, God was perfectly glorified by man, in Christ's person. Responsibility, even in the most adverse circumstances, and every way put to the proof, fully met, so that as man God had nothing to claim, and found his. delight. This was perfect as between him and God, but redeemed no one. He abode alone, only so much the more perfect because he was, but still alone in it. As to

His own perfectness, He could have had twelve legions. of angels, but He did not come for that. Still this was an immense truth as to man and God and His glory. God had been perfectly glorified by a man there in the scene where- He had been dishonored. - This in itself was of immense moment and to the glory of our blessed Lord. Not that this could be tested without His death, for the question was till then, (not for faith but for fact),.. will He be faithful in spite of everything? He was. His death threw back the light of absolute unmingled obedience on all His life from His birth on. He came to do God's will; His will was the spring of all He. did; and if He had to learn what obedience was, in this world of sin, where it had to be made good, He was in spite of all suffering, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He was the blessed, gracious,, perfect man,- but the obedient man, as Adam had been the disobedient one-the obedient one in the midst of all suffering and.-. trial, as Adam was disobedient in the midst of blessings.. In this, God had been glorified in man; but He was thinking too of all of us, of His glory in grace and purr: pose. He was going to bring many sons to glory. But these sons were found in sin, guilty too, in fact, in every-way. All that the first Adam produced hateful to God, was thus to be removed; and 'where grace and God. Himself had been revealed in Christ, it only, as we have seen, drew out hatred in man. Other questions arose, though questions connected with sin, in one way or another; death which stood out against man; and as regards the Jews, there was the breach of the law and

positive transgression; and in rejecting Christ, not only man's common sin, but the rejection and the loss of the promises in Messiah the promised seed. Messiah was cut off and (surely the only true translation), had nothing. But we may now see what, in the substance and purpose of it, was the import of the cross. As regards the previous Adam state and its fruits, and I may add any special transgressions of Jews against law,-it was by the deep and blessed work of atonement, the total putting away of all guilt for the believer, all the fruits of the old nature were blotted out and effaced, gone out of God's sight so it proved the righteousness of God as passing over in forbearance, the sins of Old Testament saints, Rom. 3 and sets the believer now, Jew or Gentile, righteously clear in God's sight before Him in peace. This as-regards the sins of the old Adam, or if a Jew, transgression also under law. They are gone. The work as to this had a double character. The blood sprinkled on the mercy seat so that it should be presented to all,-it was the righteousness of God towards all; and the sins of His whole people were confessed and borne, so that there were none to impute.

This met responsibility as to the old man. As children of Adam we were under guilt in this place and condition. All is perfectly cleared and we are before God white as snow, righteously owned as clear. But there was the tree as well as the fruit. The evil will, the lawlessness of nature, Jew or Gentile, by nature the children of wrath. But Christ has died a sacrifice for sin. "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, (a sacrifice for sin, *περι ἡμαρτίας*) condemned sin in the flesh." Sin in the flesh, the principle of evil working and producing sin in us is condemned. I do not say sins are but sin; but it is condemned when a sacrifice was made for it, when it was put away by Christ's sacrifice of Himself. It is not forgiven. We, doubtless, are, as to it. An evil principle cannot properly be forgiven; it is condemned, but put away judicially by atonement in the sight of God by Christ's sacrifice. All that constituted the old man in God's sight is put away wholly in Christ's death, and that judicially by a work which has glorified God as to it, was what became Him.

Thus far God has been glorified by Christ's perfect personal obedience as man, and by His work in atonement for sin. This work indeed for sin goes much further. The whole new estate of the universe is founded on it. As remarked elsewhere, all God's dealings with this world are now on the ground that sin is there; must be, because it is there. But Christ has wrought a work in virtue of which God's relationship with the world, the new heavens and the new earth, when all is accomplished, will be on the ground neither of sin nor of innocence: but of righteousness. He is the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin, (not the sins, that He does not do as falsely cited), of the world. But as to this object of Christ's death, that is, as to man as a sinful child of Adam and sin in the flesh, this is not all. Christ not only died in the consummation of ages, i. e. when man's probation was fully gone through, as we have seen, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, but He died to sin. He, the sinless one, closed all His connection with the whole fallen Adamic scene, and Adamic state, by death. He, ever sinless in it, had come into this scene in grace, walked up and down in it, had been tempted in all points, and carried obedience on to death, and had thus done with the whole scene, and the sin which He had to say to as long as He was here, though it had only proved at the end, as a result, that He knew no sin, that He lived as a man out of it and above it; had He stopped short of death that could not have been said, though now we can say so; we know He died to it. He was no longer connected with man in the state in which life in man was sin, though in him sinless but: tempted, and by temptation even to death proved sinless..

Satan had tried to introduce sin into it in Him, but in vain; and now He died to it, ceased to be associated with man in that way absolutely by death. The estate of life in which He had thus to say to man ceased. He destroyed the power of death then, and annulled his power who had it, by undergoing the full extent of and rose into another condition of human life, in which man had never yet been at all, the first fruits of those that slept. But the resurrection of Christ was not only divine power in life, and that in Christ Himself, who had power to lay down life and power to take it again. There was another truth in it. Divine righteousness was shown in it. He could not be holden by it, but all the Father's glory was involved in this resurrection. His person made it impossible He could be holden of it. His Father's glory, all that the Son was to Him, was concerned in His resurrection; but, having perfectly glorified God in dying and finished His Father's work, Divine righteousness was involved in His resurrection. And He was raised and "righteousness identified with a new state into which man in Him was brought, and more than that indeed, for more was justly due to Him; He was set in glory as man at the right hand Of God.

But for this another thing was needed. Not only did the blessed Lord meet for us who believe, all our sin as children of Adam, by His death, so as to clear us according to the glory of God from it all in His sight, but He perfectly glorified God Himself in so doing. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him. So John 17:4,5. Hence, as stated in both these passages, man in the person of Christ entered into the glory of God. But it was wrought for us,- our sin was put away by it. Christ, as having thus glorified all God is, is our righteousness. We are thus the righteousness of God in Him. We have a positive title: to enter into that glory as regards righteousness, though owning it all to be grace,. (grace reigns through righteousness), and rejoice in hope of the glory of God, by the work and worth of Christ. "As He is, so are we in this world." But this took place in Him as entering into, beginning in His person a new place of human existence, a risen man entered into glory. The power of eternal life was in it. Dead to the old scene and all that state of being and place and ground of relationship to God, he lives, in that. He lives to God. Christ has thus His perfect place Of acceptance as man with God, and we in Him. He is gone in the power of divine life, according to divine righteousness, into divine glory. A further truth connects itself with this. He has sent down the Holy Ghost which unites us to Him,. so that we are in Him, members of His body, sitting in Him in heavenly places. Moreover the Holy Ghost dwells in us. I will, with the Lord's help, take up this further on. I only notice here, in connection with our present subject, that the Holy Spirit makes us clearly know the efficacy of Christ's work and our redemption, so that we are at liberty, knowing on the one hand that our sins are put away, on the other that we are in Christ: He is the earnest of the glory, the spirit of adoption, and Sheds the love of God, who has done all this, abroad in our hearts. We know that we are in Christ, and Christ in us. Yea, we dwell in God, and God in us; and we know it. His presence is more than this, but I reserve this part for a moment, to consider our place in Christ. The double effect of His work will be noticed here. There was, we have seen, responsibility to God on one side as born of Adam in the world, and God's purpose on the other, to bring us to glory and privilege in the second Adam. Christ has perfectly met one for us, and entered, Himself, consequent on the work of redemption, into the other. He has glorified God as to the first Adam's state, but has died to it, not that He was ever in any of the sin, of it, save as bearing it, but as with us here below as men, in like manner taking part of flesh and blood with the children in the likeness of sinful flesh, and made sin. for us on the cross when fully manifested as in that state knowing no sin. Now He is entered into the glory, the glory He had

with the Father before the world was, as second Adam according to the purpose of God as to man, and according to righteousness (John 16;17).

Our state, our salvation, hangs on this: and we may add, the whole condition of the Jews or the fulfillment of promises on the earth. The sure mercies of David are based on and identified with the resurrection of the Lord as surely as He died for that nation also.

The cross is for God's glory, our salvation, and our state before God; it is the turning point of everything. First: our sins, and sin, are put away. All is clean gone in God's sight according to God's glory.

But as alive and having our place in Christ, we see and are in Him as having died to that whole estate and condition,. suffering as Son of man. The cross, as it showed man's rejection of Him as come into the world in grace, so it breaks in an absolute way (nothing so absolute as death to close our connection with what we lived in, and the rather as He was rejected in will by man), with all He was in as alive down here. Our guilt as responsible men has been perfectly met for God, but we have done too in Him as to our life and standing before God with all down here by the cross. We are baptized to His death. It is the point we come to, we are crucified with Christ, nevertheless we live, but not we, but Christ lives in us. "We are dead and our life hid with Christ in God"-are to reckon ourselves dead. Hence we say with the Apostle, " when we were in the flesh"; we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of Christ dwell in us; if not, we are none of His. If we are Christians, our only true standing is in Him, as having died and risen from the dead. I can well understand a Christian knowing only that, as a sinner, as guilty, Christ has died for him, and so seeing what he, can rely on before God as a judge; and he is blessedly right; but his true standing, his place with God, is in Christ risen. ".If Christ be not risen ye are yet in your sins;" and in this is for the Christian, as quickened, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes him free. The standing and life of the Christian, as such, rests in this, for he is risen with Christ, in this place before God, not in Adam state or nature; Christ has died, the just for the unjust, so that he is not for faith in that at all, but alive from the dead through Jesus Christ our Lord. But further, Christ has gone up on high, as man, into glory, and as His work was for us, righteousness must put us there. All beyond the cross is not thus meeting our responsibility, but bringing in God's purpose. The good pleasure of His will was to give us sonship with Christ, adoption and glory, with Him. Yet this according to God must be in righteousness and holiness too. It is righteous, for God has been perfectly glorified in His whole being and nature by

Christ on the cross. And we know the first-fruit of this in His being glorified (John 13;17); but thus it becomes, according to sovereign grace and purpose, indeed, but righteous that we should be in the glory with Him. It was free purpose, but now, according to what God is, righteous, and according to His holiness too, for Christ is our life withal-not our sinful Adam one-a nature which cannot sin, for we are born of God. Thus the flesh is judged as entirely evil and we are of God, and, through grace, according to righteousness, our standing is in Christ before Him.

The Holy Ghost the Comforter is therefore given us as soon as Christ went up on high; and thus we know not only that we are risen with Him, but that we are in Him and He in us. This sets our standing, and consciously so, through the Holy Ghost in Christ; sitting in heavenly places in Him; accepted in the Beloved. A blessed place; but this in purpose. Responsibility was there. It has

been - met according to God's full requirements. His resurrection is the witness of that, and so insisted on in Romans, not ascension there; so 1 Cor. 15:17, we are justified through His blood. But there was a value in this work for God's own glory, His righteousness, majesty, love, truth, all He is and according to purpose. This done for us, good and evil being known, and in the way of redemption, gives us a righteous and blessed place in perfect love in the presence of God and our Father, according to a life and nature, and in a place which Adam innocent had not at all. Our place in heaven is founded on the glorifying of God. The first of Ephesians brings this fully out.

I may add collaterally that through far inferior and national, yet divinely given, joys and promises, this is true of Israel. True, I mean, that the death of Christ has broken all relationship with God founded on flesh, or connected with their standing as heirs of promise as to it, though to secure them on a surer basis, He who was heir_ of the promises came as a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. But, if Israel in the flesh was naturally heir to them, Jews by nature He labored in vain, and spent His strength for naught and in vain. His people would none of Him. The bill of their divorcement ran thus: " Wherefore, when I came was there no man, when I. called was there none to answer." Often would He, the Jehovah of Israel, have gathered Jerusalem's children, and they would not. If they had but even now known, in the day of their visitation, the things that belonged to their peace, but now they were hid from their eyes; not only was Israel thus shut out according to his title to the promise, but the Messiah must give up, as thus come in the flesh, all that belonged to Him as so come in the flesh, though His work was perfect and with His God. He was cut off, and had nothing; so only it can really be translated. But this by the depth of the riches of the Wisdom of God, brought. Israel, like the Gentiles, under pure mercy, as the Apostle teaches us in Rom. 11, and God, ever faithful to His promises, His gifts and 'calling, without repentance on His part, accomplishes them, but in pure grace, and yet in righteousness, through Christ's dying for that nation, and the mercies of David are assured in His resurrection from the dead. They indeed Will enjoy the blessings of the new covenant and all their promises down here, but through Christ's death, and based On His resurrection. But as in a deeper and more absolute work in us their blessings are given with the complete setting aside of all their old standing under the old covenant in flesh, and founded anew on the Cross and the resurrection of Christ.. But this by the bye.

I may add that what came on man by sin, death, as well as an awaiting judgment, Christ has truly gone down into, and broken its power, for the quickened soul, forever; resurrection has told its tale, and the power of death, as the dread of judgment, is gone, for the believer, forever.

But this is not all. The Holy Ghost has been given to dwell in us, for we are cleansed. And as Christ has done that work which is the foundation of the eternal blessing of heaven and earth, so the Holy Ghost has been given to us to unite us with Him and dwell in us, so as to Set us as in Him and He in us, in the center of the whole scene of His glory. This will be perfectly so in the ages to come. But even now, not only are we one with Him, according to Ephesians 1., but the Holy Ghost is in us,, and the Apostle looks to our being strengthened with might by it in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, that we may be rooted and grounded in love, and able to comprehend all the glory on every Side, length, and breadth, and depth and height, and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, filled

even- to all the fullness of God. Thus it is. we are a testimony. Thus it is glory is to God in the Church throughout all ages. Thus: the way -Christ the blessed Lord has perfectly glorified God Himself on the Cross, in His death, brings us into that glory according to Divine purpose in and with Him and fills us with the Spirit, that we may be able to comprehend all the glory of which Christ is the center, and know the love which has made the Glorious One bring us so into the center of all with Himself to whom all glory belongs. All things that the Father has are His, and we, children, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Him, not only bring us with Him there, but better yet, give us Himself, and with Him a place with Him in the Father's love.

The result is this: the whole standing, condition, estate in life of the believer, is changed, not outwardly as to the body yet,' as is evident, but in relation to God, and that really by a new life. He is as completely out of the old as a man is out of the life of his former state when he has died, and now he looks to live with Christ who is risen; yea in spirit as having partaken of life from Him when risen, he can say he is risen with Him. His place before God is in Christ risen, not in Adam in the flesh. But as he is there by the death and, resurrection of Christ, he is there according to the value of what He has there wrought: that is, all his sins, all he was in the first Adam, atoned for and put away totally and wholly out of God's sight. He is fit, according to God's own work and nature, for God's sight and presence. Morally he is justified before God; and as regards God's nature and presence, he must be fitted for it, to be in it. And Christ has perfectly glorified God Himself. Harmless, holy, in love we must be to be there. Hence (Eph. 1:4) it is not said according to the good pleasure of His will. We must be that according to God's nature. But here, as we have seen, we cannot leave out God's purpose, if we would know His mind about us. His good pleasure was to predestinate us to the adoption of children, and bring us in glory as such into His presence. Such was the worth of Christ's death; so did He therein glorify God, that this purpose is righteously accomplished, accomplished, and He becomes our life as risen, that we may have this place, and He, in unspeakable goodness, be the first-born among many brethren. But there is yet more, He in an especial way loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, and thus it has a place with Himself as His body and His Bride, and He nourishes and cherishes it as a man would His own flesh. By the Holy Ghost, consequently given to us, we know our place thus given to us, sonship in present consciousness, the Bride's relationship, in divinely given knowledge. For the former [sonship] is individual, the latter clearly not. So far we learn what closely connects itself with it, that individually we know we are in Christ and Christ in us. But we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. We are consciously in Him in the presence of God. Holy and without blame before Him in love, and the Father's children by Him, "as He is, so are we in this world." This, according to God's purpose, is justly founded on His perfectly glorifying God in His offering of Himself. This is our place with and before God, a perfect one as and in Christ. Eph. 1 brings it out most richly before us. This is privilege, not testimony, save as all privilege rightly so acts as to produce testimony. But besides Christ is in us, the Holy Ghost dwells in us individually and in the assembly. And here present joy, responsibility, and testimony come in. We have fellowship, the blessed Lord being our life, with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, that our joy may be full, abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us. Yea, we know that we dwell in God, and God in us, because He has given us of His Spirit." Our responsibility depends on this too. It is often thought that responsibility is connected with uncertainty. It is a mistake. Responsibility is founded on the relationship we are in. If we are always in it, we are responsible to act rightly in it. My child is my child, and cannot be

otherwise. Hence he is always bound to act and feel as may child. Were he not in the relation, he would not; and so of others. We are not to grieve the Holy Spirit of promise by which we are sealed to the day of redemption. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost; we are not to use them for sin. We are to walk worthy of the calling wherewith we are called, in the unity of the Spirit. Hence, when the Apostle has shown the Church in that unity as the dwelling-place of God, and we all heirs of glory in our position in Christ, he prays according to the riches of that glory, that we may be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith. And thus God was to be glorified in the Church by Christ Jesus: this by a power that works in us. This becomes thus testimony. So the Church is a testimony to principalities and powers in heavenly places. So are we called on to mortify our members on earth; to apply the Cross to all the workings of flesh in us and every movement of our will; to mortify by the Spirit the deeds of the body; and the result, as in Paul, of bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus is that the life of Jesus might be 'manifested in our mortal body. Thus our being in Christ is the highest possible place as to standing; and perfect. But God's dwelling in us, our being individually and collectively his habitation and temple; Christ's dwelling in our hearts by faith, here is the power of fellowship grounded on our standing; here our responsibility, our state tested, as compared with our standing, not to put that to doubt, but to use it; here the character, means, and way of our testimony.

We then are to reckon ourselves dead; not in the flesh at all, but in the Spirit; in Christ who has died, and justified us as to all we were in Adam, before God; alive to God through Him, and in Him members of His body. Not to know ourselves as alive in the flesh, but as having died and risen again; not to know even Him after the flesh, that is as down here connected with man and with Israel, as in the world; but as passed through death to all here, and by resurrection into glory and a new state, to begin and be the Head of a new creation, of which we are the first fruits. I do not pursue the consequences of this as to law, conflict, and other collateral subjects. My object was to lay the great basis of truth as to it as Scripture states it. We must look at the atonement in all its truth to know it thoroughly. No, compassionate remembrance of weakness was there, no patience with poor dust and ashes as we are. God had no need, it was not the time to consider weakness as if the spirits should fail before Him, and the souls which He had made. One was there who could drink the cup, made sin before Him; and all the outgoings of the divine nature against sin were let loose against sin, as such, on one able to sustain it, that sin might be put away out of God's sight, according to that nature, that eternal blessing might be in righteousness before Him. Our special place must then be sought in His purpose. The foundation in righteousness is according to His nature. Not merely the putting away the old thing, needed for God's glory as it was, rebellion, and disobedience, and sin; but Christ by glorifying God entering as man into, yea beginning, the new thing the fullness of which will be in eternity, and in that the First-begotten from the dead, the Head of the body, the Church, and withal the First-born among many brethren conformed to the image of God's Son in Glory.

The Lord make us to know how truly it is all new. If permitted, I may enter more specifically into the prayer of the third of Ephesians, and compare it with that of the first. For the present I confine myself to a skeleton of the whole subject. The reader will find the question of righteousness, and the essential character of the new thing through death and resurrection, treated of in the Epistle to the Romans; the purpose of God, our place in His presence in Christ, and His dwelling in us to fill

us with blessing, in Ephesians. Hence, as to doctrine, Romans does not go beyond resurrection; Ephesians, to ascension and union.

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3;1-3).

Approach to and Delight in God

I AM not sure that I have sufficiently distinguished in the following article between the atonement and the Sprinkling on the altar of incense. The blood of the bullock was sprinkled on the mercy seat for Aaron and his sons-the heavenly saints. The blood of the goat also. This made an atonement for himself and for the holy place, and for 'the tabernacle of the congregation. He was alone within in doing it. The congregation of Israel being in view also, for God must have been glorified in order to bless them. Then he went out and sprinkled the altar of incense with the blood both of the bullock and of the goat. After all this was complete, he confessed the sins of Israel on the scapegoat, and it was sent away.

Controversy, where there is research after truth, has this advantage attending it, that it urges the spirit to more attention and diligent research, and where the, subjects are scriptural, to search the Scriptures; and these ever afford to the humble and inquiring soul, fresh and blessed inlet into the mind of God. Two points have been before me in consequence of recent controversy on the law and the righteousness of God. I would now. bring them before your readers; in part, as presenting questions tending to conduct to more light; in part, as acquired instruction. If we examine the order of the ceremonies of the great day of atonement, we shall find a more definite character in them than had yet drawn my attention. The blood was sprinkled on the mercy Seat, and before the mercy seat, and on the altar of

incense, but on nothing else, according to the directions of Lev. 16, we may specially remark, not on the altar of burnt offering. But atonement is made for the holy place; I presume it is meant, by the sprinkling that did take place, but there was none on the candlestick or the show bread. These aspersions of blood at once lead to the thought, that what was in view was approach to God in the sanctuary. There was clearly the great general fact, that the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat, so that. God's nature and character were glorified in Christ's shedding His blood, so that His blood being thus presented to God, the gospel founded on that, could be preached to every creature. It was the Lord's lot. But this I have spoken of elsewhere, as of the other aspect of Christ's sacrifice typified by the scape-goat, that is, bearing the sins of His people. I only note, now, the specific character of the offering. The blood was sprinkled on the place connected with the drawing near of the priests in the sanctuary, and that as representing the whole people approaching God: coming into God's presence in the highest way, or a daily approaching in the same character. For us there is no veil; but the altar of incense, though without the veil, specially referred to what was within. God in the holy places was seen in His divine righteousness. It is such as He is that He must be approached. It is not merely how He deals with responsible man as such, but His own nature. If we approach Him, we must approach Him as He is in Himself. This is evidently the character of approaching Him in the sanctuary. This connects itself, I have no doubt, with the gold. All was of gold in the sanctuary. In the court of the tabernacle the vessels were of brass, specially the laver and the brazen altar. This refers, as the place also spews, to God's dealing with sin in this world. Not that the court represented this world; but it was not the sanctuary. It referred to God's dealings with sinners in this world. Men came there as unclean,

whether for sacrifice for their sins when in them, or for cleansing. That is to Christ as a sacrifice, or to have the washing of water by the word, which, without the

sacrifice, they could not have had. Hence it was priests who washed; but it was washing. The idea in all these cases was drawing near, whether as a sinner or a saint; only one a drawing near about sin; the other, drawing near to God as cleansed, the laver being a washing to consecrate at the first, nr cleanse for present service. But on the great day of atonement, it was only in the holy places that the blood was sprinkled. But this gives it a very full character. A blessed thought it is for us that we draw nigh to God in His own nature and character, what He is in Himself. He is there in His own nature, in righteousness and holiness, and we, absolutely cleansed for that, and, in the new man, created therein after God, draw near to Himself without having any question as to sin, now put away. Our delight is in holiness and righteousness, in God as He is; and we draw near according to the intrinsic value in God's sight of the blood of Jesus. It is the enjoyment of what God is, in righteousness and true holiness; but Christ in His offering has been the glorifying of what He so is. This is very blessed. 'We approach God, and joy in God. This is divine righteousness as it is in itself, as it is in God, enjoyed by us as 'admitted through Christ. And note here, it is in this way we specially know atonement, for peace and drawing near to God. Hence for the atonement for Aaron and his sons, this only was done. The bullock was slain, and the blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat and the altar of incense. There was no confession of sins, no scape bullock; Christ, raised from the dead by the blood of the everlasting covenant, enters in according to the glory of the Father, according to the display of all His perfections brought out in the resurrection of Christ-for he was raised through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and by the glory of the Father-so we, as associated with Him, draw nigh in the full acceptance which that blood has in the necessary righteousness of God as regards it. It is not merely that sins can be forgiven, and therefore I can have to say to God as a moral governor, what is also true-" There is forgiveness with Thee that Thou mightest be feared;" but I draw near in the positive and perfect acceptance in which-God in His own nature receives, in righteousness, that which has glorified it absolutely; that is, according to His own nature. God is active in owning Christ thus in righteousness, in raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His own right hand, and thus we enter. But there is another thing needed. The sacrifice of Christ is available for transgressions. There is not only its intrinsic value as the Lord's lot, but Christ is the bearer of the sins of His people as the scape goat. God has to do with us as responsible men, the Jews as a responsible nation, both in flesh; as a governor that has to do with sins. Christ has borne them in His own body on the tree, and they are gone. It is not, and cannot be, of course, another sacrifice. The sacrifice must be suited to God, but it is another aspect of it than the one we have previously spoken of. It is the removing of sins that men may be received judicially in righteousness, not enter into God's presence according to the intrinsic excellence of His nature and Christ's acceptableness in it, and enjoy that nature. (We enter in, in the new nature. The transgressions belong to the old). This is our proper and only present place, because we are risen, and in Christ, in the place of priests. The bullock fully represents the character of Christ's sacrifice in this aspect for us. Then -our sins, when we were alive in the flesh, have been put away, and we are reckoned dead, and He that has died is justified. from sin. The whole nature of the flesh and its deeds are viewed as a past existence, the moment Christ rose, which is actually realized, when we put off. the old man and put on the new. As all my sins were future when He died for them, so when once. I am not in the flesh, all that belongs to it faith looks on, as past, as to atonement and righteousness when He died. For so,

-and so only, could they be put away. But, as risen, I, come into the holiest, not only because I am cleared from--sins, a process which, in itself; went no further than judicial acknowledgment of me where I was responsible; but according to all the value of that in which Christ is entered in. This, I repeat, is our only proper present position; because the old man, who was the responsible man in this world, is viewed as dead and buried, so that we are not in the flesh. Hence, though we were responsible, and the sins were borne and atoned for, we are not at all now in the place, and condition, or nature, in which that government and dealing took place, it is over for us. The bullock; the fullest and highest value of Christ's sacrifice, is ours, and represents our present, standing. The two goats clearly spew that the same one sacrifice, of course, applies to both parts of his work; our being presented to God according to His nature, and the putting away of sin, which was inconsistent with our duty as children of Adam. But the application is, in a measure, different when Israel comes in question. Because, they do not enter into the holiest through the rent vail, the new and living way. They know the value of Christ's sacrifice when He comes out, and they look on Him whom they have pierced. They are under the weight of multiplied transgressions as a nation, and stand on that ground, and in flesh, have not to do with Christ within the vail, but when He has come out. I need not say, it is no new sacrifice. Isa. 53 presents to us.. their recognition of the one we already own. They are not in heavenly places in Him; but He appears to, and is with them,' to bless them, in the earth. They are accepted according to the righteousness of God as a moral governor. I do not say individuals, and all of them, as spared, are not viewed of God in His sight according to Christ's blood in heavenly places, I cannot doubt indeed they are; but it is not their dispensed place, to stand there, in their own souls before God. That moral... government indeed continues, as that, under which they-- are, as men in flesh on the earth. Hence it was, after all the blood-sprinkling was done-" When he path Made-an end of reconciling the holy place and the. tabernacle Of the congregation and the altar, he shall bring the live goat," etc., that the live goat was sent off into the wilderness with the sins of Israel on its head. I dare say the godly Israelite, thus at peace with God, may be learning the intrinsic value of the great sacrifice which has cleansed him so as to get in growing nearness into the knowledge of God; but his dispensational place is, according to sin-bearing, ours according to Christ's presence in heaven, our old man, in which we were connected with earth, having died in that, by which our sins were put away.

It is this point I feel important: The character of the blood-sprinkling, as confined to the holy place and tabernacle itself. Israel's ordinary sacrifices were on the altar of burnt offering; the blood was sprinkled there; they came as from without there. It was all right; every sinner must do so. It is as blessed as it is needed that we can. The sins must be put away if we are to draw near to God. But it does not take into the sanctuary. And here multitudes of Christians rest. If, indeed, they know this: They rest in the putting away, or hoped-for putting away of their sins. It must be the first approach, but they stay on Jewish ground. And, indeed, in every way; for they look for a new sprinkling with blood (a new sacrifice they dare not, and nothing else would do, for, as the Apostle says: Christ must often have suffered from the foundation of the world), every time they fail. It is not the value of the sacrifice in itself which is different. There is, we know, but one-never to be repeated, which has its own intrinsic, necessary value; but the sacrifice and sprinkling of blood on the brazen altar has a different character from sprinkling it on the mercy-seat and on the altar of incense. This, the brazen altar, was judicial righteousness, as dealing with man as responsible to God, and in the exercise of moral government. Here the Israelites came to God. Christ met this claim on the Cross, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; dying for the nation of Israel also.

This bearing of sins was shown in the scapegoat, but in a way which not only met our case in principle, but had, in its form, special reference to Israel in the last days after the Church's time was over. But the sprinkling of blood on the day of atonement went further. It entered into that within the veil. It carries us up to God, where Christ is gone. It may be remarked that the offerings of the day of atonement, which gave it its special character, did not include burnt-offerings. The bullock and the goat were both sin-offerings. The burnt-offerings for himself and for the people were not offered till the last special service of the day-the letting loose the live goat into the wilderness was concluded. All was properly sin offering. It placed Christ, and those associated with Him, in the sanctuary, and, as far as this world went, outside the camp. A religion of the world in flesh was not recognized in it, but the Cross, i.e., Christ rejected on the earth, and His place in Heaven. It is available for Israel but as bearing their sins and making a sacrifice of Himself; by which they could be blessed on earth. The burnt offerings were offered on the brazen altar. These prefigure Christ presenting Himself to God as a sacrifice here on earth, through the Eternal Spirit. This was the perfection of Christ here on earth, and that, indeed, in which, consequent on our admission into the holy place, we have to follow Him here below. I present these things, though some parts of them are to me acquired instruction, more as subjects for meditation, than as teaching your readers. But they will find them, if soberly followed out for profit, accord-in.. to Scripture, full of rich edification.

I, turn to the second subject of which I spoke, introducing it by begging my reader to refer to the well-known chapter of the third 'of John's gospel, as skewing the way the Lord connects His life and death with the heavenly place, which He contemplates, but does not then speak of. A man must be born again He assures Nicodemus, even to have a share in the earthly part of the kingdom with God, as taught by Ezekiel; but it was sovereign grace, and so went out as the wind, whither it listed. But Christ spoke from His own knowledge, who came from heaven, yea, was in heaven, and it was a nature intrinsically capable-immense blessing I-of enjoying God, and the rejected Messiah was the Son of Man lifted up, that whosoever believed in Him should have eternal life; not blessing, as life on earth. He died to all that was here, yea, even to His own Messiahship, as born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and opened the door, by His death, to those heavenly things of which He was able to speak. The life of the Spirit and the death of Christ, in their proper value, when known as death to this world, as was seen in Christ, and glorifying God in His nature, are the entrance, as possessing life, in Him risen, into the heavenly sanctuary. Compare Col. 3 (where life aspiring after those heavenly things is the subject) and Ephesians (where the power of the Holy Ghost uniting us to Christ, gives us the sitting of the saints in heavenly places in Him). In John 3 it is only opened out to us in vista. Thus, in the resurrection of Christ, as risen with Him, we pass up into the heavenly places, while Christ has died to the whole world, and sin, to everything which is in the world and connected with sin. It is passed and gone as non-existent. Christ is risen, and is the first fruits and beginning of a new state of things, of a new creation. Old things being passed away, God has quickened us together with Him, having forgiven us all trespasses. Christ died to sin and for sins. The new covenant does not go beyond forgiveness, remembering sins and iniquities no more. But it never deals with any entrance into the presence of God in the sanctuary. This, as we have seen, is our place by redemption. This leads me to the second point I would refer to-the difference of sins and sin. It is not new; but I do not think that Christians have sufficiently remarked the force of St: Paul's reasonings on the subject.

Sins, of course, are fully recognized, wholly condemned, and atonement made for them. Nay, it is by them that the conscience is first acted on and brought to repentance. The blood of Jesus, the Cross, is the blessed answer to them. Not only so, but even where all are brought under the sin of Adam, the actual sins which affect the conscience-are introduced as that which is the added occasion of death. Of course where the law is alluded to, positive transgression is recognized. But we shall find, besides all this, and where this has been recognized, the great question of a state of sin, and, being in the flesh, treated. Up to the end of the third of Romans, sins are dealt with, but the conclusion drawn that we are all under sin, in that state, condition, before God, as in Psa. 32-"Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin is covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin." This question the fifth of Romans treats; but it goes further. It spews sin entering into the world; -a principle of evil in which man was alienated from God. It has reigned It is not merely that I have committed sins; but sin has reigned, death being the proof of it. The sixth chapter carries out this thought distinctly, and introduces death as that which closes the evil, that our state, being one of sin, as alive as children of Adam, death closes that state. We are crucified with Christ, do not any longer exist as before God, as alive in the flesh. But what was this death in Christ? Here we have no dying for sins, but to sin. We all are aware that there was in Christ no sin, but ever living in the midst of this scene of sinners, obedience tried to the utmost, even unto death, and drinking the cup, tempted in all points, like as we are, He died to that scene, died rather than fail in perfect and absolute obedience, in glorifying God.. And He did so glorify Him, and, perfect in all things, closed all connection with. this world, and with man as in a state of sin. He died to sin once, closed all connection of man with God, as on the ground of living in the flesh. There was not a movement of His life which was not the perfection of the divine nature in a man, in the midst of the temptations through which we pass, and having completed and finished that obedience, he died to the whole sphere and scene of -existence, really died to it, and in resurrection entered on another, which did not belong to that order or state of things, but which had its starting point, its womb of existence, in death to it. Always morally separate from sinners, His life proved that that divine display could not win man to association with it, or to come to Him to have life, and He died so as to make a final and judicial separation of divine life from the whole first Adam condition, because there was nothing but sin there in will, and transfers; so to speak, the divine life which was in Him to a new and heavenly sphere, where flesh or sin could not come-the resurrection state. In this life of Christ, as risen with Him, our sins all atoned for, we live, He Himself being our righteousness, according to his acceptance in the value of ifs work. The sixth of Romans, therefore, speaks no more of sins, save as past fruits of another state, from which we are freed. Christ has died unto sin once; we are to reckon ourselves dead unto sin, and alive unto God, through him. He that is dead is justified from sin; no state of sin can be charged on Him, for as to that, He is dead. He cannot be accused of being in that state, for He has died. Sin will not have dominion over us. So, in the seventh, we have died. When we were in the flesh, there were motions of sins, and the law only provoked them. Hence, when by a new nature, as taught of God, we see the spirituality of the law, I discover this active principle of sin, and look to be delivered, and so I am in Christ. I die in the state I was in, and am now alive in Christ risen. The law is seen here, not as working a curse, but as the means, when we are under it, of detecting the hopelessness of flesh. Its sin being only detected and made exceeding sinful by it. It is the body of death. We are delivered from it (not pardoned its fruits) through Jesus Christ our Lord. Sin in the flesh is condemned, but in that in which Christ was for sin, a sacrifice for sin. And then the contrast

of flesh and spirit in their nature is dwelt upon and insisted on. And where is the groundwork of deliverance? Resurrection. I have passed, as dead with Christ, out of the flesh (ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if the Spirit of Christ dwell in you) into a new scene by resurrection, not as to our bodies (for the redemption of which we wait), but as to our state before God and our souls. It is the Spirit, because this is the power of life; but it is Christ risen, our life, and we alive in Him, and by the Holy Ghost united to Him as sitting in heavenly places, and so sitting there in Him. If I speak of being at the foot of the Cross, I simply say I have not died with Christ. I have not passed, through the rent veil, into the holiest of all. I am then before the Cross, in my old nature, with my sins upon me; for if I am dead with Christ and risen with Him, I have passed on through the Cross, as the door of faith, without any sins in God's presence in light. So in Galatians, though not with the same development. I would draw some practical conclusions from this. I get a double character of divine righteousness, typified by the gold and the brass. One, His own divine nature and delight, the other judicial requirement from the creature, according to its place. The gold is divine righteousness, as in the nature of God. According to this, Christ, having glorified God in all that he is, is received within as man, and sits at God's right hand, we partakers of the divine nature being of God in Christ Jesus, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, and renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created us, united to Him whom God has set on high, have our place, not personally, of course, at God's right hand, that could not be, but in Him, in that heavenly place, according to the delight of God's nature, for that is in Christ. It is fellowship with this, or restoration to it, which is the character of our approach to God, as simply enjoying it in the new nature; it is not in contrast with evil, it is not forgiveness of what is past, sweet as that is in its place. I have, for faith, and shall have, in fact, entirely done with the nature which sinned, and the whole state of existence in which flesh moved. I exist only in the new creation. Hence the Apostle says he did not even know Christ after the flesh, any more. It is the joy of the new man in the presence, and blessedness, and glory of God. The brazen altar is righteousness too, and divine righteousness, but in its claims on man's nature, not in the revelation of its own. Here the blood was sprinkled by which the sinner approaches God, and this will be the standing of Israel. How many of God's children remain here in fact. How little they have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. They remain outside, and, hope, when the time comes, they will pass in judgment; and have a share in glory. They are in Egypt, looking to the blood to keep the holy judge out, not in the wilderness redeemed out of the bondage they were in, passed the Red Sea. They do _look to the blood as that which is the ground of their hope against judgment, but they have no thought of having been crucified with Christ, and risen. They hope in Christ, as in fear of the righteousness of God, instead of in a new nature and life as risen with Christ, enjoying God as in the Spirit, and not in

the flesh. One thing we must remember: that even there, where we enter into the full blessedness of God's presence, the Lamb that was slain will be the object in whose perfection we have learned that blessedness.

The "Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom"

THE origin of the Crimean war is said to have been in a squabble between some members of the Greek Church and some of the Roman Church, as to the custody of the keys of that which they designate the Holy Sepulcher, where the Lord was laid. The Emperor of Russia, as head of the Greek Church, and the Emperor of the French, as the Eldest Son of the Roman Catholic Church, thus found a pretext, the one against the other. The tendency of that war was to bring the East more into notice, and perhaps, in the course of God's providence, to give development to principles at work in Europe, political and ecclesiastical, beyond what many think. Protestant England took part with Roman Catholic France, and had to submit to be dragged in the wake of the Emperor's plans. But Protestant England had been busy, with other Protestant countries, about the Holy Land before that; and the proof of it, clear to all, was the Bishopric of Jerusalem.

The speculations of many minds were active as to the results of a bishopric in Jerusalem, and a bishopric upheld too, not by England only, but by European Protestantism as such. But my thoughts are upon another matter, connected with the Land too, and indirectly connected, more than at first sight may appear, with the hierarchical system of this country. The A. P. U. C. is that to which I refer. What is the A. P. U. C?

I answer, -from " SERMONS ON THE RE-UNION OF CHRISTENDOM, by Members of the Roman Catholic, Oriental, and Anglican communions." The title-page has " Beati pacifici " as its motto; and the statement, "Printed for Certain Members of the Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom;" so that A. P. U. C. is the short for Association for the Promotion of the Unity of Christendom, the first letters of the four words, Association, Promotion, Unity, Christendom.

Sermon 19. (on " The A. P. U. C.," signed A.) may

as well stand as my introduction to the subject. The italics are mine

.

Brightness of Eternal Glory

Shall Thy praise unutter'd lie?
Who would hush the boundless story
Of the One who came to die;
Came from off the throne eternal,
Down to Calvary's depth of woe;
Came to crush the powers infernal-
Streams of praises ceaseless flow!
Sing His blest triumphant rising,
Sing Him on the Father's throne;
Sing-till heaven and earth surprising,
Reigns the Nazarene alone.

**I' The above article is from notes taken at reading-meetings.

Sickness prevents the contributor from finally correcting them.

There are some who because the Epistle is not descriptive of us, as the Church, see nothing in it for us. Truly it is NOT about us; it is only about Christ.- Editor.

The Bruised Reed and the Smoking Flax

AT 12:20-12:21" A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust."

I CALL attention to the above passage, believing that, however well the commonly received interpretation of it may comport with the true idea of the grace of the Lord, it is a false interpretation, both as to the persons it refers to, and also to their condition.

The popular thought is, that the bruised reed is a figure of a person broken and contrite in heart, and that the smoking flax is a soul in which the fire of divine life is newly kindled, or, at least, in which grace is operating, though as yet but feebly and dimly; and that the Lord will not break the one, nor quench the other. This fails as an interpretation, because the Lord is to do both when the proper time arrives;-the words are "till he send forth judgment unto victory." But will he ever break the broken heart? He was sent to bind it up (Isa. 61;1). Will. He ever quench the operations of His own grace? We need not answer the question.

The reed is used in Scripture as an emblem of weakness, and in several places for a nation, as in 1 Kings 14:15-" The Lord shall smite Israel as a reed is shaken in the water," etc.; and 2 Kings 18:21, where Egypt is called " the staff of a bruised reed;" also Ezek. 29:6. A reed was, moreover, put into the right hand of the Blessed One, in derision of His claim to sway the scepter of the kingdom.

But neither of the figures in the passage do I look upon as expressing a good or desirable condition which the Lord was to cherish; but a bad condition which He must certainly judge, though not until a certain time.

1st. The bruised reed expresses, I believe, the external condition of the Jewish nation, as under the Gentile yoke; but not yet given up to the unrestrained will of their enemies under the full weight of the judgment of God. This condition they were in when the Lord was upon earth, had they but felt and owned it.

2ndly. The smoking flax is an emblem of the internal or moral condition of the Jews, full of that envy and hatred to the Lord which betrayed itself so early and so constantly, which led to His crucifixion, and which is still leading onward to the reception of the Antichrist; under whose hand as the instrument of God, the bruised reed will be emphatically broken, and the smoking flax quenched (i.e.), the Lord shall visit His judgment upon the full-blown enmity of His people; but, in the midst of judgment remembering mercy, He shall save them from utter destruction, making them willing in the day of His power, and leading them to say, " Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! ' so that the judgment shall end in victory, "and in His name shall the Gentiles trust." In Isa. 7:4, Rezin and the son of Remaliah are called, because of their " fierce anger," "smoking firebrands." And ver. 8, in three score and five years Ephraim was to be " broken, that it be not a people;" passages almost suggestive of the view here taken. In Luke 12:49,50, the Lord said, " I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled I But I have a

baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." There were many tokens of this kindling, and Matthew quotes the passage from Is. xlii., as illustrative of the Lord's charging them not to make Him known; but in connection with the fact that He withdrew Himself from thence, etc., upon learning that the Pharisees had gone out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him." Here was a tuft of the smoking flax; but the time of its judgment and quenching had not yet come. It must smolder and increase, till it should compass His death--that baptism by which the flood-gates of divine love should be opened, and He, who was the expression of that love being glorified, should be the unfettered Dispenser of eternal life to as many as the Father bath given to Him.

Notes of Conversations

Consecration of the Sons of Aaron. Leviticus. 8. 9. 6, 22-24.

A. Is this the character of Priesthood which belongs to us now, before the glory of God appears?

B. You have, here, Aaron anointed apart-before his sons; just as you get Christ distinct. Moses put the coat on him (v. 7); anointed the tabernacle (v. 10); and then brought Aaron's sons and put 'coats on them.

A. How is it the tabernacle is anointed without blood?

B. I suppose as looked at as connected with Christ instead of connected with us.

A. Showing His Priesthood to be taken on other ground than ours.

B. Surely; because it was all Himself-He was the altar, &c., &c.

A. On the ground of what He was personally?

B. Yes.-The moment the sons are brought in, you get the blood put on the Altar. They are anointed with blood; Aaron without any blood at all,-because Christ, of, course, has no need of it.

A. Then there were three separate offerings of the sons of Aaron?

B. Yes, the burnt offering,-the sin-offering, and the ram of consecration; because all that is connected with consecration. You get the ram always as the offering of entire sacrifice, and the offering which is official consecration to God.

A. The latter had a little the character of the peace-offering?

B. Yes, it had. You get the three-sin-offering, burnt-offering, peace-offering. There were three for the people on the 8th day, these are three of another kind.----(Continued on p. 67).

Death Is Ours

" ALL things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." (1 Cor. 3:21-23.)

A friend lately used to me this expression: "Death is a terrible monster; I hate it." My soul replied: " What and where should I be, but for that terrible monster of your hate." Death is mine in the highest sense; not merely in the lower sense, that, as it is appointed unto men once to die, I may have to die; but, in the highest sense, Death is mine; for death itself, in the divine use of it-in the way God has used it, has been, and is marvelously mine, my own: my boast and my song.

And to what can I turn first, when speaking on this subject, so well as to the blessed Lord's death?" The Lord's death " (1 Cor. 11:26); " the death of God's Son " (Rom. 5:10); the death of " the Prince of Life " (Acts 3:15); are expressions that may well usher in the wondrous roll. " I am the resurrection and the life," said the Lord. But He could not in His own person be the resurrection without death first; nor, according to divine counsels, was He to take openly the place of being the life, the last Adam, the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15), without first dying. " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (John 12:24.) "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:17,18.)

And all through His course He could say, " I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50.) For the goal of His course who had come as Son of God down from the divine glory as displayed in heaven above, to become the Son of man here on earth, was " death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8,9.) Marvel of marvels, and wonder inexplicable to human reason! The Son of God-He who created all things, and upheld all things, the appointed Judge of quick and dead-was, as Son of man, crucified through weakness! (2 Cor. 13:4.) And never did His divine glory shine out more brightly than then. A creature, however high, has no right to leave the sphere assigned to it-its own proper sphere. The Son of God had no such restraint upon Him. He had the right to be worshipped in the heavens, and the right, if He would, to be hanged as the Son of man on the cross. Creature-glory consists in honor put upon it. Divine glory showed itself here in His divesting Himself of all external glory as attached to sphere or place, emptying Himself that He might show the perfect expression of sympathy with His Father's mind. He was one counsel with Him. He would show it in death, the death of the cross. And death, the wages of sin to Adam the first, was, in the case of the last Adam, the Son's payment (in love, how free!) of tribute to divine counsels, the expression of the perfect sympathy of the Son of God as Son of man with the Father's vindication of His own character against the world and Satan, and the whole fallen human race. That cross on Calvary issuing hereafter in the all-pervading glory of the Lamb that was slain, alive and at God's right hand-shows (blessed Lord!) death, death in its most awfully-magnified expression, even Thy death, to be mine, my very own, my boast, my glory.

If none other claim it, yet do I: monstrous, but not terrible; nor to be hated, for it was Thy death.

2ndly. But I must remark, further, that it was thus that the glory of God, as the God of resurrection, was brought out to light. Eden, with man in innocency, proclaimed the eternal power and godhead; and after the deluge, in the rainbow covenant, the sign of the long-suffering patience of God to a world in wickedness, came out to light. But Eden and innocency I have lost; and mercies to me as a sinner in time will not answer the question of sin, nor save me from the wrath to come. But the death of the Lord Jesus was the lowly portal through which flowed forth the light of the glory of God as the God of resurrection, and of a resurrection from among the dead. 1st. He that died became Lord of all, in the wide universe; and should sit upon the throne judging, in God's own proper eternity, all men, raised again at the general resurrection: That glory, is certainly His as Son of man. " For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28,29.). Awful thought, to be brought up by the irresistible power of the Lord to answer for all deeds and thoughts done in the body, in this life. But, 2ndly, blessed be God, if the light of the great white throne is seen, we know also that there is in Him, who will sit thereon and judge, also a first resurrection. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." `` The hour is coining, and now is, when the dead [morally dead in trespasses and sins] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself. " (Ver. 24-26.) Save as a result of His death, it never could have been written: " As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:27,28.) And the unfolded results, in circumstances, of that lowly death, are the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness- for which we, according to His promise, wait. (2 Peter 3:13.)

God raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. (Rom. 4:24.) By Him we believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory that our faith and hope might be in God. (1 Peter 1:21.) Oh what should I be, or where should I be, as to salvation, as to trust for present deliverance, as to hope, if the glory of God, as the God of resurrection, had not been brought out to light! and how has it been brought forth to light, but by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from among the dead? the fruits of His death, how precious! 3rdly. But not only is there light, the light of life, found in His death; but, more than that, this light, so found, is a light in which all the dark things get exposed, their true character discovered, their power neutralized; Satan, the world, man, all are made manifest by the death of the Lord Jesus; and their power set aside, too, to faith. It was thus Satan was met, nullified, and his power set aside: " Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 14, 15.)

It was His death to which the Lord referred when He said,

" Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12:31.) And this world has its judgment in that same death: " Now is the judgment of this world," judgment made good in the blessing, too, of

the believer, as Paul said, " But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the the. world." (Gal. 6:14.) It is there, too, that flesh, unto life that is in the blood, gets its measure and true stamp. When He gave up His life a ransom for us, He showed the perfection of flesh and the vileness of flesh in one and the same act. In Himself, He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sin. Justice could find nothing in Him to find fault with; He was the only one that could not justly be forsaken, on account of what He Himself was. In Him all was perfect. He could bear our sins in His own body on the tree. But in that which He underwent on the cross, in death, there was the expression, from men who did it, of their being at enmity with God and under the power of Satan, and also, in the forsaking of Him by God at the same time, there was God's measured estimate of our sin. The just One-substitute for the many unjust-took the cup of wrath at the Father's hands and, in crying out, " My God, my God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?" gave the true measure, divinely full and perfect, of what fallen man is in the estimate of God. With mine eye on Him I cannot say, " Death is a terrible monster. I hate it." His death--death in the fullest expression of it- death as He only could present it, is most precious and marvelous. God is a God of wonders. And to wonder at Him well becomes a creature in His presence. I wonder at Him; yea, am lost in wonder when I think of death, the Lord's death; open cleft through which all the glory of the God of resurrection has poured; has streamed down upon

flesh, the world, and Satan, and made me, even me, to be able to say, " Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." 4thly. But if the spring-tide of death-death in itself--there, where it is worst, and has told forth its awful power, between God and the Son of man as the substitute, told its tale in a way that leaves the believer blessed in the hearing of it, yet conscious that there is an eternal, a divine height and depth in the subject which passeth all understanding; what shall we say as to the waves or the ripples of death Surely faith says, " In all things more than conquerors through Him that loved us." (Rom. 8. 37.) I am Christ's, and Christ is God's. Sheltered in the rock that was smitten, the dark shadow of death is not to rest upon me, upon my conscience, upon my thoughts-

Christ died! then I am clean:

"Not a spot within."

God's mercy and love!

"Not a cloud above."

'Tis the spirit, through faith, thus triumphs o'er sin:

"Not a cloud above. Not a spot within."

The Son, now upon the Father's throne in the glory which He had with Him before the world was-eternal, without beginning-has made me, through His death, as free from all the guilt that did rest upon me as He Himself was always personally free from guilt. God had never anything against Him; He has now, through that death, nothing against me. He always found His good pleasure in the Son of His love. Wondrous, but true, He even now finds His good pleasure in me in that Christ.

I count myself His purchase, put apart by Him for His own glory. He took occasion of the circumstances of the fall to bring out the compassion and mercy and grace of God, and showed,

amid the ruins of the first creation, His own competency to deal with God about the question of sin and Satan, of the fallen world, and of man. His work of humiliation is ended; but how does it all tell of His personal competency to meet every question!

Gone on high now, He uses our position in the wilderness that lies between an Egyptian world of bondage and the glory as the occasion to teach us Himself and to teach us our own selves too. And shortly, when it is glory come, He will Himself put the finishing touch to the work, and show out the faithfulness of His love to the people of His choice; and this He will do at least a thousand years before the new creation shall be put forth as the expression. of His competency to finish that which He takes in hand. And to what am I set aside individually but to be an occasion in which, according to divine wisdom, the personal glories of the Son as being the Resurrection and the Life are to find their expression? He has given me life, eternal life, a life which He Himself is, as He is in resurrection and ascension glory. (Col. 3:4.)

If, ere He rises up from the Father's right hand, He call me, I die-but I know that the " I die " means only " to all that is mortal," to all that is corruptible down here-cease forever, and according to God, to have connection with any such things as mortality or corruptibility; and, absent from the body, am present with the Lord-there to await with Himself that time when He shall put forth His glory as the resurrection,-openly put it forth; and my body shall then rise a glorified body to meet Him in the air. (1 Thess. 4:17.)

If He calls me not until He has risen up, then I shall never see separation of body and soul at all; but His life-giving power, which has already given to my soul a life in the power of which I could cast off a body of death, shall fill all up with life, and push mortality and corruptibility out of my body, without its ever being separated from the already life-possessed soul. But is absence from pilgrim scenes and from a body of sin-if changed for presence with the Lord, and being " at home "-is this death? Unbelief speaks oft as if it were so; just as if the new place Christ has opened, in which it is far better to be, so far as we are concerned, were little-as though the curtained Character of the intermediate state of which Hezekiah spake (Isa. 38) still continued, now that light and immortality have been brought to light through the gospel.

With a conscience set free by faith in a risen and ascended Lord, and with the flow of joy which the ungrieved Spirit of God gives to a heavenly man who is a son of God, what is the fever of disease? what the clammy feel of the body when its life is flickering in the socket?-the eternal life within centering the heart and mind the meanwhile upon the person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself on high. Yes; but there is a coffin before us, and there rests the body of an aged and devoted saint, happy in the Lord among us and full of love to His saints, and now gone! Ay, but gone whither TO the Lord Jesus. Is He not worthy to have His saints with Him? Has He, think you, forestalled God's

counsel in calling this one " home," home to Himself--Himself the " Home "? Not so. -The- words, " If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I," may be quoted here as true in this case also. Or have 'we no love for those that go? no love save for our own selves? no willingness to see them blessed, if their blessing cost us any privation? It is vile, wretched selfishness, which forgets God's joy and Christ's joy in welcoming to His presence a soul that leaves us; which hinders, too, our thinking of its great gain, and keeps us absorbed with our own selves and our loss. Well may you who, thus full of your own selves, forget God and Christ and the friends you profess to have loved--well may you be indignant against your

own selfishness and your own narrow-hearted love of self. But there is a jealousy of love in God. He wills that your hearts should know the sufficiency of Christ to satisfy you amid all the Writhings experienced in the wilderness. He wills, in that jealousy of love, that you should think of Him to whom He has espoused you, and of His joy over those that sleep in Him, and that you should learn how to think and feel according to that sphere in which Christ is now as its very center.

What can I tell you about the blessedness of the departed? I can only answer this by another question: 'What do you know of the attractiveness of Christ; of the blessedness of being with the Lord? For if self and selfishness fill, you, why then they find their aliment in this World; and if you are full of yourself, of your likes and dislikes, your gains and your losses, you will not profit much' from the doctrine of the blessedness of those absent from the body and present with the Lord. It does not suit you in your selfishness, and you may not like to be challenged as to whether you find more attractiveness in Christ than in all else. " This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," was the Lord's blessed word to the converted thief. What did the poor thief know of paradise or its blessedness? Probably nothing at all. But he had just made a new friend in One whose fellow there was not to be found. Faith had revealed to him the open and attracting heart of the blessed Lord. Faith had opened his heart to holiness and to confession, and to trust in his Judge, and had drawn into it the sweetness of the promises of inseparableness from that Savior: " Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

(Luke 23:43.) " With Him:" that was enough. Absent from the body, and present (at home) with the-Lord (2 Cor. 5:8), was the far better which Paul knew as to the state of a departed saint. Ay, and of the glory; what description comes up to it like that, " And so shall we ever be with the Lord "? (1 Thess. 4:17.) But this throws us upon the question of the measure of our knowledge and appreciation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who know and make much of Him will find much in the thought of being with Him. They have His Spirit, and they walk in it; and there is for a saint nothing like "presence with the Lord." If self rules in us, we must have circumstances and details, so as to be able to pick up what suits man when thinking of himself and his circumstances.

But if you love a saint that has just gone on high, like Stephen, let the thought of the joy of the one you love, who did appreciate the Lord's presence and the taste of it, have some small place in your heart and mind. Happy now is that one in the realized presence of the Lord. If you loved, let the present blessedness of that one you loved, now in the presence of the Lord, counterbalance your sense of your own loss, your own bereavement. It is a little while, it may be a very, very little while, ere the Lord shall rise up. If He did so now, that body would not be interred, but rise to life and glory, and you should be changed and mount up together in the air, and so be forever with the Lord. When we meet the Lord we shall know Him, though we never saw Him before. No mistake. In God's presence no second person can ever be mistaken for Him. He will know all His around Him in that day, and they will know one another.

There is a monstrous abortion of unbelief in many minds now, that because earthly ties and relationships cease in heaven, persons will not be known, or our mutual interest not sustained. The stupid folly of the thought is superficial. I know and love, and am known and loved by many who were once either my masters or my servants upon earth; the relationship has passed, but, thank God, not the mutual love and esteem which our hearts formed in it. A child, when married, ceases to be a child in the parent's house; he or she is, according to God, absolved from the tie,

but the love and interest go on; or does a married daughter cease to be loved because she has taken headship under another, and has not the tie and responsibility of a child in the house? In divorce, would the pain and agony of the passed relationship cease to a loving heart because God had pronounced the tie of man and wife to have been broken? Paul's former tie with the Thessalonians may cease, but not his love of theirs, or theirs of him, as formed when both were on earth. They will be round him in the glory, his joy, and crown of rejoicing. "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" (1 Thess. 2:19.) See also the expression: "Sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." (Chapter 4:13.) The condition of those who cannot see this is carnal; occupied with themselves and circumstances, they cannot see afar off, they cannot enter into the Lord's joys and grace.

There is but one thing more that I would add. It may be said to me by some: "According to you, as it seems to us, Death is then nothing." To this I would reply: Not so, by any means. Let death be what it may, Christ is more; and He makes the dark to be light, and the bitter to be sweet. One that is in Christ, and such a one only, can say, "In all things more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." Such a one only can say, "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" Death in man was the fruit of sin; in- death of the body there was an awful expression of how sin had brought in destructive ruin upon the body of man, and it then pointed on to that second death, "where their worm dieth not, and where their fire is not quenched." If the Son of God, as Son of man, has met the difficulties of the predicament in which man as a sinner was, He, in meeting and bearing in Himself the judgment due to the sinner, did not, He could not, morally or judicially, Make nothing of sin. On the contrary, when He bare the judgment due to our sins on the cross, there was plainly shown that the wages of sin are far more awful, as I judge, than man ever thought, or ever can know, or show them to be, even in the final casting of the, sinner out of God's presence, into the lake of fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels. The cross of Christ proved that there could be no inter-communion, even between the Son of man, faithful in his service, and God-no light from God given to Him, whilst He held the place of being the sinner's substitute. He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" But He overcame, though having to lay down His life in the pathway of victory. None of the judgment of sin remains,

to be poured out on the soul of one that believes in Christ Jesus. His judgment was our deliverance; but if delivered, we are not as yet, as we well know, exempt from bodies of sin and of death. Now we bear about in the body, however, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our, body; and, if called to depart, and leave the body, the Lord can show Himself to His people as He did to Stephen. And come what may, to depart is far better; it is to be absent from the body, and at home with the Lord, and to be assimilated in experience to any part of our Lord's course here below, so far as a saved disciple can be, is not strange, though blessed. Now we believe that Jesus died, as well as that He rose again. If I look upon His death as connected with the bearing of the wrath due to me, I say that is finished; and faith in me shuts out the thought of my ever tasting it. In that sense, I shall never taste death. If I look upon His death as His act of ceasing to dwell among men down here on earth, in a body that could die, the hour was one of deliverance to Him, and why is it not to be so, through Him, to me? A. P. C. 14:3:64.

"Tis not

So much as e'en the lifting of a latch-
Only a step into the open air
Out of a tent already luminous
With light that shines through its transparent walls."
Lord, who can pay the mighty debt
Of love so rich as Thine?
Love-which surpasseth finding out,
Unspeakable, divine

Dispensational Truth

IN the course of God's dealing with men, we may observe that He is again and again testing' them; and yet always providing for the failure in which He knew this testing would end.

He began thus with Adam in the Garden. He put him to proof, setting him as under law. But in the mystery of the sleeping man, and the woman taken out of him, He would have us learn, that from the very beginning He knew where this would end, and provided another and a better thing.

So with Israel afterward. He tested them by the law; but He revealed to them " the shadows of good things to come," the pledges of grace and salvation; knowing that man would again destroy himself, and be ruined under the Law of Mount Sinai, as he had already been under the law or command delivered to him in the Garden of Eden.

Then, by the ministry of the prophets, the Lord was leading the people back to obedience, if so be they would. be led that way.. But by the same prophets, He was anticipating the grace in which a self-ruined, helpless, and incorrigible people must finally stand, if blest at all.

John the Baptist then came, according to the prophecies which went before upon him, as the Voice, the Messenger, the Elijah, of Messiah. But he was also, in another aspect of his ministry, the Witness of the Lamb of God, and the harbinger of the Light of the World; characters in which the prophecies had not foreshewn him, but which put him in company with the Messiah, or the Christ, as dispensing grace and salvation to Israel and to man, on the clear assumption that all would fail, under the ministry that was then about to test them.

By the Lord's „own personal ministry in the cities and villages of Israel, the same process is conducted. He is testing His people by a proposal of Himself to them again and again; but He is likewise witnessing sovereign grace and redemption, knowing, as He did, that they would but again destroy themselves under thy trial that was then being made of them. By His commission to the Twelve and to the Seventy, He was doing the same-for such ministries were but a reflection of His.

And it is thus to the end. The Apostleship at Jerusalem under the Holy Ghost upon the ascension of Christ was still testing the Jew; and the Jew failed under it again. But " times of restitution " and of " refreshing " were looked at in the distance. And then, in the last commission instituted by Him, that is, in the Apostleship of St. Paul, the good news of God's salvation was sent to the ends of the earth, to gather the elect that they might act and shine as the Body of Christ; but in that same Apostleship He anticipates what the end of that ministry would be, and makes provision accordingly. This is seen in the second Epistle to Timothy; confirmed as that is by the challenge of the candlesticks in Rev. 1-3; and further, by the judgment of Christendom in Rev. 4-19* These thoughts may naturally introduce me to my subject-" Dispensational Truth."

(* I shall have to look at these Scriptures more particularly by and bye.)

It has been said lately, " that the study of it has a withering effect upon the soul." Let us try this by the light of the wisdom of God, as we get that light (where alone we can get it) in the word of God.

In the Epistle to the Romans, the saints of God are largely instructed in this character of truth. Chapters 9.- 11. is a very full writing on divine dispensations. But I grant that this is after they have been settled and established in personal truth-truth, I mean, that concerns themselves in their relation to God, as chapter 1.- 8. chews us.

Now this would let us know, that there is a condition of soul, in which it would be unhealthy or unseasonable for it to make the ways or dispensations of God its study. And, therefore, if the person who has thus spoken be intellectually inquiring into such matters, Divine and precious as they are, before the question of his own relation to God is settled, I can suppose that he has found this study to be a withering of the soul.

And again, in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, I see the Apostle refusing to feed those saints of God with such knowledge as we are now speaking of. In the stores given him of the Spirit, he had " hidden wisdom," or " the wisdom of God in a mystery," and he would bring it out to the " perfect." But the Corinthians were in a bad moral condition; and he would, therefore, attend to them personally, rather than feed. or entertain them with knowledge of God and His ways. And very much in this same way, I may say, the Lord Himself had already dealt with Nicodemus, the Rabbi, as we see in John

So that again, I grant, there is a condition of soul, in which it would be unhealthy for it, nay, unwarranted of the Spirit of God, to make dispensational truth its study. And, therefore, if the person who has thus spoken be walking carelessly, I do not wonder at the soul withering if it be thus occupied.

But further, not only is the condition of the soul to be thus considered, as we make these things our study, there it also a mode of studying them which the word of God suggests, and which is to be considered also. I would.. instance what I mean. The Apostle, in tracing the dispensations of God, as I have already observed he does in Rom. 9-11, interrupts his progress through that great subject, and takes up for a time something that is strongly personal in its character, or in its bearing upon us individually. I mean in chapter 10. of that wonderful Scripture. For there we listen, each one for himself; sinners as we are, to the voice of law and to the voice of. faith, with suited admonitions, and encouragements, and teachings.

Just, I may say, as in 1 Cor. 12-14, where the same Apostle is unfolding ecclesiastical truth, as he is here unfolding dispensational truth; for there in like manner he interrupts himself by something deeply and solemnly personal and practical, as we see in chapter 13. of that Scripture.

So that I fully grant that the condition of the soul, and the mode of pursuing this study, have to be considered, while we are engaged in it. But, with these and kindred admonitions and jealousies, I find the wisdom of God does set us down carefully and continually to the meditations of His counsels and ways in His different dispensations; and that He has been doing so from the beginning.

Have we not proof of this? Surely the very earliest divine records, the patriarchal stories of the book of Genesis, teem with notices of God's counseled ways. In them He is issuing and telling out

the end at the beginning. They are all of them true narrations-surely they are-and we are to acquaint ourselves with them as such. But is that all? Is it 'merely to tell me what happened so many thousand years ago, that they are written for me? Or, do I expect to find in them, disclosures of divine secrets, good for the use of edifying one in the knowledge of God and His ways? I have no doubt how I am to answer this. Sarah and Hagar are not merely a domestic tale, but an allegory. And I am full sure, the same book of Genesis, where I read that allegory, teems with kindred ones-some more, some less, rich and profound in communications of the Divine Mind in eternal counsels.

And then, Mosaic ordinances take up the same wondrous tale.. The Jewish year, as 23. of Leviticus would tell us, measures, as in a miniature and in a mystery, the way of God from the day of the Exodus out of Egypt, to the day of entering and dwelling in the kingdom, the millennial glory of Christ and the creation.

Afterward, the Prophets were instructed in those ways of God, and ordained to be the witnesses of them to all generations. I admit, there was another purpose of God in calling them out; and that was, to bring back Israel to their allegiance to Jehovah, if so be they would turn and repent. But the grander, and still more characteristic purpose of their ministry was this-to declare the ways of God, according to His counseled wisdom in dealing with this world of ours.

And when we come to the New Testament writings, we find the same. Not only do certain parts of those writings make such truth their subject (such. as Rom. 9-11, as we have already said), but such truth will be seen through parts and passages, which are more immediately dealing with other things. Dispensational truth is there called, by the high titles of " wisdom " and " mystery"; and well it surely may bear such dignities. And the Apostle prays that we may have spiritual understandings, to entertain and reach such themes. He tells us, that he speaks of such among the "perfect;" and lie intimates that it was the shame and loss of the Corinthians, that they were not prepared for truth of that high quality. And in all this, great honor is surely put on such truth itself, and encouragement of a peculiar kind given to the study of it. And if we are in company with that Spirit, who wrote the whole volume,. we cannot but be acquainting ourselves with it, as we go from Genesis to Revelations, throughout scripture from first to last.

But further.

Godliness is the religion of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15, 16). Our character is to. be formed by it, and our service defined and directed by it. The truth is the instrument and the standard. It is that by which. the Spirit works in us and with us; and it is that by which we try everything. It is an instrument in the Spirit's hand, and a standard in ours-and the truth. that is this, is connected with the dispensations of God..

This is seen at once. Morals. and the duties which attach to human relationships get a peculiar character from their connection with such truth-as, among other scriptures, Eph. 4: 5. 6. would, in many particulars, illustrate for us. We are now in this dispensation to learn " Christ," and be. taught " as the truth is in Jesus," What was holiness and service under one dispensation, ceases to be so under another. Actions change their character with the changing time. In order to do right, or to be right, according to God, we must " know the time," as the Apostle speaks. The day was, when it was holy to call down fire from heaven to consume adversaries. But the day came, when the offer

to do such a thing had to suffer rebuke-and that too, under the same supreme divine authority which had warranted, nay, inspired it, before. " Everything is beautiful in its season "-and dispensational truth is the great arbiter of seasons, telling us the times and what the Israel of God and the Church of God ought severally to do.

At one time, the Lord put the sword into the hand of His servant; at another, He took it out of such a hand. Joshua and Peter tell me this. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar and unto God the things that are God's," was a divine decree in the day of the Evangelists-but, in earlier days, every trace of Gentile rule in the land of the fathers was required to be clean blotted out by the zeal and strength of the children. It was not to be " God " and " Cæsar " then, but Jehovah's name was to be written on the land of the Twelve Tribes, and every stick and stone on it be claimed in the name of Jehovah of Israel, without a rival.

Places and ordinances, in like manner, change their character with dispensations.. But this is more easily admitted or apprehended than the other. Mount Sinai where God came down, and which awful, consecrated spot, none Were to touch but Himself, is now simply " Sinai in Arabia "-and institutions, which were once divine, and the dishonoring of which was death, are now but "beggarly elements," " rudiments of the world." Nay, more-they are even put in company with idols. (Gal. 4). Thus, what was sacred at one time, becomes common at another; while, what was unclean once, is afterward given for the communion of the saints. The serpent of brass becomes Nehushtan-a company of those who had been repudiated as " uncircumcised," becomes " a habitation of God through the Spirit."

Thus it is indeed so, that the character, the value with God, of actions, places, ordinances and the like, will change with changing dispensations. We are to decide on their godliness, their sacredness, their holiness, by " the truth." And not only is it thus with changing dispensations, but with -the changing phases and con' ditions of the same dispensation.

The harps of -Israel, for instance, were struck in the days of Solomon, and songs were sung when Heman Asaph, and Jeduthun were in the land. But in the days of Babylon, the harps were to be hung on the willows, and the songs of Zion to be silent.

So, David, according to the mind of God, when his hunger and wanderings bespoke a ruined condition of kings among the people, would ask for the show bread of the Temple for himself and his followers, though in the day of the integrity of Israel and their dispensation, it was lawful only for the priests to eat of it.

So again, this same David could not go on with a purpose that was right in his heart, as the Lord Himself said of it, because it was not right, or in season, dispensationally considered (2 Chron. 6:8,9.)..

And thus we see, from a few samples out of many, that different stages or eras, or conditions of things, in - one and the same dispensation, have their several and peculiar truth on which to ground their own peculiar claims, just as surely and simply as if they were different dispensations. The children of Israel under Joshua, and under the Judges, the Jews at home, the Jews in Babylon,. the Jews returned, though all of them alike under the same covenant had very differently the claims and service of Jehovah to answer and do. " Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the Bridegroom is with Ahem," I may call to mind, -in connection with this. When He is taken

away, then indeed they may fast (Luke 5), and ought to fast.

Surely, I may say, everything helps to show us, that dispensational truth is the great, I say not the only, rule and manner of holiness according to God. We must "know the time," for nothing is right out of season. "The children of Issachar were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." (1 Chron. 12:32). Scripture is full of instruction upon this principle, and leaves us at no liberty to judge the holy and the unholy, independently of "the truth." Our godliness, our piety, in order to have a divine character, depends on our knowledge of the truth; of times and seasons as they are with God, or according to his mind in His perfect and beautiful, though changing dispensations:

Here, however, let me say, lest I should be misunderstood, that I surely know there are rules of right and wrong, which are essentially so, by moral necessity so; and we are not to question their authority. Conscience is ever to be respected, though it must consent to be instructed. Nature itself has a voice at times, which we are to listen to. Surely I grant all this, though I speak of dispensational truth, as I do. For I again say, it is not the only rule, and measure of holiness. And I will say More. I grant that all dispensations have certain common. qualities, certain features which mark each and all of them. Let me dwell on this for a little.

In this world, which has--departed from God through pride, and desire of self-exaltation, where a man would have been as God, if God appear and act at all, surely He will come in a way to stain the pride of all flesh, and bring back His revolted creature to glory only in Him.

And we see, accordingly, that it is thus, or on such a principle as this, that He has always acted in the midst of us, ever choosing the weak thing to confound the strong, that no flesh might glory in His presence, but that he who gloried, might glory only in Him. Let dispensations change as they may, or the scene shift as it may, this is always seen.

The Patriarchs were few, very few, in the land, and strangers there. They had not so much as to set their foot on, going from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people; yet did He suffer no man to do them wrong, reproofing even kings for their sakes, and saying, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm."

When His elect became a nation, they were the fewest of all people, not worthy of a memorial or place in the records of the world; but they multiplied in spite of Egyptian task-Masters, and then flourished into

a kingdom, and became the center of the earth and its nations, in spite of all the enmity that surrounded them.

Their victories were gained by instruments of the most perfect weakness; lamps and pitchers, ox-goads, jaw bones, and slings, doing the work of the army and the war-horse, the sword and the shield; while two would put ten thousand to flight, and trumpets of rams' horns pull down the walls of hostile cities.

And so, when times change altogether, when the nation is broken up because of its sin, and a ministry of grace and salvation goes forth, it is fishermen of Galilee, with their divine Lord, the son of a carpenter, at their head, that bear it abroad to the cities and villages of the land.

And so again, when the Apostle of the Gentiles comes to speak of ministry in his day, he tells us of the weakness and foolishness of God proving stronger and wiser than man, and points to the Church at Corinth as 'the witness of this same principle which we have traced from the beginning; that God was humbling the flesh or man, and making Himself our glory and boast (1 Cor. 3) And he then lets us know, that he was acting on this same principle himself, as in company with God - for that he was among the Corinthians in weakness and in fear, as a minister of Christ, not using excellency of speech or Of wisdom; but that, in the midst of this his weakness,. he carried a secret with him, a glorious, wondrous secret, beyond the reach of the eye or the ear,. or the heart of the princes of this world. Gideon and Samson and David knew the victory that was before them in their. day, though they went forth to the battle with lamps, and pitchers, with the jawbone of an ass, or with a sling and a stone; and such an one was Paul with his treasures of light in the Spirit, though he was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

But this, rather by the way, I will now come again nearer to ourselves and, to my subject.

In the New Testament, we have 'the present. dispensation presented to us in three successive conditions. First - the Churches, as such, are seen under the pastoral care 'of the Spirit in St. Paul as is witnessed by his epistles to them. Secondly - they are challenged as candlesticks, or as churches under responsibility; and they are called to give an 'account of themselves, by the Son of man who appears before them in bright, burning, judicial glory- as we see in Rev. 1-3 Thirdly -they are, as it were, lost in Christendom, no longer nourished and disciplined as churches, or challenged as candlesticks, but meeting as Christendom (the corrupted worldly thing in the earth which calls itself by the name of Christ), the judgment of the Lord - as we see in Rev. 4: 19.

These are three eras in the story or progress of the dispensation, three phases which it bears successively.

I ask-Do not many things connected with Christian place and service and duty change with these changing aspects of our as they did in like changing eras in the story of Israel? From the simplest analogy, yea, from moral necessity, I might answer, surely. But a meditation on the two epistles to Timothy will determine this for us, and give us to know, that this is the divine good-pleasure concerning us.

The first of these two epistles contemplates the churches in the first of the conditions I have noticed above; that is, as under the pastoral care of the Spirit through the Apostle. The second of them contemplates, I believe, the saints in the interval between the second and third of these conditions; that is, between the challenge of the candlesticks and the judgment of Christendom - this assuming that the challenge has ended in conviction and dismissal or removal.

It may, however, be asked, is such an assumption warranted? Yes, I say, fully - because the challenge of His steward by the Lord, in each and every dispensation, at all times, and under all circumstances, has ever so ended; that is, in conviction and dismissal. Man in a responsible relation to God has never had an answer for his Lord. None, entrusted of Him with any deposit, have ever been found faithful, but He of whom it is written, " all the promises of God in Him are yea and in Him amen." " Give an account of thy stewardship" has always ended in the stewardship being taken away (Luke 16). " God stand in the congregation of the mighty," if " He judge among the gods," the conviction - will surely be pronounced, " they know not, neither will they understand,

they walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth -are out of course"; and the sentence will be delivered, " ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes " (Psa. 82).

So that the challenge of the Candlesticks in Rev. 1-3 must be assumed to have ended in conviction and dismissal. And to establish this as a fact, I may refer to John himself in those chapters. He is a kind of Representative of the churches or candlesticks, and he is set before the Lord Jesus, the Son of Man, as one that was walking among them as a Judge, shining before John in bright, burning judicial glory. Had He. appeared to John as Judge of the world John. would have stood; for he had already learned and taught that "- we have boldness in the day of judgment." But He was standing among the candlesticks, and before John as representing.- them; and this was overwhelming. As one dead, he. falls at the feet of such a Judge, such a glory. He came short of it - he had no answer for it the blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, would do for him as a sinner, but not as a steward he is overwhelmed and falls at his feet as one dead: Just like Isaiah in like conditions; for when the Throne of Jehovah set itself before -him in judicial glory for the challenge of Israel,, the Prophet cries out: "Woe is me, for I am undone!".

All join in telling us what the end of this challenge must be. The steward is. called to give- an account of. his stewardship, and it conies to pass again, as it had ever done. before, that be is no longer steward. The stewardship is taken away-the dispensation is in ruins- and upon this, the long and dreary age of Christendom, of a corrupt and ruined dispensation, begins to take its -course, as it is stilt doing in this our day, and, 'as it will do, in growing corruption of every form, and multiplied confusion in every, place, till it end in the judgment of Christendom as the specially guilty thing. on the earth, under the eye of God.

Now, the second epistle to Timothy anticipates, as I believe, and as I have already said, this. interval the era between the challenge, of the candlesticks (and. their consequent removal) and the judgment of Christendom

And-let me here turn aside for a moment just to say, that we ought to acquaint ourselves with the mysteries of this dispensation, as the Lord Jesus told His disciples in His day, that they ought to know " the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 13:11.). We ought to know the course, and the changes, and the successive phases through which it was to pass, for otherwise we cannot be duly instructed scribes to bring out of our treasures the old things and the new things of God, according to " His manifold wisdom."

To return, however,; to the two epistles to Timothy, of which I was speaking; and to give them a little closer inspection, we may observe, that the first. of them contemplates a disciplined house, outside of which the unclean were to be put; the second contemplates a repudiated house, outside of -which (in a sense) the saints were to retire.

We know not what time intervened between the writing of these two epistles. It is likely that it was some considerable time; for Paul was at large, abroad in active ministry, when he wrote the first of them, but he was a prisoner at Rome, having already appeared before Caesar, to answer for himself, when he. wrote the second. And Timothy was at Ephesus, left there for the care and ordering of the house of God, when the first. of these was addressed and sent to him; but we cannot say, with any certainty, where he was when he received the second.

But then, when we further look at the two, and compare them still for a little longer, we find in the first of them that the house, under the care of Timothy, is called " the house of God, the church of the living God," and it is dignified, or had in honor, as " the pillar and ground of the truth " - while, in the second of them, _ the house contemplated (though not under the care of Timothy, not provided for by the Holy 'Ghost) is called " the great house," and, in its uncleanness and corruption, it is presented to us as having been formed by a lie, namely this, " that the resurrection is passed already."

These are strong contrasts.

Then again, in the time of the first of them Paul is an authoritative Apostle; in the second, he is a deserted prisoner, in bonds to the Romans, and neglected by the saints; one who has to weep over the failure within, as well as to suffer the persecution from without.

And again - and this is an affecting fact - in the second epistle, Paul talks of personal, family associations, dwelling in the remembrance of them with evident relief and comfort of heart; as in chap. 1: 1-5. But this, in a way full of interest and tenderness, lets us know that church associations were now disappointing him. For it was not after this manner he wrote in his earlier epistles to the churches. He had then his kindred in Christ to remember, and was not put back to his associations and recollections in nature.

And further still, in the progress of this same epistle, lie speaks of Jannes and Jambres, likening the day which that epistle contemplates to the day of those adversaries. For Satan was then, in Christendom, purposing to neutralize the truth, by putting it into strange company or with evil admixtures, as he was doing with those magicians in the day of Moses, and thus blinding the conscience whether of the King of Egypt, or of the world.

'What a premonition of that which has come to pass! What is Christendom but the scene of such admixtures as have neutralized the power of the truth! These and kindred marks spew us, that the dispensation was contemplated as under different conditions, as the Apostle was writing these two epistles. In the first of them the Light in the Candlestick is fed and trimmed - in the second, the Candlestick has been removed.

But is this to be a surprise to us? Are we to think that the steward of God in this age would have proved faithful, since every other steward of His, from the beginning hitherto, as we have already seen, had been judged and set aside? The Church was to have been under her Lord, and in the Spirit, the light of the world, the pillar and ground of the truth. But she has become worse than darkness - a false beacon on the hill that has betrayed the traveler. But Adam, the steward of Eden, at the beginning, then Noah, lord of the world that now is, and then Israel, the husbandman of the vineyard in Judea, had already been found wanting. The King had failed ere this, the Priest, the Prophet - and now the Candlestick. It is a tale told again and again, the unfaithfulness of man as responsible to God, the Steward called to give in his account, and that ending in the stewardship being taken away from him. The house of prayer, so to speak, has always become a den of thieves.

But further, as to the course of dispensations. - In each of them, while each was still subsisting, there has been separation after separation. See this in Israel, -Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, were, each of them, returned captives, a separated remnant who, with their companions left Babylon.

But the day came, the day of the prophet Malachi, when "they that feared the Lord" had to separate from the returned captives, and "speak often one to another," as though they had been another Remnant (Mal. 3).

So in Christendom. The Reformation, for instance, was a time of separation. But from the persistent, growing, and accredited corruption which still or again prevailed, further withdrawing or separation has again and again had to take place. The return from Babylon did not secure purity in Israel the Reformation has not recovered it and kept it in Christendom. The -emptied, swept and garnished house has not done for the Lord Jesus.. He has found no habitation for His glory there. The unclean spirit, the spirit of idolatry, may have gone out from Israel, for there were no idols or high places in the land after the return from Babylon; but Israel was not healed; for infidel insolence, the challenges of the proud and scornful, were heard there fearfully. And what else, I ask, if not this again, in the Reformation-times of Christendom? Read the prophet Malachi, and look around at the moral condition of things under the eye, and mark the wondrous analogies that there are in the stories of corruption and confusion in man's world, whether here or there, whether now or then, whether in Israel or in Christendom, whether in our day, or 2000 years ago. Is it not so?

When we come into the book of the Apocalypse, after contemplating the different aspects of the dispensation in the two epistles to Timothy, we find, as I have anticipated already, the Lord challenging and judging, challenging the candlesticks and judging the world-in other words, judging the candlesticks by setting them aside, judging the world by the avenging destructions of His own day.

In the first three chapters, we get the first of these actions. The churches, as candlesticks, or as in their responsible place and character, are summoned to -give an account of themselves. The Son of Man walks among them in judicial glory. They had been previously fed and disciplined by the Spirit in St. Paul, as churches of saints, elect bodies, samples of the Bride of the Lamb; but here they are, as candlesticks, such as were responsible to shine as lights in the world, being set of God for that end, challenged and arraigned-according to which, the Son of Man begins His address to each of them with these words, "I know thy works." And as we have -already seen, that no steward has ever had an answer for God, when Challenged to give an account of his stewardship, this challenge of the candlesticks must be assumed to have ended in conviction and dismissal.

But, at the close of such a meditation as this, what does my soul suggest to my conscience? O for that faith that converts statements into facts, and ideas into realities I Not that I question what I have 'Written, but am so sure of its small influence and authority over me. I am conscious that it is one thing to have communion with truth, and another thing to have it with the Lord Himself. And I join in judgment with one who has lately written thus: "The dispensational aspect of truth must be secondary to that which is eternal. The exclusive or disproportionate study of dispensational truth has frequently engendered that knowledge which puffeth up to the weakening of the love which buildeth up. Often may be heard students on this lower form speak slightly of others much more deeply rooted in Christ than themselves, by reason of their non-acquaintance with theories which were often mere human speculations grafted on the truth of God." And he adds: "there is a possibility of being dazzled in the stead of being illuminated by light." For myself, I desire thankfully

to listen to these words, and to take the admonition and warning they convey to myself. They are seasonable and healthful.

Divine Righteousness

THE progress of discussion on the question of Divine righteousness, and a rapid review of what I have myself written, present the whole matter to me in so serious a light, that I have been led to resume my pen upon it. I do this the rather as I see that more are entangled in the pernicious error which I seek to oppose than I was at first aware of, and that the error is more grave than I had thought when I first rejected it as wrong.

That the " British and Foreign Evangelical Review," and, after it, the " Irish Christian Examiner," should have admitted an article so utterly anti-Christian in doctrine as they did, proves such utter blindness as to what truth, and error is, in the professed leaders of religious opinions, that I feel, more than ever, the need of having the truth as to the righteousness of God, fully and clearly before the mind. I am not unaware of the clamor that has been raised, nor of the warnings against dangerous errors, which have been the natural resource of those who could not answer what was said, and would not admit the truth that was produced. Nor am I ignorant how any error was accepted, provided the divine truth I insisted on from Scripture was condemned.. All this has only served to show me the real source of the opposition, and the importance of the question raised. Were it merely a question as to brethren (so called), I should not feel disposed to stir; but this is in no way the ease. What the church is, and its present state, and the presence of the Holy Ghost, is that which is important, and, with that, the coming of the Lord. But the 'question of what is righteousness before God, and the righteousness of God, is of vital importance for the whole church of God. I am satisfied that a large number of souls are misled as to it, and that a right apprehension of it is a means of spiritual deliverance for them. Many a simple soul has no distinct thought about it, resting simply in peace before God upon Christ's work. They are happy. They may learn more, no doubt, but I can only hope they may keep their simplicity and their peace. But many are kept back by false teaching on the subject. What has been taught beyond simple redemption and atonement has, I am bold to say, only darkened counsel,. I am perfectly aware that I shall have a whole host of evangelical teachers warning and denouncing. Save for their sakes, I am quite indifferent to that, if I have Scripture with me and guiding me; as I have no kind of doubt I have. The opposition only shows the need of being decided, and making the matter plain from Scripture. My opponents have gone wrong, and the clamors of those I am sure are wrong do not move me, except to be still more decided. Some may blame my confidence as to the possession of the truth, and this apparent braving, of others. But Scripture is of sacred and sufficient authority, and if the school of doctrine I oppose is misleading- the saints, it is worth while to denounce, their doctrine as unscriptural and mischievous error. Had I any bitter feeling, I should be blameable, but I do not even know the persons I am opposed- to, save one or two, by name. I am not conscious of any such feeling. But I do denounce the doctrine of our righteousness being made out by Christ's keeping the law for us, as unscriptural, and subversive of the whole scheme of Christianity, as regards our position before God. Paul who, as is well known, is the great teacher of the doctrine of justification, laboriously argues against every thought of the kind; and the doctrine which Paul teaches is wholly set aside, if such a notion be received. It is this which makes

me earnest on it. It subverts the doctrine of the New Testament as to the true standing of a Christian before God. My adversaries insist that Christ kept the law for us, and that that constitutes our positive righteousness before God. This

I deny: not that He kept the law, but that this is our righteousness. Scripture teaches no such doctrine; but it teaches the contrary. Issue is thus fairly joined. I denounce the doctrine as unscriptural and contrary to Christian truth. I affirm that those who teach it are in this respect false teachers. The arguments of my adversaries I have sufficiently met as they have been presented from time to time in the controversy. My object now is different, -to treat the subject as a whole from its source as a system of doctrine,

The starting point of these doctors is the law. Righteousness is measured by the law. There must be a law to have righteousness, or sin on the other hand. Sin is the transgression of the law. "It is evident then," says Dr. O'Brien, "that in the justification with which we have to do, -in which man is the party and God is the judge, -we have only to look to the law to which man is answerable, to see what justification means." This is the doctrine of the whole party. Hence, all must be put under the law and the same law. Thus, Adam is placed under it; and hence Mr. Molyneux, who does but refer to the common doctrine, says, "It was said to Adam 'Do this and live.'" And this is carried so far, that in the "Marrow of Modern Divinity," it is explained how Adam broke each of the commandments.

So the heathen are put under the same law; hence the Christian also; while distinctions of absolute law, and particular formal law, are invented to meet the plain argument which Scripture affords against this.

The whole system is false in every part of it and if, instead of saying, 'we have only to look to the law to which man is answerable,' I do look to Scripture and revelation, I find the Apostle there very carefully sliming that this is not the ground on which we stand at all, but another, -God's righteousness, which he carefully and diligently contrasts with it. He diligently spews that we are not to do, what Dr. O'Brien says we are to do; and moreover, that we are under the curse if we do it. This evidently is a serious question. These teachers of the law are telling us to do exactly what the Apostle is telling us not to do; what he denounces; what he tells us puts men under a curse. But I must answer each portion in detail, to clear the ground, before I take up the system as a whole.

Every part and parcel of it is false. In the first place, for it is well to give the first place to what is alleged as Scripture, sin is not the transgression of the law. The translation is a false one; brought about, I doubt not, by this system of doctrine. The word is used in contrast with being under law. It is translated differently by the translators themselves elsewhere. They that have "sinned without law, shall also perish without law," and they that have "sinned under the law, shall be judged by then law". (Rom. 2:12). Now, what 'has been translated transgression of the. law' (1 John 3:4), is the same (as to the force of the word, only here as an adverb), as what is translated here without law' (Rom. 2:12), in contrast to being under it and judged by it. That is, what has been translated transgression of the law,' is by the Apostle expressly contrasted with it. It is lawlessness. This is a serious thing. This doctrine as to the law has led to the falsification of the Scriptural definition of sin. I do not think any honest man will pretend to say that *ἀνομία* means transgression of the law, or the same thing as *παράβασις νόμου*.

The principle of the system is, that "Do this and live," was said to Adam. This is equally false. "This do and live," was not said to Adam; nor, as is stated in the "Marrow of Modern Divinity," implied in the threat of death on his eating the forbidden fruit. Adam had nothing to do. He was not put to gain life by doing anything. He was not yet fallen under the power of death at all. As far as security of life was attached to any act at all it was to the eating of the other tree. But that he was never told to eat and live. It is a striking fact, that responsibility, and a source or sustainment of life, were thus set as distinct things even in Paradise. That which has been the puzzle of heathens and Jews, and schoolmen, and theologians, to reconcile, responsibility, and the free gift of life, stood out there, were represented in these two trees. The creature failed in his responsibility, did, and died. It is to this these teachers seek to bring us back, when the revelation of God is, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." But Adam was never given a promise of life conditioned on his doing anything; was never put on this ground by God; but had a warning of death, he being alive, if he disobeyed. What is said on this subject is a mischievous, fatal, and anti-scriptural statement. Not only it is not found in Scripture, for they can never produce Scripture. for any of their statements, but Scripture puts Adam on wholly different ground. There was nothing he was set to do, there is no promise of life in doing it. He was alive, and threatened with death. This false doctrine subverts the whole truth of the fall, and of our condition as fallen. Adam fell from what he was in; did not lose a promise, for none was made to him. All the revealed principles of God's dealings are falsified by this system.

We have seen man on the ground of responsibility, and failing; and the tree of life, otherwise free to him without any doing or condition, untouched. Man was now fallen and sinful; separated from God, and sinful in nature; I pass over the great and solemn judgment, executed on earth as the result of this state, because it was a judicial act.

The next thing God does is to give a promise, not of life, but of the seed, of Christ; an unconditional promise that all nations should be blessed in Abraham, and this subsequently is confirmed to the seed. No promise of life was given to Adam, fallen or unfallen. It was declared in the judgment on Satan, that the seed of the woman should bruise his head. But the seed of the woman-the first Adam was not; but the second. This seed is now promised to Abraham without any condition as to its gift. Up to this, the one only law, and which, in its nature (as a covenant on express terms) excludes all other, as ground and measure of responsibility was the prohibition of eating the forbidden fruit. Man's heart and nature had departed from God before even he outwardly broke through the prohibition; but this is another matter. The spiritual man may perceive this, but this has nothing to do with a law or the terms of a covenant.

After this promise, made unconditionally to Abraham (not of life, but of the seed), came the law. Not that it could touch that promise or the covenant, impossible, as the Apostle shows us in the Galatians; but it was added that there might be transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. Up to this there had been no promise of life at all. There had been the legal covenant made with Adam, the transgression of which involved death; and the promise of the seed, without any condition at all, - as to its principle, an unconditional promise. Such, unquestionably, are the Scriptural facts as to this, and the statement, in fact, of the Galatians. When the law came, there was a promise of life, a conditional promise: he that doeth them shall live in them (Lev. 18), quoted by Paul in Rom. 10, as the expression of the law's principle as to the way of righteousness, although it remains still and infallibly true, that life and incorruptibility were

brought to light by the Gospel; it is not said first given.

But, thus far we have found-that the statement as to Adam, that he was put under the terms " Do this and live," is not found in Scripture; but that, on the contrary, he was set in a quite different condition, and on Other terms. It is a subversion of Scripture instruction to place him under the law, as subsequently given. He was under a covenant; but, as living, threatened with falling under the power of death. We have found that Abraham, the next remarkable dealing and revelation of God, was not placed under any law at all as the ground of righteousness, he was justified by faith; and that the promise was given to him without any condition whatever, and that that promise was not of life, hut of the seed, Christ. These cases show that this general putting under law, from Adam onwards, is an effacing of the clear, positive instruction of Scripture as to the various positions in which men were set. The notion that the law was written in Adam's heart is equally unfounded. He had not yet acquired the knowledge of good and evil, necessary to the application of the law; and it is yet more evident, for he had another formal law to test obedience; and, certainly, that was not written' on his heart.

But we are arrived, in the progress of God's dealings, at the giving of the law. The question of righteousness, which the unconditional promise had not raised, is now raised. Righteousness is required from man. But we must notice this a little more particularly.

We find, again, the two great principles of paradise, responsibility and life; but life dependent on man's satisfying his responsibility, " This do, and thou shalt live." No doubt the literal statement in Leviticus refers to their enjoying life, under God's blessing, in this world; still the great principle is laid down, and hopes beyond this world gleamed through the darkness by the inspired cravings of men's hearts, and the prophetic testimony of the word. If a man kept God's commandments, he would live. But, as the Apostle says, that which was ordained for life, I found to be unto death. If there had been a law given, which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the law. But there was not. The law was a special system introduced to test man when he was really a sinner under death, yet pretending to power and free will, and to bring to light what he really was. It was found to be a ministration of death and condemnation, the strength of sin, making sin exceeding sinful; and, though not by any fault of the law, provoking the action of sin. But it was only added till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made. It was the exact rule of what God required from man, but man was a sinner. It did not give life, did not lead into righteousness before God. The keeping of it would make a man find life. But this, Christ excepted, no man ever did. It prohibited, necessarily and rightly, what man did, and was, and felt; and commanded what was contrary to his state and feelings, according to the nature of the old man. It was a process, a dealing with man, of the weightiest character, because its contents were the perfection of man as such; but it was a testing process, it did not give life. It could not do so in itself, even if it were kept. It resulted in sin's becoming exceeding sinful, not in righteousness.

In Christ, God took up the question of the trees again; but not in requiring or forbidding, but in acting. He gives life, life in Christ, and Christ takes the whole consequence of our responsibility on Himself; puts all away; and having perfectly glorified God therein, places man, according to sovereign goodness, in the glory of God. I speak, of course, of the efficacy of His work for believers. Here, only, can man find the conciliation of responsibility and the possession of life. But it is grace, the act and work of God. He has given His only begotten Son, that we might live

through Him, and to be the propitiation for our sins. Now, as He is, so are we in this world. It is a glorious and blessed solving by God in sovereign grace, of what never could be solved in any other way. Grace reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Law never was the means of obtaining righteousness, or giving life, and was never meant to be. It was given to Adam in a way not involving the knowledge of good and evil, but testing obedience under the penalty of death. On failure, the seed of the woman was announced in the judgment on the serpent, but no promise given to Adam. Promise of the blessing of all nations is given to Abraham, and confirmed to the seed, Christ. Then the question of acquiring righteousness before God is raised (which, yet in principle, was already settled in Abraham), in the giving of the law, and divine favor on obedience. The result, and necessarily so, to a sinful nature, is, that law works wrath by transgression.

We may add, man's state is then fully tested by God's `manifestation in grace on the earth, and judgment pronounced on the world: " Now is the judgment of this world." But thus, God is perfectly glorified by the second Adam's work; and He, the author of divine life and eternal salvation.

We may consider the law and Christ, as the two great principles on this question of life and righteousness; the old covenant and the great foundation of the new; or, which more concerns us now, because both are directly made with Israel,-as the two great principles of righteousness-on man's part, under responsibility, for God,. and life sought for thus,-and here God is simply a judge (as Dr. O'Brien says),-or righteousness on God's part for man, and eternal life given; our sins being put away, and God perfectly glorified. And here God is a justifier. This leading into heavenly places by sovereign grace to us, according to the perfect glorifying of God, accomplished by Christ. Now, the law, as we have seen, was never the Way of getting life; law, neither on tables of stone, nor on the heart; never the way of obtaining righteousness, though if it could have given life, it might have been so; that is, of obtaining the righteousness of law, not God's, but man's. The notion of a universal legal righteousness is proved false by God's various ways with man. But if we reject the thought of one general rule, the law, by which righteousness was to be obtained,-- were there then various ways of obtaining life and righteousness before God, because God dealt in these various ways? By no means. But God's way of giving. life alike proves the falseness of their legal system. These were means of testing and instructing man by the dealings and ways of God, that he might know himself in relationship to God. Eternal life was always the gift of God. It was promised before the world began, and was manifested in due time through preaching. Our saving and calling was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, and is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light by the Gospel. No man can give himself natural life; still less, divine. That is in and from Christ for man. The law did not give it, so Paul tells us; no law was given that could, and no better law was possible than what was given. It did declare that he that doeth these things shall live in them; but declared it to one who had a nature not subject to the law of God, and which could not be. But righteousness and life cannot really be separated. If we live before God, it must be as accepted and righteous in His sight. If a law had been given which could have given life, righteousness should have been by the law. So Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law on this wise, The man that doeth these things shall live in them. The righteousness of faith is not separated from life, though not by it. Christ is both to us, both to all who ever had life, or ever had righteousness. His death proved the righteousness of God in forgiving the sins of believers

before He came. God hath set Him forth for a propitiation. through faith in His blood, to declare His (God's) righteousness. But eternal life was promised before the world was. The question of righteousness was raised by sin coming in. To turn now to this: Adam, innocent, had never the question of his acceptance raised, nor that of righteousness. He was what God made him. To speak of justifying him, was to call in question the workmanship of his Maker. But conscience once come in, the question is there: " how can a man be just with God?" Abraham was not justified by law or by works, but by faith without works; for to him that worketh is the reward of debt not of grace. Those under the law were not justified by its works, as is manifest from Scripture. The whole system of the law as the means of righteousness was left behind by the Christian Jew, to have it in another way (Gal. 2:15,16), the faith of Christ. Was the law then abrogated for those who were under it? It was not. But they died from under it by the body of Christ, to stand on another footing, and in another life altogether; even in Christ, their life and their righteousness. They are not in the flesh, they are not under the law.; but they have put off the old man and put on the new man. They are alive unto God through Jesus, according to all the value of what He has done for them; purged from sin, and accepted in the beloved. The law is always an individual thing. The man that doeth shall live in them. The very essence of it is that the man himself does it, that he is obedient; not he disobedient, and another obedient for him. The man that does them is justified. But the law had raised the question of righteousness. The knowledge of good and evil was come in, sin and conscience together, and for peace and divine acceptance there must be righteousness. The law had-put it on the ground of man's doing, as alive and responsible to God in this world. It could only have done it thus. No doubt faith looked beyond, but man on earth had to be righteous according to his state on earth. That was the way, the only way, on the ground of man's responsibility, and as God, in giving the rule of this in the law (though its highest requirements were, so to speak, hidden in it), gave a perfect rule for man as His creature down here, man has applied it to all times, and as eternal, necessary, and the only ground of righteousness, the only one for all times. So it would be, if man was to have his own righteousness. But is that so? And if eternal life, promised in grace before the world was, is to be conferred, is that to be found by earning it under law? Or, has not God some other way, and man another need? Man's conscience tells him he ought to be what the law requires. His pride tells him he may be; and theologians, feeling they cannot, seek to meet it by making it up some other way, but keep it as the measure. This, then, is the question: the law being the perfect rule of man's conduct as a creature, is it the one, ever true, abiding way of life and righteousness to him, or has God another? That which makes it difficult to man to get out of this thought that the law has this eternal place is, that it is the measure of righteousness for man, the true perfect rule of it, and his conscience owns it. My adversaries say it is the one abiding way of righteousness, and that what God has done is to fulfill it for man, maintaining it, not merely as right, and as the rule of righteousness for man, but as that by the fulfilling of which righteousness is to be obtained and life eternal. I affirm that it is the perfect rule of human or creature righteousness; but that it is not, and never has been, the way of obtaining righteousness before God; the way of God's righteousness; that God's ways have shown it; and that though it be in itself a perfect, and, therefore, immutable rule for creature righteousness, God, who did not mean us to have righteousness that way, brought it in by the bye. I go further, and say, it was never meant to be, and never could be, that by which righteousness was established for us, but that God has shown the weakness of the creature, and the impossibility of his attaining to righteousness as such, and has condemned and

set aside the whole nature and state of things in which the law has its operation, in view of our introduction into heavenly places.

In the first place our salvation and calling was given us, not according to any works at all, but in Christ Jesus before the world began. There was the promise of eternal life. It is the sovereign gift of God. The Son quickens whom He will. No law has been given which could give life. As regards righteousness, the law could do nothing in it. Adam, innocent, had no need to acquire any righteousness. As I have said, he was what God had made him; the law, as God has given it, could have no application to him: stealing, lust, and loving his neighbor, had no force for him. In no way could the principle of law, as requiring righteousness, be applied to an innocent person. An imposed rule does not suit such an one; nor a law which supposes evil, one who is ignorant of it. When he had fallen, it is quite clear the law could not justify or give righteousness. It was applicable then, but could only condemn. By it was the knowledge of sin. Neither the purpose nor the ways of God give righteousness by any law. The law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. In Him was life, and he that hath the Son hath life, and he

that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The eternal source of it, He hath brought life and incorruptibility to light by the gospel.

The great question then arises, as to direct proof: has not God set up another kind of righteousness than that of law, and if so the fulfillment of the law cannot accomplish that righteousness, a righteousness which is, not the adequate fulfillment of man's obligations, (and the law can be no more), but the glorifying of God's nature fully, so that He is glorified in blessing according to all that that nature is. Not the setting aside of the authority of the law; for both God's authority and real creature righteousness, were involved in it; but magnifying it, yet putting man on another ground as to his acceptance, the fruit of God's thoughts and God's work, made good in setting Christ at His right hand; setting man on the ground of resurrection by the glory of the Father, and I may add, heavenly glory; the law knowing nothing of resurrection, but applying to man alive in this world. I affirm that, according to Scripture, there is such a new divine justification and righteousness. It has a double bearing or aspect. It meets the failure of men, as under the responsibilities of the first Adam, including the transgression of the law. It places man, accepted of God, in a wholly new position, in which divine life in power is also found: and God is just or righteous in both. It is according to what He is, not what man ought to be merely, though atonement meets that. It is from Him, His doing, and put in force by Him in justifying. He it is that acts in it in grace, so that it is His righteousness. It is in contrast with man's, founded on Christ's work in manhood, but in which God Himself was glorified, and into which man is brought, so that in it, He, God, is just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Otherwise God could only have been just in condemning, for justice had nothing to do with unfallen Adam. He was, I repeat, what God had made him, and should have stayed so. God cannot judge or call in question His own work, so as to apply justice to it.

Now, in Scripture, we find man's righteousness, or legal righteousness, always contrasted with God's in nature, in fact, and in principle; the latter being distinctively introduced by the gospel, while promised of old; the law having in the interval raised the question of man's righteousness and given the true measure of it, so that God has confirmed it by His divine sanction. Thus " Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things

shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not," etc " That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." " That is," as he says, " the word of faith which we preach." Now, here I find expressly that the righteousness, which is of the law, speaks one language, and the righteousness which is of faith, another; This is expressly declared, but it is confirmed by the fact that, when speaking of Christ, it speaks nothing of His life, or law-keeping, as connected with the righteousness of faith, but of His death and resurrection. Remark further, that, in this righteousness of faith, man does not do or act but believe; God acts. He has raised Christ from the dead. I believe in what God has done. Paul is not ashamed of the gospel, because therein the righteousness of God is revealed in the way of faith to faith. A new thing as to its revealed completeness and ground, though prophesied of of old. So, in Rom. 3, God's righteousness apart from law is manifested. It is; "at this time," and " His righteousness," that He might be just and justify him that was of the faith of Jesus. It may be alleged, Yes, but that is by Christ's keeping the law. But it is not. The same passage says: " God hath sent Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His (God's) righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past." God's righteousness is shown in remission through blood-shedding; and this, the apostle emphatically declares, that God might be just and the justifier of believers. And note, in speaking of the sins of believers in past times, there is not a hint of fulfilling law for them, but of His blood. That made God evidently righteous, as regards old testament saints. Surely if the other had been true, it would have come in here as regards these. But no; it is "justified freely by His grace through redemption"; but keeping law is not redemption.

So, in Galatians, the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. It is not faith in one's fulfilling law; but faith in contrast with law; faith is in the seed to which the promise was made, according to the statements we had already gathered from Scripture; and if the inheritance be of law, it is no more of promise. It is a diligent contrast of the two principles. One is Hagar, the other Sarah. But Hagar is cast out with her children. Law can have no place with the promise and faith. And that no man is justified by law is evident, for the just shall live by faith. But the law is not of faith,-is another and a contrasted principle. Curse came by the law. Is it then set aside? No. Christ has glorified it, and redeemed us from its curse, having been made a curse for us. Is there anything added to show that He kept it for us, that we might be justified? Not a word: contrast with it only. It is not of faith. I find, then, an opposite principle to law brought in, and that by which we are justified, set in careful contrast with law: God's righteousness by faith, contrasted with man's; our own, by law. Christ's keeping it for others being never hinted at nor supposed to be possible. Righteousness by law being always considered as our own, and rejected; as in Phil. 3:9, " not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith." The law, if kept, would be man's righteousness; what we have through faith, is God's.

But if the law be not thus a rule of life and way of righteousness, and Christ's own obedience unto death makes us righteous who believe in Him, what principle have we to guard us against sinning and practical ungodliness? Here what answers to the other tree of Paradise comes in;. the tree of life. It is not by imposing a law that we are kept in obedience (that failed us, for the same reason that it did in obtaining righteousness), but by 'giving a life. Christ becomes our life, and our

obedience is in this life, to God Himself, in contrast still with law (Rom. 6). But this introduces another point, which applies to law too. The law indeed kills us, as alive in conscience without it; but this could only be ruin and condemnation. Christ has died in grace for us, and this is appropriated to us by faith in Him that is risen. We say we are crucified with Christ. The faults of the old man are not made up by law-keeping, but the old man itself is wholly condemned and set aside. God has condemned sin in the flesh by Christ's death, and set it aside; for we are dead. He only that is dead is really justified from sin. The sins have been put away, for Christ is crucified for us; sin in the flesh condemned by His death, but we are crucified with Him; not in the flesh. We were in the flesh, and then the motions of sin could be excited by the law. We reckon ourselves, being baptized to His death, dead to sin, and alive to God; Christ risen, our life; so that we walk in newness of life. But this is our deliverance from" law; because He who was under it, has died and satisfied its claims, and come from under them; law having dominion over a man as long as he lives,-and we are dead, and alive with a new kind of life, out of the state and place where law reached us. We have died wholly out of that, as truly as Christ has died, and risen into another, God's true place for man in Christ. It is a new creation in us, and by which we are placed in the new creation, where the old things are passed away and all things are new. Thus life is new, as well as righteousness. It is divine life, as well as divine righteousness: Christ our life, and Christ our righteousness. Neither are obtained by the law, both in and through Christ. Deliverance from the law is not by abrogating its authority; that could not be, for it was God's and was the necessary and right rule for living man, alive in this world. But as such, he was wholly guilty, willful, and condemned. But in Christ we have died to that state of being to which the law applied. We are not alive in the world. Thus the first man has been tested by law as the rule and measure of man's righteousness in the flesh, but he was already a sinner; and faith, looking to that which was in God's counsels before the world existed but which has been manifested in Christ and by the gospel, knows that while the law was a perfect rule for man in flesh as long as he lived, it was, in God's use of it, only a temporary thing between promise and the seed, when man was already a sinner; useful to convict, but incapable of giving life or righteousness. Having seen the promised seed dead and risen again, faith knows our sins to be put away, reckons the flesh dead, and ourselves alive in a new state, (where Christ raised is our life, Christ raised our righteousness), out of the nature, scene, life, and condition, to which alone law applied. Hence, we are always said to be as Christ is now, not as He was; while we are to walk as He walked. And this leads me to the rule of practice which is, equally with our justifying, in principle and nature above and out of law, divine and not human, though in human forms and circumstances. Law required that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, a perfect rule where all is right, mutual and common blessing; but unsuited to, unequal to meet, a state of sin. We are called to love as Christ loved, and to give ourselves, our lives, if needed, for others.. One recognizes self as a measure in a happy state of things; the other, the giving up of ourselves for need, misery, or want of any kind. It looks for the self-sacrificing power of divine love, as manifested in Christ; not mutual kindness measured by self. We are to be imitators of God as dear children.

This then is the Christian position. It takes life as it was in Christ before the worlds, but manifested in Him in the flesh, the eternal life which was with the Father, which we have as having the Son. It knows nothing of life by the law. It is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, the Son quickening whom He will. It is man made the righteousness of God in Christ; not by law, though Christ kept it, but through Christ's having perfectly glorified God in His death, obedient even unto

death; put away our sins wholly, so that we are justified completely from them; condemned absolutely and set aside the old man (so that we are not in flesh); and brought us into God's presence according to His glory, according to the worth of that sacrifice in which God Himself was perfectly glorified. Man's perfect righteousness is measured by the law, but that law was given to sinners as requirement to obtain it, and served to convict of sin. The law was made not for a righteous man, but for sinners and profane, 'οὐ κείται' does not apply to the righteous. But this way of righteousness is not what is ever made good at all and the creature set up before God by it; but a new kind- of righteousness is set up, God's righteousness by faith. The law is man's righteousness; we are not justified by that: the gospel reveals God's-the righteousness in which he is just. Not just in recognizing that man has, or has not, come up to the measure required of him, that will have its place, as justice, in condemnation in the day of judgment; but just in accepting and glorifying, because He, God Himself, has been perfectly glorified, and glorified where sin was, so that He should be glorified in all He is, love as well as righteousness. Man's righteousness, were there such (in Christ there was), there is no difficulty in measuring and defining; the law gives it us perfectly. Human righteousness, and human life in blessing before God, would be the result of keeping it. God's righteousness is God's, and not man's; and yet man, that is the believer, stands in it before Him. This is the difficulty which attaches to the expression. It is God's, yet man is in it; yea, said to be it, before God. My adversaries consequently reduce it to the former, and make it to be man's righteousness, only that Christ has fulfilled it. The reformers, while bursting into light, soar far beyond this, and declare that the Christian was far away out of and beyond law. Yet, pressed by those who accused them. of setting aside law, they slipped back into vague language, or held Christ's fulfilling it, while Luther suppressed the expression in his translation of the New Testament altogether. Since then this has been systematized. But it is a curious fact. that that, because of which the apostle says he was not ashamed of the gospel, is not found in Luther's Testament.

The reason of all this confusion and error is that men have not seen that the old man is wholly set aside by the, gospel, with all its life and standing before God; that we have, as seen in Christ, died out of it altogether, are not. alive in the world, and are set on a new footing altogether, founded on death and resurrection. In Christ; Christ for us and we in Christ, namely in Christ risen, and before God, according to that which He has wrought, and in the power of a divine and endless life, but in resurrection, sin being put away, death overcome, and we in the place of the second Adam, according to what he has wrought (and wrought as offering Himself, and made sin), and not according to what the first Adam wrought, nor, I may add, according to what he ought to have wrought, nor any more in question as to that, and brought to this state as recognizing ourselves wholly dead in trespasses and sins, guilty and ruined in him, transgressors if under law, enmity against God, but now passed out of that state as quickened together with Christ, consequent upon the blessed work in which He glorified God. And as the first Adam sinned and left God and was turned out of an earthly paradise, and was then the parent of a ruined race in that state, so the Second has perfectly glorified God, making an atonement for our sins; and having perfectly glorified God in that place of sin when it was now needed (Himself sinless or He could not have done-so, yea, His sinlessness in it was His perfection), has entered into a heavenly paradise, and we as spiritually, so to speak, born of Him stand in His place before God. But He has entered into this place now, not as filling up the measure of man's righteousness, though when alive He surely did so, and much more; but by glorifying God in the place of sin, i.e. made sin for us, all that God

is, so that we should stand not on the footing of man's righteousness, measured by man's duty, but God's, measured by God's glory; Christ having in that put away all our sins and guilt incurred in our standing as men.

Now I fully admit, that many a beloved child of God only knows this last; that is, the blessed and righteous forgiveness of sins: and such are on a sure ground of grace. May they ever hold it. But these do not know the whole blessing of their position. They go to the eleventh verse of Rom. 5, a blessed journey for the heart too; but they do not with intelligence go through the sixth chapter on to the eighth chapter. If they get into the seventh chapter they stop at it inconsistently perhaps, but they do. Why then (though man be it before God by grace), is this righteousness God's righteousness not man's?

Man's is simple. That is the fulfillment of his duty to God, of which the law may be taken as the perfect measure: man's work, measured by man's duty. This is God's work, measured by God's glory. It is His counseling entirely, and no duty of any man to any one. His acting as the fruit of His own love, the Son's undertaking in His own blessed love, but so undertaken for His Father's glory, the divine glory. So Hebrews 10., "A body hast Thou prepared me.... Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me.... Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God." Surely God's law was in His heart, but was man's duty the measure of that work? Was it, by keeping that law we were sanctified? Was that the will He did to sanctify us, and to perfect us before God? No: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of Jesus Christ once for all." But perhaps we needed the other to be perfected before God? No: "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." It was not, though obedience, merely that of a creature who had his measure of duty from the place he was in naturally, but a divine surrender of Himself, and undertaking to do God's will, a heavenly undertaking of obedience to do God's will, be it what it might, but completed, not by doing what was the duty of man, but by suffering in obedience and love the whole wrath of God, as offering up Himself. When the blessed Lord became a man He was, I need not say, a perfect man, and consequently an obedient man; for that was man's place. But the obedience was absolute. All was obedience even to death, to death under wrath, which proved its perfectness. He, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God. Of that the law could know nothing. It had its duly prescribed measure, and was perfect because it had. He gave Himself a ransom for many. No doubt He kept the law in this, for He loved God with all His heart, but He did a divine work too. But there is more. God's love was perfectly glorified, not to holy beings, but in its

own supremacy,, according to its sovereign glory in and through Christ. God commended His love, what is peculiar to Himself, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, and this at the cost of the infinite self: -sacrifice of Christ, so that it should be a motive for His Father to love Him: "Therefore doth my Father love me." God's righteousness against sin was glorified; and, mark, not in the way simply of judgment against the evil-the day of judgment will do that-but in the way of drinking that cup of wrath for others, in love to others, in love to those His Father loved, and to glorify God's love to man, so that God would be glorified in justifying-not justifying the just, but sinners: "Just, and the Justifier of them that believe in Christ Jesus "; " the Justifier of the ungodly." This was a glorious glorifying of God, i. e., not merely a doing of man's duty, but of displaying sovereign, and otherwise unknown and impossible qualities (after all a very feeble word), and sovereign excellencies in God; there only possibly brought out. How was. God's sovereign majesty there brought out; " It became Him [what a word!] in bringing many sons to

glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering!" How was the truth, that the wages of sin was death, here made good; not a mere human succumbing, though He truly died as man, but a Divine testimony to its import! But I stay myself, however much more we might attempt to say, because I feel the thought and pen of man are feeble when they treat such a subject. They may suggest, but the Holy Ghost alone can give Divine thoughts on so holy a subject, and we bow better than we explain. Still we have the word of the Lord Himself for this solemn hour: "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." "If God be glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and shall straightway glorify Him." It was this that brought man to Divine and heavenly glory; not the keeping of the law. Christ had always, as an obedient man, glorified His God and Father; but there was a "now," when all had another character, though, it threw the luster of its perfectness on all His path from the beginning. His life, though truly man, was always a Divine life; but this was a Divine work, to do which He had come. He gave Himself. As then it was God's counsel, God's will, so it was in its nature a Divine work (though He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death), and God Himself glorified in it, a display of God's righteousness which could justify through grace; which mere righteousness, dealing with responsible man, could not do. It was redemption in righteousness; grace reigning through righteousness. Man's? No; God's, where man was only sin, but where sin was put away-put away by the sacrifice of Himself. If any say that Christ did not glorify God by more than mere obedience to the law, they lie against the truth. Say, He fulfilled the law in doing it, I have nothing to say. We are called to do it by walking in the Spirit. But He gave Himself. He was made sin, was obedient to death, drank the cup of wrath. He who was the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His being, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. It is not man's righteousness, which is doing his duty in his place as man, but God's counsels, God's thoughts, God's work, God's love, when the question of man's righteousness was over, and the One righteous Man made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. A work carried on by the love of God as man, between Him and God, where we had no part at all but sin, and where He, though sinless, was made sin, and stood only as such; and where, if there were any righteousness, it must be God's, and that was displayed in raising Him up, and that is shown in justifying us because of it, and hence giving us glory in the Christ, according to His title in redemption. It was the voluntary act of God, yea, even in Christ, not the duty of the first Adam fulfilled, though that he surely did, when man was in a state of sin. It is God's righteousness, because God has been displayed in it, glorified in it, as he could not have been by any innocence or any law-keeping, because it is His thought and His work-a thought which would have been a blasphemy for any one else, but which is His sovereign glory; a work which no creature could have done, innocent or guilty, which is necessarily Divine in its nature and character, and by which God is righteous in justifying sinners, not by their legal righteousness, but by His own. Man ought now to keep the law; does, so far as heart, in the new creature. Could he have done that work, though, blessed be God, a man did it? Well then, it is not man's righteousness in its nature, or in fact. Done between God and Christ the Son of God, it is for man, but God's righteousness for him, That righteousness is displayed in setting Christ at His right hand, and bringing us into Divine glory because it is Christ's, because it was done for us. Would keeping the law entitle us to be like Christ in glory? In doing more than that, we should only have to say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do. But whom He justified them also He glorified; predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among

many brethren.

A few remarks as to details remain. The mere falsehoods which my opponents have permitted themselves, I shall not notice; my object has been positive truth, not controversy. The notion has been expressed, that God cannot justify, without the person's being righteous in fact. This has no sense, if it is a sum of another's righteousness imputed. It is a denial of that grace which justifies the ungodly. But what I would note here is, that the point I insist on is, that it is God's righteousness which is revealed, not the claims of God on man satisfied, so that it is man's measure reached in conduct, but God's work according to His own glory, in contrast with what man should be for Him. In virtue of God's own work for man, He justifies him; not in virtue of man's work for Him, by whomsoever accomplished. - Hence, glory with Christ is the fruit of it. Hence, it is not justice sitting to estimate debt (though that be satisfied by atonement), but grace reigning through righteousness. God has acted for Himself in the matter, according to His own glory, though for man, and imputing it to him. But the principle is false, as it is stated for the righteousness of God (Rom. 3) is known in remission. God justifies therein, and that is through faith in Christ's blood. So that 'it is false, that there must be actual righteousness in conduct, for God to justify. His righteousness is revealed. He is just, and justifies through blood and faith in it.

I have yet another word to add as regards the difficulties insisted on with some pretension, of making a difference between "imputed righteousness," and "imputing righteousness." The attempt to confound them may serve to mislead; and souls who trust others, and do not examine, may be misled by it. But as to those who raise the difficulty, it is either willful, or very great stupidity. Change the word expressive of the thing imputed. He imputes goodness to that man in that matter, but he did not deserve it. Here it is simply accounting the man to be good, reckoning him to be such in the given case. Or, on the other hand, say: it was imputed goodness as to him, though I spewed him favor as such, for the act was his father's doing. Here it is an act of goodness in the father imputed to the son, and he therefore treated as the good person.

Now, Scripture always uses it in the first sense. God imputes righteousness to man without works; that is, He holds the man for righteous, just as if I impute goodness to a man in some matter, I account him good. That is all it means, and no more. It does not say why. Only in our case, it is because of faith. But imputing righteousness to a person, that is, accounting him righteous, is not a statement that there is a quantity of righteousness accomplished outside him, in virtue of which he is so accounted righteous. The question I am discussing is, why, a believer is accounted righteous, beyond 'that righteousness which is equivalent to remission: My adversaries say, it is making up the legal righteousness in which they have failed. I affirm that it is God's work for them, accomplished in Christ, for His own glory and their good (demonstrated in putting Christ in that glory) according to his on glory, not merely according to the legal claim on man. Hence it is God's righteousness, which the legal righteousness could not be; not man's. And legal righteousness can be no more, for it is not righteousness in respect of a claim, if it goes beyond the claim. In either case, righteousness is imputed in virtue of 'a work, which the man himself has not done. There we are one; but I affirm that it is that glorious work, the glorifying of God by Christ, in virtue of which He now sits at God's right hand, and we shall be in glory with Him. They say it is Christ's fulfilling the law for them during His life. Thus they put the Christian back now under the law, as if he were alive in the flesh; and Christ's living obedience, his righteousness. I say no; His life was blessed, perfect, or He could not have been a spotless lamb. But our connection is with Christ after He is

dead and risen, consequently we are not in the flesh, nor know Him after the flesh; not alive, for faith, in the life to which law applies. We have died and risen with Christ. We belong to the other world, to heaven. We are dead, and our life hid with Christ in God.

The standard of walk follows. For my adversaries, it is the law. That is their rule of life. I. say nay; I am dead and not under it, but obedient in a new nature to God, in which His holiness and love are to be developed in my heart. I am called to be a follower, an imitator of God as His dear child. And the, measure is different. My opponents say, the fulfillment of the law is my righteousness, the accomplishment of it the aim of our practice. I say, no; Christ is my righteousness, as having glorified God Himself, and so being in His glory, and Christ the standard of my path, His actual glory my point of attainment, and I, changed here from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, I am to purify, myself as He is pure, for I am to be like Him when He appears.

By the law, my measure is to love my neighbor as myself. In grace I am to give up myself, as Christ offered Himself up a sacrifice and an offering to God. He laid down His life. I am to lay down my life for

the brethren. I am become light in the' Lord, and I am to arise from among the dead; and He will give me. light. But the principle of the contrast is clear. The law requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves. The gospel calls the Christian to act like Christ, and give himself up for others in the path of love., That is the kind of love wanted sinful world. But these are consequences, the main point is that I stand in God's righteousness according to the effectual Work of the Lord Jesus, for the glorifying' of 'God; Which is so imputed to me, that,. I shall be with' Him in the glory, and meanwhile knows the Love which has imparted to me the unspeakable gift, the love shed abroad, in my heart by the Holy Ghost given to me.

It is God's righteousness by grace, and the work of Christ, not man's righteousness by law, for God. What God has wrought for man, not what man has wrought for God. That of which God's glory, not man's duty, is the measure; though man's failure in that duty has been atoned for in it.

UNTO HIM.; THAT LOVED US, AND WASHED US FROM OUR SINS IN

HIS OWN BLOOD, AND HATH MADE US KINGS. AND PRIESTS

UNTO GOD AND HIS FATHER; TO HIM BE

GLORY AND DOMINION Forever

AND EVER.

Revelation. 1:5,6.

Father! We, Thy Children, Bless Thee

For Thy love on us bestowed;
As our Father we address Thee,
Called to be the sons of God.
Wondrous was Thy love in giving
Jesus for our sins to die!
Wondrous was His grace in leaving,
For our sakes, the heavens on high!
Now the sprinkled blood has freed us,
On we go toward our rest;
Through the desert Thou dost lead us,
With Thy constant favor blest:
By Thy truth and Spirit guiding,
Earnest He of what 's to come,
And with daily food providing,
Thou dost lead Thy children home.
Though our pilgrimage be dreary,
This is not our resting-place;
Shall we of the way be weary,
When we see our Master's face?
No; e'en now anticipating,
In this hope our souls rejoice,
And His promised advent waiting,
Soon shall hear His welcome voice.
"LORD JESUS, COME."
Lord Jesus, come,
And take Thy rightful place

As Son of Man, Thou risen One!
Come, Lord of all, to reign alone!
Come, Jesus, come!
Lord Jesus, come!
The Man of sorrows once-
The Man of patience waiting now-
The Man of joy forever Thou,
Come, Savior, come!
Lord Jesus, come!
Crowned with Thy many crowns,
The Crucified, the Lamb once slain,
To wash away sin's crimson stain,
Come, Jesus, come!
Lord Jesus, come
And take Thy Father's gift;
The people by Thy cross made Thine,
The trophy of Thy love divine!
Come, Jesus, come!
Lord Jesus, come,
That, lost in Thee, our souls
May bow and worship and adore,
In Thy dear presence evermore!
Come, Jesus come!
Lord Jesus, come,
And let Thy glory shine,
That quickly these changed bodies may
Each one reflect a living ray;
Come, Jesus, come!
Lord Jesus, come!

Let every knee bow down,
And every tongue to Thee confess,
The Lord of all, come forth to bless;
Come, Jesus, come!
The Spirit and the Bride,
And Him that hears, say, " Come."
Yea, Lord, Thy word from that bright home
Is, "Surely I will quickly come."
E'en so, Lord, come!
M. S.

Fragmentary Remarks

I BELIEVE that the Churches have been merged in the mass of ecclesiastical popular hierarchism and lost; but I believe also that the visible Church, as it is called, has been merged there too.

Still there is a difference, because churches were the administrative form, while the Church, as a body on the earth, was the vital unity.

What I felt from the beginning, and began with, was this: the Holy Ghost remains, and, therefore, the essential principle of unity with this presence; for (the fact is all we are now concerned in) wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

When this is really sought, there will certainly be blessing by His presence; we have found it so, most sweetly and graciously, who have met separately.

When there is an attempt at displaying the position and the unity, there will always be a mess and a failure: God will not take such a place with us.

We must get into the place of His mind, to get His strength. That is now the failure of the Church. But there He will be with us.

I have always said this. I know it has troubled some, even those I specially love; but I am sure it is the Lord's mind. I have said: We are the witnesses of the weakness and low estate of the Church.

We are not stronger nor better than others (Dissenters, etc.), but we only own our bad and lost state, and therefore, can find blessing. I do not limit what the blessed Spirit can do for us in this low estate, but I take the place where he can do it.

Hence, government of bodies; in an authorized way,

I believe there is none; where this is assumed, there will be confusion. It was here [Plymouth], and it was constantly and openly said, that this was to be a model, so that all in distant places might refer to it. My thorough conviction is, that conscience was utterly gone, save in those who were utterly miserable.

I only, therefore, so far seek the original standing of the Church, as to believe, that wherever two or three are gathered in His name, Christ will be, and that the Spirit of God is necessarily the only source of power, and that which He does will be blessing through the Lordship of Christ. These [the Spirit present and the Lord, ship of Christ] provide for all times. If more be attempted now, it will be only confusion.

The original condition is owned as a sinner, or as mutilated man owns integrity and a whole body. But there a most important point comes in. I cannot supply the lack by human arrangement or wisdom. I must be dependent.

I should disown whatever was not of the Spirit, and, in this sense, disown whatever was-not short of the original standing; for that, in the complete sense, I am- but what man has done to fill it up; because this does not own the coming short, nor the Spirit of God. I would always own what is of God's Spirit in any. The rule seems to me here very simple.

I do not doubt that dispensed power is disorganized; but the Holy Ghost is always competent to act in the circumstances God's people are in. The secret is, not to pretend to get beyond it. Life and divine power is always there; and I use the members I have, with full confession that I am in an imperfect state.

We must remember that the body must exist, though not in a united state; and so, even locally. I can then, therefore, own their gifts and the like, and get my warrant in two or three united for the blessing promised to that.

Then, if gifts exist, they cannot be exercised but as members of the body, because they are such, not by outward union, but by the vital power of the head, through the Holy Ghost.

Visible body," I suspect, misleads us a little. Clearly the corporate operation is in the actual living body, down here on earth, but there it is the members must act, so that I do not think it makes a difficulty.

I believe, if we were to act on Cor. 12.14 further than power exists to verify it, we should make a mess.

But then the existence of the body, whatever its scattered condition, necessarily continues, because it depends on the existence of the Head, and its union with it. In this the Holy Ghost is necessarily supreme.

The body exists in virtue of there being one Holy Ghost. There is one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling; indeed this is the very point which is denied here.

Then Christ necessarily nourishes and cherishes us as his own flesh, as members of his body; and thus goes on 'till we all come," etc. (Eph. 4) Hence, I apprehend we cannot deny the body and its unity (whatever its unfaithfulness and condition), and (so far as the Holy Ghost is owned) His operation in it, without denying the divine title of the Holy Ghost, and the care and headship of Christ over the Church.

Here I get, not a question of the Church's conduct, but of Christ's; and the truth of the Holy Ghost being on earth, and his title when there; and yet the owning of Christ's lordship. And this is how far I own others.

If a minister has gifts in the Establishment, I own it as through the Spirit, Christ begetting the members of, Or nourishing, his body. But I cannot go along with what it is mixed up with, because it is not of the body, nor of the Spirit. I cannot touch the unclean, I am to separate the precious from the vile.

But I cannot give up Eph. 4, while I own the faithfulness of Christ. Now if we meet, yea, and when we do meet, all I look for is that this principle should be owned, because it is, owning the Holy Ghost himself, and that to me is everything.

We meet and worship; and, at this time, we who have separated meet in different rooms, that we may in the truest- and simplest way, in our weakness, worship. Then whatever the Holy Ghost may give to any one, he is supreme to feed us with, perhaps nothing in the way of speaking; and it must be. in the unity of body.

If you were here, you could be in the unity of the body, as one of ourselves. This Satan cannot destroy, because it is connected with Christ's title and power.

If men set up to imitate the administration of the body, it will be popery or dissent at once.

And this is what I see of the visibility of the body; it connects itself with this infinitely important principle, the presence and action of the Holy Ghost on earth.

It is not merely a saved thing in the counsels of God, but a living thing animated down here by its union with the Head, and the presence of the Holy Ghost in it. It is a real actual thing, the Holy Ghost acting down here. If two are faithful in this they will be blessed in it.

If they said ' We are the body," not owning all the members, in whatever condition, they would morally cease to be of it. I own them, but in nothing their condition. The principle is all important.

Christ has attached, therefore, its practical operation to two or three; and owns them by his presence. He has provided for its maintenance. Thus, in all states of ruin, it cannot cease till he ceases to be Head, and the Holy Spirit to be as the Guide and the Comforter sent down.

God sanctioned the setting up of Saul; he never did, the departure from the Holy Ghost. The " two or three" take definitely the place of the temple, which was the locality of God's presence, as a principle of union. That is what makes all the difference. Hence, in the division of Israel, the righteous sought the temple as- a point of unity, and David is to us here Christ by the Holy Ghost.

On the' other hand, church government, save as the Spirit is always power, cannot be acted on.

I suspect many brethren have had expectations, which never led me out, and which perplexed their minds when they were not met in practice. I never felt my testimony, for example, to be the ability of the Holy Ghost to rule a visible body. That I do not doubt; but I doubt its proper application now as a matter of testimony. It does not become us.

My confidence is in the certainty of God's blessing, and maintaining us, if we take the place we are really in. That place is one of the general ruin of the dispensation. Still, I believe God has provided for the maintenance of its general principle (save persecution), that is, the gathering of a remnant into the comfort of united love by the power and presence of the Holy Ghost, so that Christ could sing praises there.

All the rest is a ministry to form, sustain, etc.

Amongst other things, government may have its place; but it is well to remember, that, in general, government regards evil, and therefore is outside the positive blessing, and has the lowest object in the Church.

Moreover, though there be a gift of government, in general, government is of a different order from gift.

Gift serves ministers; hardly, government. These may be united as in Apostolic energy; elders were rather the government, but they were not gifts.

It is especially the order of the governmental part which I believe has failed, and that we are to get on without, at least in a formal way. But I do not believe that God has therefore not provided for such a state of things.

I do believe brethren a good deal got practically out of their place, and the consciousness of it, and found their weakness: and the Lord is now teaching them. For my part, when I found all in ruin around me, my comfort was, that where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, there He would be. It was not government or anything else I sought. Now I do believe that God is faithful, and able to maintain the blessing.

I believe the great buildings and great bodies have been mistake: indeed, I always did. Further, I believe now (although it were always true in practice), the needed dealing with evil must be by the conscience in grace. So St. Paul ever dealt, though he had the resource of a positive commission. And, I believe that two or three together, or a larger number, with some having the gift of wisdom in grace, can, in finding the mind of the Lord, act in discipline; and this, with pastoral care, is the main-spring of holding the saints together, in Matt. 18. This agreeing together is referred to as the sign of the Spirit's power.

I do not doubt that some may be capable of informing the consciences of others. But the conscience of the body is that which is ever to be acted upon and set right. This is the character of all healthful action of this kind, though there may be a resource in present Apostolic power, which, where evil has entered, may be wanting; but it cannot annul "where two or three agree it shall be done."

So that I see not the smallest need of submission to Popery; i.e., carnal unity by authority in the flesh, nor of standing alone, because God has provided for a gathering of saints together, founded on grace, and held by the operation of the Spirit, which no doubt may fail for want of grace, but which, in every remaining gift, has its scope; in which Christ's presence and the operation of the Spirit is manifested, but must be maintained, on the ground of the condition the Church really is in, or it would issue in a sect arranged by man, with a few new ideas.

Where God is trusted in the place, and for the place we are in, and we are content to find Him infallibly present with us, there I am sure He is sufficient and faithful to meet our wants.

If there be one needed wiser than any of the gathered ones in a place, they will humbly feel their need, and God will send some one as needed, if He sees it the fit means.

There is no remedy for want of grace, but the Sovereign goodness that leads to confession. If we set up our altar, it will serve for walls (Ezra 3:3). The visibility God will take care of, as He always did; the faith of the body will be spoken of, and the unity in love manifest the power of the Holy Ghost in the body.

I have no doubt of God's raising up for need, all that need requires in the place where He has set us in understanding.. If we think to set up the Church again, I would say, God forbid. I had rather be near the end, to live and to die for it in service where it is as dear to Gods that is my desire and life.

A Full Christ for Empty Sinners

OH 6 WELL does the writer remember the effect on his own mind. of the perusal, upwards of twenty years ago, of a paper in the first volume of the Christian Witness, on " The Distinct Characters of the several Writings of the New Testament." If not the first, it was among the first means of leading him to read Scripture in the light of the characteristic subject and aim of each distinct portion of it. But, while leaning on God's grace as the only efficient cause of true instruction, every attempt to impart to others what has been so precious to his own soul has served more deeply to convince him of the truth of one remark in the paper above referred to; viz., that " the expression of one's own thoughts, and the acting so as to awaken similar thoughts in others, are two very different things; and the latter is a rarer and more self-denying attainment than the other." It is not as attempting much more than the former that the following thoughts are submitted to such as bring all they read and hear to the test of the word of God itself.

Much that twenty or thirty years ago had to some of us all the vividness and freshness of truth newly discovered. to the soul has long, as to the letter of it at least, been familiar to all who are likely to read these remarks. The way in which the same blessed person is presented in Matthew as the Messiah of Israel; by Mark, in active service as the Minister of the Word; by Luke, in the fullness of that grace in which He, the Son of man, came to men as such, to seek and to save that which was lost; and by John as the Word which was in the beginning, which was with God, and was God, but which was made flesh, and dwelt among us; all this the reader has doubtless read and heard again and again, until the words remain in the memory, whether they be understood and enjoyed through divine teaching or not. The peculiar character of John's Gospel has been dwelt upon by many. Many have pointed out how the glory which passes before us in that gospel is the glory of Christ in His highest divine titles and relations; " the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Sweetly has it been shown, moreover, that while no other gospel so freely unfolds this highest Godhead-glory of Christ, no other shows the sinner in such immediate contact with Him, receiving of His fullness. These and other leading features of the book, though never losing their interest, have yet to numbers become familiar truth. What the writer would now suggest may bear no comparison in importance with these chief 'characteristics of this gospel; but nothing is lost which contributes in ever so small a degree to acquaintance with the precious record of the glory of Him of whom it is said, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

In perusing any book, inspired or uninspired, if we find certain words occurring often enough to awaken attention to the fact, and then, on examination, discover that they are thus used throughout the book, we immediately conclude that they either express its great theme and object, or at least that which is very closely related thereto. Reading thus the Gospel of John, certain words can scarcely fail to impress the mind with the frequency of their use; while a comparison with the other evangelists confirms the conviction that the words in question do really bring out what is in closest connection with the great leading subject. For instance, the word life meets the eye almost at the beginning of the book, reappears most prominently in chap. 3., and afterward,

indeed with such frequency as to awaken the inquiry, Can this be one of the leading words in this gospel? Can it have any characteristic force? Let us see. But, before comparing this gospel with the others in this respect, we do well to remember that there are more words than one in the New Testament rendered life. One, $\zeta\omicron\upsilon\epsilon$, means life, in the strict, absolute sense. I speak only of the use of this, and other words in the New Testament. Another, $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$, soul, is frequently represented by the word life; but it is not the natural, ordinary use of the word; and if it were, it is as often so given in John as in any other of the gospels. The word $\beta\iota\omicron\varsigma$, used for life, in the secondary sense of living, or way of living, does not occur in our gospel at all. It is to the first word, $\zeta\omicron\upsilon\epsilon$, life in its absolute sense, that our inquiry relates. It occurs in Matthew seven times; in Mark, four times; in Luke, six times; and in John, thirty-six times. Its force and bearing, as thus characterizing John, may be estimated by such passages as, "In Him was' life;" "Not perish, but have everlasting life;" "Passed from death unto life;" "The resurrection of life;" "I am the bread of life;" "I am come that they might have life;" "That he should -give eternal life;" "That, believing, ye might have life through His name." Is it nothing that in the midst of this world of death, the One who has life in Himself has been here to manifest it in His own person, and to impart it to us who were dead in sins? Nor has His rejection by the world, and His ascension on high, interrupted for a moment this outflow of life from Him to dead sinners. He is glorified of the Father, who has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father "has given" Him.

But let us turn to another word: love. Here, also, we have two words, $\alpha\gamma\alpha\pi\eta$ and $\phi\iota\lambda\omega$, each with its shade of meaning, rendered to love in the English New Testament. Taking both these words, with those immediately related to them, such as the noun love, we find one or other of them in Matthew twelve times; in Mark, five times; in Luke, fifteen times; and in John, fifty-six times. Nor can we doubt the force of such words as characterizing this gospel, in view of such passages as the following: "God so loved the world;" "Now, Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus;" "Having loved His own which were' in the world;" "One of His disciples, whom Jesus loved;" "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another;" "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him;" "That the world may know that I love the Father;" "Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Life and love! Precious words! Life the gift of love. Divine love, in the person of the Son, bestowing a life, not only eternal in its duration, but of such a nature that the love wherewith the Father loved the Son can now rest on those of whom He said, addressing the Father, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and, I in them."

But in what sphere does the revelation of this love take place? True it is that none profit by it vitally and everlastingly, but they in whom the native opposition of the heart is - overcome by almighty grace, in the positive communication of life. But is it only among God's ancient people Israel that such persons are found? Are they the only inheritors of this blessedness, so immeasurably surpassing their fruitful land, the covenanted portion of their tribes? Let us see. The word world is quite as characteristic of our gospel as either of those which have been under consideration. We stop not to notice the word $\alpha\iota\omega$, sometimes translated world, but intrinsically referring more to duration than to the world itself; absolutely considered. "The times which pass over it," the world morally viewed, is what it signifies. The word $\kappa\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$ -the world literally, including both the earth and its human inhabitants, occurs in Matthew nine times, in Mark three times, in Luke three times, and in John seventy-nine times. How it is used, the reader may judge from such instances as-

God so loved the world;" "The Savior of the world;" " I am the light of the world;" "Now is the judgment of this world;" " I came not to judge the world, but to save the world;" " The world seeth me no more;" " The prince of this world;" " I have overcome the world;" " I pray not for the world;" "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;" "The world hath not known thee." Could it be more evident than it is, that when the Eternal Word, the only-begotten Son, was made flesh and dwelt among men, the question was one which concerned not Israel alone, or Israel more than others, but the whole world. It was towards the world the love of God was shown in the gift of His only-begotten Son. It was as the Savior of the world that the blessed Lord Jesus appeared, and as the light of the world He shone; and now that He has left the world, and returned to the Father who sent Him, He has left the world under the solemn responsibility of rejecting Him, and of not knowing the Father, of whose love He was both the messenger, the gift, and the expression. If He had tears for Jerusalem, and said, " How often would I have gathered thy children together, but ye would not," with what feelings did He bid farewell to the world, towards which such love had been shown, and by which such love had been repulsed and trodden under foot?

But there is one judge the world, but to save the illustrative of the difference between this gospel and the others. It is the word πιστεῖν, to believe. We have it in Matthew eleven times, in Mark fifteen times, in Luke eight times, and in John ninety-nine times. Nor does this amazing disparity exhibit the whole amount of the difference. Six out of the eleven occurrences of the word in Matthew give it in connection with miracles, or in reference to false prophets, or in the lips of ungodly scoffers; so of eight passages in Mark, out of the fifteen that it contains; but in John the vast majority of cases in which the word is employed are those in which it expresses the believing in Christ Himself unto life eternal: " That all through Him might believe;" "To them that believe on His name;" " That whosoever believeth on Him should not perish;" " He that believeth on me hath everlasting life;" " If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins;" " Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Lord, I believe."

It is added by the Holy Ghost to the last quotation, concerning the man that had been blind, " And he worshipped Him." May we all have his simplicity of faith, and more of the deep joy which filled and overcame his heart in gazing with his new-found sight on the One whom he now beholds by faith as the " Son of God." It is to faith alone that the discovery is made of His glory and His grace; and faith counts the one whom it receives as unspeakably more precious than all attendant blessings, privileges, and favors, vast and unutterable as these may be. " As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Thus have we seen the life revealed in Christ, and bestowed by Him as the gift of the Father's love in Him, not to any class or nation privileged by descent, but to all to whom it is given to believe on Him throughout the wide world. To that world itself, indeed, was the coming down to it of God's well-beloved Son, the expression of a love on God's part, which has no measure but the gift that it bestowed. " God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth, in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Never, till at the moment of now perusing it, had it been noticed by the writer, that in this one verse all our four words are found-life, love, world, believing! Thus does it gather, as into one focus, the light shed throughout the book from the person, mission, and work, the life, death, and resurrection-victory of the Son of God.

In turning to chap. 6., one point it is important to consider; that is, the contrast-between the way in which Christ, is presented here, and in the previous chapter. Life, in its communication by Him, and its reception by us, is the theme of both chapters; but in the fifth He is seen in full Godhead-title and glory, as the Source and Dispenser of the life sovereignly imparted by Him to us. The recipient of the life is regarded as entirely- passive, and called into life by the Almighty, new-creating voice of the Son of God. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Here there is nothing in the case of the sinner but the powerlessness of death itself, till the deep silence is broken by the voice of the Son of God, who never thus speaks in vain. His voice makes itself heard in the soul, till then dead, but no longer dead as it hears the voice of the Son of God. It lives. " They that hear, shall live." But we read here of no exercises or feelings, no desires or sense of need, of which Christ is the object. It is Christ in divine title and competency, as the Son of God, who speaks, and the soul, till then dead, hears and lives. But in chap. 6. our Lord is seen in the place of humiliation He had assumed as man, "come down from heaven," and the object thus of those desires, and of that sense of need, of which the quickened soul is conscious, but conscious, mark, because of the sin and ruin which it knew not till the voice of the Son of God broke in on its deep sleep of death. It is not always, perhaps not often, that these things can be distinguished in fact. The discovery of Christ in the soul awakens perhaps the first sense of desire after Him, producing thus the hunger and thirst which He only, in further discoveries of Himself and of His work, can appease. But though this may be true in principle, as it surely is, the soul, while going through this passage in its history, is too much occupied with itself to distinguish very accurately the order of its experiences. What is of infinitely greater moment is the truth by which, instrumentally, they are produced; and this, blessed be God! we have in all its fullness and variety in the Scriptures under review, and other portions of God's Holy Word.

In the early part of our chapter, we find our Lord fulfilling, in the midst of Israel, the predictions of Psa. 132, where, in connection with Jehovah's choice of Zion, and placing David's son upon the throne, we read, " I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread." But though Jesus be thus manifested as the heir of all the glories prophetically Unfolded in the psalm, He- is not here.- taking that place. Israel and the earth were as yet unfit for this; and God's time for it had not arrived. Hence Jesus retires before the urgency awakened by His own act in this feeding of the multitude. When they would have taken Him by force to make Him a king "He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." Indicating thus that He would be on high during the postponement of His kingdom, His absence was continued until His disciples were in great trouble through a storm by which they were overtaken in crossing the lake. Jesus rejoins them with words of comfort, "and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." This episode does not so much refer to the Church, or to the saints composing it, as to the Jewish remnant in days to come: The return to them of the now absent but exalted Messiah will both hush the storm which will be threatening their total overthrow, and conduct them at once into the haven of rest. The heavenly saints will be taken from amid the whole scene of trial and of conflict, to be with their Lord whom they meet in the air.

All this, however, is but introductory to the great subject of the chapter, which is linked with these details by the inquiry of those who next day followed our Lord to the other side of the lake. They seem to have been swayed by the most sordid motives, with which they are pointedly charged by

the Lord. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for Him hath God the Father sealed." If they would come after Him, and this was all the "labor" they had performed, - He would have them come for that which would endure. Not the perishing sustenance of a life which shortens each moment of its existence, but the imperishable food of an imperishable life, which it was the great errand and business of the Son of man to give. Son of man He is, blessed be His name, and not simply Son of God; but in this place of humiliation to which He had stooped, how had the Father singled Him out from the whole race of mankind, 'setting upon Him alone the seal which marked Him out as the object of the Father's perfect approval and infinite delight. Believers are now, since the resurrection and ascension of the Lord, sealed; but it is in Christ that they are thus distinguished. "In whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Christ was sealed because of His intrinsic perfections; we, through our identification with Him in the place He has taken as having accomplished redemption. But the verse under consideration brings us to the Son of man as giving " meat which endureth unto everlasting life."

They who could follow Christ for loaves only, seek to excuse themselves for the neglect of this better gift. " What shall we do, that we might work the works of God'?" is their next question. In what lovely, patient grace, does the Lord reply, " This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." Is He the One who, of all that ever trod this earth, was counted worthy to be sealed of God the Father '? How evident, then, that to believe on Him is that which God must approve, and without which nothing else can be accepted in His sight.

The only answer of the people is an inquiry after signs, with a reference to the manna in their fathers' days, which seems intended to depreciate, by comparison, the miracle of the day before. It is as though they would say, " If you would have us believe in you as the sent One of God, you must show us greater works than these. You have fed five thousand once; our fathers, in Moses' day, ate manna for forty years: as it is written, " He gave them bread from heaven to eat." Then did our Lord begin to unfold the great subject of the chapter. The reasonings of Jewish pride and unbelief gave Him the occasion; but, dealing with these in the most unsparing way, how does He, at the same time, present Himself as the Object on which any hungry, thirsty, fainting, perishing one might feed and live forever. " A full Christ for empty sinners" indeed. These Jews were not such, and so went empty away. But how many fainting ones, perishing with hunger, have here been regaled, and found in Jesus the bread of life.

The remainder of our chapter affords us a threefold view of this blessed one. Christ incarnate-Chrisť slain-Chrisť ascended. May we have grace to listen, to receive, and to worship.

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." How simple, and yet how weighty and conclusive His answer to their unexpressed thoughts about Moses, as though Moses were shown, by the miracle of the manna, to be greater than our Lord. " Moses gave you not that bread from heaven." He was but a receiver of it, like the people themselves, who subsisted on it for forty years. It was God's gift, and despised, alas! by those who lived on it, just as " the true bread " was

now being despised by their descendants. Our Lord does not pursue the subject of the manna. He does not say, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father did. No; He would not speak of the manna in connection with the Father's name, as though the import of that name were disclosed by the gift from heaven of bread for six hundred thousand men and their families for forty years. Was this more, in reality, than His feeding all His creatures everyday and every hour? "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." So vast are the Creator's stores, and so easy their application in Providence to the creature's need. But the Father's name is linked with deeper wonders-far. All the riches of grace are told out in the revelation of that name. " My Father giveth you the true. bread from heaven." What was that? The answer is at hand. "For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." The Father's provision for a dying world was to send from heaven His only begotten Son. His appearing here was as the lowly Son of man. The fact was of world-wide interest. All alike needed this bread from heaven, and all alike were welcome. Not to Jew or Gentile, as distinct and privileged, but to the whole race as perishing, was this bounty sent. " In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son' into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9); "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their 'trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. 5:19.) But the world would not be reconciled. It had no taste, no appetite for this " bread from heaven." There might be the momentary movement of the affections by His gracious words, leading some present to cry, " Lord, evermore give us this bread; " but it was only to make their rejection of Him more manifest and decisive when they came to understand His meaning. But let us listen to His words.

" And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Dear reader, do you understand these words 1 Has your soul-hunger been appeased by this " bread from heaven," this " bread of life "? Has your soul-thirst been quenched by receiving in Him and of Him the water of life? Or is it possible that one who reads these lines should fall under the condemnation of the words next uttered by Christ?" But I said unto you, that ye also have seen Me, and believed not." No language so cutting as that of rejected mercy, repulsed and slighted love. Here was this blessed One; His errand to this world nothing less than to be the expression of His Father's love, and the Savior of lost men. He bore His credentials in every gracious word that fell from His lips, and every action of His perfect spotless life. One of these, the miracle of the loaves, had attracted after Him the multitude, who from selfish motives had followed Him across the lake. They confessed thus that they had " seen " Him; but, alas! they " believed not." When they understood that He was the bread of life, they show plainly it was not for such food that they had come. They would have had another meal such as on the day before; but for the One who gave it they had no heart. He had come to save them, if they would, from a worse death than that by hunger, but they had no sense of their danger and need in this respect, and therefore had no heart for Jesus as their Savior; and they would not receive Him. Nor would any, with Christ shown to them thus and nothing more. These men were not worse than others. Their unbelief was manifest and declared, and He treats them, therefore, as unbelievers, as rejecters; but this is what would be the result in every case, were we left to our own thoughts of Christ, when thus seen as "come down from heaven."

Thank God, there is something more. Christ had not only come, as bringing life and love so near to the world, to men as such, that only by refusing the life and repelling the love could they hold on in

their sins; He had come to fulfill the counsels of His Father's love in the sovereign gift of life, as shown in chap. 5.; and of this He now proceeds to speak, though still as "come down" and here in humiliation, the

object for faith to receive and appropriate. Such faith, it was evident, had no place in man's heart; but God could give it, and would sovereignly in His grace. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me, I will in nowise cast out." How humiliating and heart-breaking for us, that in the presence of incarnate life and love in the Person of the incarnate Son of God, no one would have come to Him, no one have been benefited by His mission, had there not been those who were given Him of the Father, and on whose coming therefore He could securely reckon. Man's will would, in each individual, have held out against Christ, had not the Father resolved that He should have some as the trophies of His victory and the reward of His coming down from heaven. Alas that our deadness to such love should have called forth such sighs as seem to breathe in these words of Jesus? Is it not as though He were accounting to Himself for the marvels of human unbelief? As though saying, After all, it is but what I might have counted on. Nothing will affect man's stony heart, save where My Father's grace effectually intervenes, and on that I may securely calculate. All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me. And then to see how perfectly He fills the servant-place He had taken. For any now to -come to Him is the proof of their being among those given to Him of the Father; so He may well declare of such that He will cast none out. The heart to come to Jesus is the sure sign to Him, had that been needed, of His Father's gracious working; and therefore He is but obedient to His Father's will in receiving, without question as to the past, all who come to Him. "Him that cometh to Me, I will in nowise cast out." Precious words! Rich has been the comfort they have yielded to many an otherwise desponding one; but how greatly is their value enhanced when the coming to Christ is seen, not as an act of man's fickle will, but as the effect of the Father's drawing to Jesus of one given to Him in the counsels of that Father's love before the foundation of the world. Then, too, as we have just seen, the reception of such a one by the Savior, irrespective of every consideration beside, is not merely the fruit of His compassion for the sinner, but of His grateful obedient acceptance, as the servant of His Father's will, of the one sent to Him, brought to Him, by the unseen drawings of that Father's love. All thus rests, not upon any fancied good in the sinner, but upon the Father's choice and the Son's obedient love. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." How He thus discloses that a far deeper and more important work had been entrusted to Him than that of satisfying Israel's poor with bread: no less a charge than that of raising up at the last day all given to Him of the Father, without losing one. Blessed Lord! to whom besides could this charge have been entrusted? But, while disclosing, as above, that His real errand was one not depending for its issues on man's will, known already

to be so perverse as in every case to reject the Savior, an errand, too, embracing the safe production by Christ in resurrection-blessedness of all given to Him by the Father, it is touching to find how solicitously He leaves wide open the door to any one anywhere who is disposed to enter. He may not, as yet, be able to account for the change in his own condition, as we have seen it accounted for by the Savior; he is

not the less welcome; or his final safety the less certain and unfailing. "And this is the will of Him that 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."

The great stumbling-block to the Jews at that time was His professing to have come down from heaven, just as afterward, in Paul's day, the doctrine of Christ crucified " was "to the Jews a stumbling-block;" and for precisely the same reason. Their pride disdained the being indebted to one so lowly; and they were so self-satisfied as to see no need for one to come from heaven, and much less for one to die upon the cross, to meet their case, and be their Deliverer and Redeemer. Their case, as they thought, was by no means so desperate as this. They could not have denied their national subjection to the stranger's yoke, and a " great prophet" to have stirred up the people to crowd around the standard of some great commander who would have led them on to victory over their Roman oppressors; this would have been a Messiah to their mind. But for a plain homely man, reputed to be son of a carpenter of Nazareth, to profess to have come down from heaven; and to speak of Himself as the bread of life, engaging to raise up his followers at the last day; in other words, for the lowly Jesus to present Himself as the Savior of their souls, and the Giver of everlasting life, this was a deliverance and a Deliverer of which they felt no need, and for whom they had no relish. They did not hunger for such bread; they did not thirst for such life-giving drafts. " The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?" They could understand that a heavenly existence prior to His being a man on earth was implied in this language; in other words, that it was divine glory, veiled in His lowly place and condition as Son of man, which was in these words declared by Him as His. With this implied claim, they Contrast what they suppose to be His origin, and inquire, " How is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?"

In answer to all such cavilings, the Lord only again retires into His own consciousness of how the case really stood: " Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." No one hungers for the bread of life so as to come to the Savior except as drawn by a sense of urgent need, which exists in none but those whom the Father draws. The prophets had declared of all who should inherit Israel's promised blessings in the latter day" And they shall be all taught of God." This Scripture our Lord quotes, and again consoles Himself with the assurance" Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." All in Israel who had inwardly heard God's voice not only came to Jesus, but were overjoyed to do so. Take Nathanael for an instance, in John 1:49. It was these dealings of God with the soul under the fig-tree, these humbling discoveries of self and sin leading to guileless confession of total ruin, that accounted for any coming to Christ. But, as recollecting the sense which might have been put on His words, the Lord. adds, " Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father." What treasures do these few words unfold. However souls may be taught of God, drawn of the Father, and consequently come to Christ, it is not that the Father is immediately revealed; so as to be seen. There was no incarnation of the Father, as. of the Son. He abides in unmanifested Godhead. And only in the Son, who stooped to " come down from heaven," and be here a man upon earth,

is the Father to be seen. " Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father." Infinite distinction between this blessed Son of man and all men on the

earth, whither in grace He had humbled Himself to come. He had seen the Father. In the depths of that eternity in which the 'Word had been " with God," in which the "eternal life " was " with the Father," had He who now humbly speaks of Himself as " He which is of God," " seen" what no creature can-" seen the Father." What unfathomable secrets of love, and blessedness, and glory are wrapped up in these short, simple words! Tread softly, O my soul, for surely this is holy ground! And here He was-He who had seen the Father-He was here to make Him known;. He had become incarnate for this very end. He had taken flesh, come down from heaven, or He would still, equally with the Father, have been I eyond the ken of mortals, beyond the creature's sight. " No man hath seen God at any time: the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Who else could? And how else could we ever have known Him? How else could the light of the Father's love and grace have beamed into our dark hearts, and shed its luster on our whole upward path to the abodes of which the Savior afterward said, " In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." When there with our adorable Jesus, and privileged to behold His glory, how will there be connected therewith the witness of what He had known and enjoyed there from all eternity 1 "For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

From these depths He returns, and with what perfect ease and grace, to the simplest presentation of Himself as the bread of life. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." How simple the way in which the Savior is received. Just as a hungry man with bread before him asks no questions, makes no demur, but eats and lives, so the Savior, with a hungry soul before Him, needs nothing to commend Him to such a soul's grateful, adoring reception. But where are such? Alas! it was the lack of all taste for Christ the self-complacency which felt no need of Him, that prevented these blinded Jews from receiving Him. And where is there an appetite for Him now Precious bread of life He doubtless is, perfectly adapted to nourish and sustain divine 'life in man, even if that life be in its most infantile stage, the very earliest moments of its communication by grace to the soul. But without this, what is there? Death! A corpse has no appetite; it neither hungers nor thirsts. No more does the soul that is still dead in sins, dead to God, It is of the woman who seeks her happiness on earth that the word is spoken, " She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5:6); but it would surely be as true to say that he who thus lives is also dead. Dear reader, if fashion or pleasure, the world in any of its forms, be all we wish, all we seek, what can the bread of life be to us in that state? Insipid and distasteful indeed in our esteem. Christ will not help us to win the prize in any race of ambition or pursuit of pleasure. He who passed by the nature of angels, and all the gradations of human rank, to be a working man, a carpenter, and to be known on earth as these Jews tauntingly designated Him, " The son of. Joseph, whose father and mother we know," He is not one in whom pride can find its food. And as to pleasure, what can they who seek it find in the One who " pleased not Himself," who tells us in this very chapter, " For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me"? And yet, solemnly as the fact begins to declare itself, that between this incarnate One and those who surrounded Him there was not one thought, feeling, or motive in common, how `graciously He continues to urge every consideration which might be adapted to produce in them an appetite, to awaken desires after Himself, the living Bread. They had referred to the manna, and covertly to Moses as the giver of it, in order to depreciate Christ. He returns to that subject now, to press on their attention the contrast for themselves. " Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from

heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and- not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." Wondrous words! The manna, testimony as it was of God's power and grace, and type indeed of Christ Himself, in its actual use did but nourish for a few years that poor, fleeting, feverish, forfeited life, which begins at our birth and ends at our death. A taper wasting from the moment it begins to shine; "a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away;" is it for this, or the support of it, or for the brief pleasure that it affords, that men toil, fret, weary themselves, despise heaven with all its glories, refuse or neglect Christ and His great salvation? Yes. It was so in our Lord's day on earth. It is so still. O that His words (thank God! "they are spirit and they are life") may reach the heart of some one who cons these pages; the words in which He contrasts with everything in this poor, perishable life, that interminable existence in unutterable peace and joy, that "everlasting life," which all receive who receive Him. Hungry soul! can you not feed on Jesus? As you would appease your natural hunger on the suited food, can you not find in Jesus what meets your entire need what satisfies your every wish? Here is an undying life, an unwasting one; to "live forever" is the effect of feeding on this bread from heaven. "That a man may eat thereof, and not die;" "if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." Has the worldling anything to compare with this? Do his most feverish dreams of happiness on earth embrace the element of unending continuance? It is just for him the one element wanting, the lack of which spoils all the rest. How passing wonderful, that the One who stood before these Jews as the lowliest and poorest of men had the full consciousness then of having a life to bestow, to communicate, which death cannot touch, and which is, in its own proper nature, everlasting life. He is no longer here in humiliation, speaking such words of grace and truth as these; but He has not ceased to be the Giver of this life, Himself the fullness of the life He gives. "As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him."

To gather up a little what has been under review. We have here the "Son of man," one who is really partaker of flesh and blood, a man, conversing with the men who had followed Him across the lake. We have this Son of Man-the sealed One of God the Father. He is the sent One, too; and the first thing for any one who would please God, is to "believe on Him whom He hath sent." He has meat, or food, to give, moreover, which endures to everlasting life. In the conversation with the parties just adverted to, the mystery of His presence here is declared, and many of the moral traits of that life of which He is the full expression, and which He was here to communicate, are either stated in words, or come out in practical display. He was from heaven-the Incarnate One. He was the Father's gift, a character in which He

delights in this gospel to speak of Himself. He was the true bread, the real and only nourishment for divine life in man, had it, only been there. What perfect adaptation to man's need in this bread from heaven! He who is that bread gives life, moreover, as well as sustains it where it is. But where

is it, alas! save as sovereignly bestowed, when all would equally have treated it with disdain? They had seen Him and had not believed. There is the heartiest welcome, an open door-none refused; he who comes is no more to hunger; he who believes is no more to thirst; but the Savior has to take refuge from universal rejection by mankind, in the certainty that all would come to Him who were given to Him

of the Father. The outflow of His own love in receiving all such, and casting none out who came, is thus seen as the perfection of obedience to His Father, whose will, not His own, He had come from heaven to do. How the heart bows in contemplation of such obedience. He who could speak of raising up His people at the last day, as though it were as easy and simple an act of obedience as any that He performed while here, speaks of Himself as having it in charge not to stop short of this. " This is the Father's will... that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." Blessed Jesus 1 how safe to be confided thus to thee! But more than this, this safety appertains to all who see Him and believe on Him. " The last Adam is a quickening Spirit." Though it may be of His resurrection-place that this is spoken, such is the fullness of life in His person, that the eye that rests on Him receives, with the beams of His countenance, that life which these beams impart. To believe. on Him is to have everlasting life. The drawings of the Father, His secret teachings, secure that they shall come to Him who are the gift to Him of the Father's love. The Father Himself, undisclosed save to the Son (He who is of God), draws to the Son by that sense of need which is met by Him alone. He is the bread of life, not a perishable life like that of which even the manna in the desert was the food, but everlasting life. What unfathomable wonders these few verses disclose. The infinite grace displayed in the fact of the incarnation, how little is it pondered by our careless, frivolous hearts. And then, the perfectness of this blessed One in the place of humiliation to which He had stooped-the absoluteness of His obedience, and the delicacy of His self-hiding, self-consuming service! To these Jews He had to speak of Himself; for they challenged His claims, and invidiously compared Him with Moses, and His miracle with that of the manna. He answers as feeling the reflection on His Father, not on Himself. " Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." Blessed Savior! grant us daily and hourly to feed by faith on Thyself, in all the perfectness in which Thou wast displayed to the eye of God awhile' sojourning in this vale of tears.

But our attention is claimed by deeper wonders still. The incarnation is one marvel and mystery and glory of the gospel; the cross is the other. Any third miracle to compare with these, the records of eternity afford not. There has been none such in eternity past; there can be none such in eternity to come. The Word made flesh! The Holy One made sin! But why was this Was it not enough that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him I Had this been all, not one sinner of Adam's race would have been found on high to sing the praises of His Savior-God. Christ incarnate, had there been no deeper mystery of love, would have shown more than anything beside man's hatred to God, and the utter hopelessness of his case. The blessed One well knew this when He came into the world, but now the proof was before His eyes. The more His intrinsic excellence, His moral perfectness was displayed, the more manifest it became that between Him and fallen man there was not one moral quality in common. It is not, as others have observed, a question of degree, a race in which one immeasurably out-distances another. No; it is contrariety-contrast--of the most absolute kind. All that men value and seek, He declined and shunned. For all on which. His heart was set, they had no relish whatever. Men seek their own glory-He sought His Father's alone. Men do their own will-His Father's was His only business. Men love those who resemble themselves, and such as love them-He loved where there were no qualities He could approve, and where there was hatred to Himself which thirsted for His blood. To think of One, who for the three-and-thirty years of His sojourn on earth never did one thing to serve Himself, spare Himself, exalt Himself; but for every moment of His life was and did, spoke, and thought, and felt, exactly as God would have Him! Let a man's eyes be opened, as

they are, when his ears are unstopped by the voice of God's Son; let his opened eyes rest on this blessed person, as the divine records set Him forth, and what is the result? " Woe is me," he exclaims, " I am utterly hopeless now! Hard and vain have been my struggles to win life by keeping the law; but now, as I look on this moral picture, every trait, every line, convicts me of being exactly the opposite. I admire His ways; I could sit and gaze on Him, and wonder; and if I could be like Him! but, alas! every attempt deepens my conviction that it is all in vain. If Christ be what God delights in-and He is-He never can delight in me, for His ways and mine are further than east and west asunder. What is to become of me, wretched man that I am!"

What indeed must have become of any of us, had Christ only glorified His Father in coming down to sojourn here as a living man? But this was not the whole: He Himself assures us it was not. " I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." As come down, as incarnate, He was the bread of God, His Father's gift, but there was bread which He Himself would give, even His flesh, which He would give for the life of the world. Now this giving of His flesh was the laying down of His life, the yielding Himself up to death, that He might become to sinners-to fallen, perishing men-what bread would be to a crowd of persons perishing with hunger. It is in a slain Christ alone that sinners can find what meets their deep and solemn need. Well may our need be met where God has been perfectly glorified about our sin. Convicted by His life of total contrariety to Him in every moral trait, whither shall we turn but to the cross, where this same blessed One gives His flesh that we may live? Did His love go even to such lengths as these? It did. When nothing less than the death under wrath of a sin-atoning victim of infinite value could meet our need as guilty ones, or justify God in justifying us, His love was found equal to the emergency, and He gave His flesh for the life of the world. That such is His meaning comes out more emphatically in His reply to the next cavil of those who stood round about Him. " How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" was their carnal, foolish inquiry. He stops not to explain, but repeats and amplifies His previous declaration, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Evidently, for the blood to be apart from the flesh, so as to speak of eating the one and drinking the other, the blood must have been shed in death. So that we have here, in the fullest way, the death of Christ, the shedding of His blood, set forth; and, at the same time, the most solemn testimony of its absolute necessity for each individual, and of the equally absolute necessity for its individual reception. " Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Who besides could have provided for our perishing souls? What other life would have had in it the atoning value, the saving efficacy, at once to meet the highest claim of God's moral glory, the glory of all His perfections, and reach down to the lowest depths of our need as guilty, ruined, hopelessly undone sinners? And yet it is as Son of man that He here speaks of Himself. How could He have suffered death, had He not become the Son of man? How this links together the mysteries of Bethlehem and Calvary; the incarnation and the cross! The one was in order to the other. He came to die. " Once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." It was "for the suffering of death" that He was "made a little lower than the angels." And it is by His death we live. Though He had life in Himself, and though, anticipatively of His atoning work, He gave life at any time to any poor sinner, it was only on the ground of that work that life could flow from His person to any who heard His voice and believed His words while here; and the actual shedding of

His blood as that of the great and all-atoning victim for our sins was the only way in which the flood-gates of mercy could be thrown open to guilty, justly-condemned sinners. How widely they are flung open now! How completely has Christ's precious sacrifice removed all the obstacles to our salvation presented by the character of God, His holy nature, the majesty of His throne, and the faithfulness of His word. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness;" and while this perfection might surely have been displayed in the endless punishment of the whole guilty race, how then would the love of God have been exercised or shown? Where is that love so manifested as at the cross? And where besides is God seen as so inexorably just? The flames of hell are not so glorious a vindication of His righteous claims, as the agonies of His spotless, immaculate Son. God's holy hatred of sin could not go further than the averting His countenance from the Son of His love, while drinking the cup for us. Who will not tremble before this holy Lord God, who, sooner than tarnish His throne, or break the word which had gone out of His mouth, that sin should have death for its righteous punishment, gave up to death-the death of the cross-the One who had been in His bosom from all eternity? And then to think of that One voluntarily yielding up His life! In obedience to His Father, and in love to us, He drinks the cup of wrath, that in Him, the slain One, we perishing sinners may find all we need. Life flows to us through His death; and the soul that finds its hunger appeased and its thirst quenched by what Scripture tells of Christ on the cross, has not only life in Him, eternal life, issuing in the resurrection of life at the last day, but a present fullness of nutriment and refreshing, of which the Savior witnesses in these words, "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." Continuing to feed on Him as the slain as well as the incarnate Christ, we abide in Him, and He in us. "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." This language assumes, though it does not mention, the fact that He who used it would rise again. And with Christ as risen, they who feed on Him as slain are so identified that He here for the first time in Scripture speaks of our dwelling in Him, and He in us. Dwelling in Him, we participate in all that is His; and by His dwelling in us, we become vessels for the manifestation of what He is. Nor is this the whole. Christ's own life as the Son of man was a life of entire dependence on the Father; and ours is one of dependence on Christ Himself. But the one is presented as the model for the other. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." Blessed Jesus, teach us thus to live in hourly dependence on thyself! It is at this point that the Savior sums up the whole subject of which He had been treating, "This is that bread which came down from heaven not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

The native sphere and home of this undying life is earth, but heaven. To all intents it is an exotic here. Perfectly was it manifested in the three-and-thirty years' sojourn on earth of the Son of man; and, as we have seen, this display of divine life in man in the person of Christ is one great leading subject of this gospel. But the One in whom this display took place was a stranger here. The book witnesses this fact throughout. We have not far to read before we find the words-"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." And then more plainly still-"He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Even His own people, the Israel of Jehovah's choice, had, as we have also so largely seen in this very chapter, no heart for Jesus: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Thus rejected by those among whom He came, He makes no secret of whence He had come. To Nicodemus He Says-"If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Who so competent to tell as He, to whom these things were familiar, and the mystery of whose

person still made heaven His home, though as man He had come to sojourn below " And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Such were His own words to the Jewish rabbi; while in the same chapter (iii.) the Holy Ghost, by the evangelist's pen, delightedly bears witness to Him as the heavenly Stranger here: "He that cometh, from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth." Alas, that He has to add: "And no man receiveth His testimony!" Our own chapter bears abundant witness to His having come down from heaven. This was what so provoked the opposition of the Jews-an opposition which became so open and so fully declared as to force from the Savior's lips the most solemn statements as to the contrast between their origin and the sphere whence He had come " And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." (Chapter 8) No; He was from heaven. A true, real man; veritably partaker with the children, blessed be God! of flesh and blood-partaker, as He has been telling us, of a life which He would give in the shedding of His blood, that there might be the link between Him and all who receive Him of an undying life. But all this could not constitute Him a native of this world, a denizen of the earth; He was a stranger here. And when many of His disciples began to say inwardly to themselves, " This is a hard saying, who can hear it I" He, knowing their thoughts, replied, " Doth this offend you I What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before I" Thus does He give, somewhat obscurely indeed, as suggesting much more than was spoken, the first intimation of the third great fact of which our chapter is the witness. Christ incarnate, and thus come down from heaven; Christ slain, His blood shed for sinful men, becoming the suited food of a life, the first movement of which in us is in the sense of our need as sinners which can only thus be appeased; and now Christ ascended, involving of necessity His resurrection, but including much more than this. The eternal life which was with the Father before all worlds-the eternal, untreated, all-creating Word, which "in the beginning " was " with God" and "was God," had come down and become, in that act of deep humiliation, "the Son of man." He was now returning to that sphere of unmingled blessedness, of highest glory, whence He had come forth to Bethlehem's manger and Calvary's cross; but He was returning thither as Son of man. Thenceforth He should be seated as man on the throne of His Father. Heaven, not earth, becomes thus from the moment of His session there the home of all who by eating His flesh and drinking His blood become partakers. of His life. Earth becomes a wilderness, a place of exile, to all such, just as it was to Him while here. He is our life; and this associates us necessarily with heaven and all that is native to that abode of purity and joy. As another once remarked: " If sin has opened to man the place of woe never designed for him, but for the devil and his angels, grace has opened to him that heaven which is peculiarly and distinctively the dwelling-place of God." " The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's; but the earth hath He given to the children of men." So the psalmist wrote; and such indeed was the only inheritance which could have descended to us, even from unfallen Adam. The earth was given to him (Gen. 1); but when his sin had opened hell to the finally impenitent and unbelieving, grace opened heaven to all who become willing to enter there in the value of Christ's blessed person and atoning work. What He but obscurely hints to His disciples in our chapter has since become accomplished fact, and one of the great foundation-facts of Christianity. Christ has gone up on high. The Son of man has ascended up where He was before. His request to His Father (John 17) has been fulfilled: " And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Nor

would He be there alone: " Father, I will (or desire) that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Heaven is now the revealed home and sphere of that eternal life which, if absolutely and perfectly displayed on earth in the One of whom we read, " In Him was life," is also derivatively enjoyed by all who believe. "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before I "

It was for other lips and another pen than the beloved disciple's to unfold this subject in detail. The place in heaven, in and with Christ, bestowed on believers by the grace which reigns through righteousness by our Lord Jesus Christ, is St. Paul's distinctive theme. The manifestation of divine life on earth, perfectly in Christ, and really though derivatively in us, is the theme of John's gospel and epistle. It is, of all themes, the most vital, essential fundamental. But deeply interesting it is to find such links as our Lord's words last quoted, and those from chap. 17: 24, evincing that, whether Paul, or Peter, or John be the instrument of communication, it is one vast circle of truth which is revealed, of which the center and fullness are found in the person and sacrifice and exaltation of the Son of God and Son of man. Christ incarnate, Christ slain, Christ ascended, a full Christ for empty sinners.

Many who had for a season followed Christ drew back from the time when this discourse was delivered. This did not surprise Him; but it afforded Him the occasion of challenging the hearts of those who still surrounded Him. To them Jesus said, " Will ye also go away I" No one wonders that Peter was spokesman for them all; and he might not yet have measured himself, as afterward, through grace, he did when he went out and wept bitterly. Nevertheless there is a warmth, an energy, a decision, about his words, that we may well covet, and as to which we may challenge our hearts, dear Christian reader, whether we could reply thus. Go away! " Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." May our- hearts repel thus, and disown every thought of any other than this blessed Christ of God. " To whom shall we go I" To whom, indeed? Oh to abide in Him! May we have grace to cleave to Him with purpose of heart, and may He be glorified in each of us for His Name's sake.

The Grace of the Glory of God

WE find that the great aim, all through Scripture, is to connect the soul with God personally., After the fall, it was the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden that accosted Adam; and it was from the presence of the Lord God that Adam hid himself-and so on;-the personal connection of the soul with God is given in how many instances I need not say, until we reach the culminating point of it in the gospel of glory committed to Paul; " the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Here alone the soul is in true worship. There are other truths and other parts of the testimony for God; dispensational truth; principles, etc., all most important in their place, and valuable as far as they go; but this alone goes the whole way, as it were, and reaches the goal.

I may illustrate what I mean, as to these two lines of truth and testimony, by the prodigal in the Father's house. In order that he might not feel his unsuited condition to the house, the father summoned the servants and directed them to invest him with habiliments indicative and assuring of his high position. Very happy and interesting work for the servants this, and of an order which engages many amongst us now; but, however interesting, it does not reach the end of the father's purpose. If the prodigal were only dressed and decorated, and not then conducted into the house of the father, both son and father would have been deprived of the great end and fruition of their reconciliation, In like manner, in Josh. 5, I have all the preparation for possessing the land; and a skilful servant might educate me earnestly and deeply in one and all of the details, from the circumcision to the corn of the land; but I should lose the real power and conscious title of entree, if I had not seen the Captain of the Lord's Host, and, as an unshod worshipper, known that it is with, Him that I take possession. In 2 Cor. 4:6, the Apostle has been spewing how the reception of the Gospel connects us with Christ in glory, as it had thus connected himself at first, when he was taught this Gospel, and was enjoined to be a minister and a witness of the things that he had seen.. Now it was a glorified Christ that he had seen; therefore, if any one sees not this light which is the ministration of righteousness, it is not salvation merely that he is rejecting,-but the " light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face [or person] of Jesus Christ."

I have often felt, that, in preaching or teaching, the person and presence of the Lord was not the summum bonum set before the soul. By some (the evangelicals) the gospel is preached by calling on sinners to present Christ to God as an all-sufficient atonement for their sins; others, more enlightened, proclaim the love of God declared in His Son giving eternal life to every believer. But both these fall short of the presentation of God establishing righteousness in His own Son, and through Him, and in His life; leading the believing prodigal to His own house, and nearness to Himself forever, in fall and unbroken joy to both. In the two former, though the gain of the sinner be largely insisted on, God's satisfaction-His gain, we may say in His joy-is not entered on at all. We little comprehend the gospel of the glory of Christ disclosed to Saul of Tarsus, who from thence became the witness of the things that he had seen. The glory of God became the starting point of the sinner; as it was also the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Under the law, there were sacrifices, which, however, never saved the transgressors of the law from legal

penalties. The gospel preached, even now-a-days, is more the presentation of the sacrifice, proclaimed, I admit, as all-sufficient and satisfactory, and the call on sinners is to approach it; but this is not presenting to faith God's salvation, because to Him the sacrifice is full and endlessly satisfactory; His satisfaction being the great subject-matter presented to faith. The reception of the Prodigal, great as was his rescue, does not derive its chief excellence from the completeness of his safety and the greatness of his deliverance, but from his happy and welcomed nearness to the Father.

We want a gospel which connects us with the presence of God in His joy; and we want an education in His word, which would connect us with our Lord personally as the living transcript of the mind of God.

FRAGMENT.

The primary leading thought of the habitation, or the house of God-is the presence of the Holy Ghost, on earth, with a people; in witness of the Lordship of Christ in Heaven.

He came down, thus, at Pentecost, and abides still,-however much the possession of the truth may have changed its character and appearance. We share that place with the churches of Rome, Greece, Prussia, England, etc. Dissent and Nonconformity are not outside of it. God alone can take us out of it-up to Heaven.

The primary idea of the assembly, is that of the association of the sons of God with Him, and so with one another, in the truth and by the Spirit. I desire-and I judge it is a lawful desire-to be manifestly associated with God and with Christ in Heaven and on earth with all those who are in Spirit and in truth associated with Him; and not only so, but with that work, whatever it may be, in which He is working at this time, to prepare a House and Bride for His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

" The Spirit and the Bride say-come." " Surely I come quickly." "Even so: Come, Lord Jesus."

Musings on Hebrews

CHAPS. I. AND II.-The Epistle to the Hebrews strikingly illustrates one quality of the Book of God. It may be read in various lights; yet no one ray interferes with another. In six or seven ways this epistle could be read with the greatest ease. I will specially look now at the first two chapters. It opens the heavens to you as they now are. How blessed is the introduction of such a thing to the heart! You look up, and see the physical heavens above you; but it is only the superficial heavens you see. This epistle introduces the inner heavens to you, and not in a physical, but in a moral, character. It introduces us to the glories surrounding and attaching to the Lord Jesus, now accepted in the heavens. We are thus enabled to see the heavens in which He has sat down; what He is about there, and what will succeed those heavens. When the Lord Jesus was here, as we learn in Matt. 3, the heavens opened to get a sight of Him. There was an object here, then, worthy the attention of the heavens. He returned-and the heavens had an object they had never known before-a glorified man. And now it is the office of our epistle to show us the heavens as the place of this glorified man. And as in Matt. 3 we get the heavens opened to look down at Christ here, so in the Hebrews you get the heavens opened, that you may look up at Christ there.

But supposing you ask, Is that all the history of the heavens? Have you gone to the end? Indeed, I have not. In the fourth and fifth chapters of the Apocalypse, we get the heavens preparing for the judgment of the earth. Then, at the close of the volume, I find the heavens not only the residence of the glorified man, but of the glorified Church. What a book it is that can present to us such secrets as these! It is a divine library. You take down one volume from your shelf, and read about the heavens; in another volume you read of man in ruins. Take down a third, and you read of God in grace; and so on in precious, wondrous variety. Now we will set ourselves down before chapters 1. And 2. "When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."- That is just taking up the pledge I gave, that the epistle is going to open to us the heavens. The Lord has been here purging our sins, and He has gone up to occupy the heavens as the purger of our sins. Supposing I had been to a distant country, I might describe it to you so as to fill you with delight, and with desire to visit it. But when the Holy Ghost comes, and shows you the distant heavens, He does more than this. He shows you that your interests are consulted there. Our representative is seated in the highest place-and seated there in that very character. Is it possible to have a more intimate link with the place? It is a wonder we are not all on the wing, to get there as soon as we can! To think that because He came to die a wretched death for us, He is seated there! I defy you to have a richer interest in the heavens than God has given you.

Now, in verse 4, we see that not only as the purger of our sins, but in the verity of His manhood, He is there, seated above the angelic hosts. We have seen already what an interest we have in Him as the purger of our sins. Now, the chapter introduces Him to us as the Son of man above angels. Man has been preferred to angels. Human nature, in the person of Christ, has been seated above angelic nature, though it be in Michael or in Gabriel. The whole of chapter 1. is thus occupied in giving you two sights of Christ in heaven. What two secrets they are! The purger of our

sins, and very man, seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

I read the first four verses of chapter 2. as a parenthesis. Do not you like these parentheses I The Holy Ghost speaks the language of nature. We see friends, when conversing together, turning a little aside, to converse about one another. So the apostle speaks here: " I am teaching you wonderful things. Do take heed that you let not such things fall on a careless ear." We must not be mere scholars. If we be disciples of a living master in the school of God, we shall have our consciences exercised while we are pursuing our lesson. That is what the apostle is doing here. That parenthesis falls on the ear most sweetly and acceptably.

But though a parenthesis, it opens a new glory to us. How the field of Scripture teems with fruit! It is not a thing you have to till diligently and get but little fruit. That parenthesis contains another glory of Christ. (Surely we ought not to need exhortation!) He is seated there as an apostle, My apostle. What does that mean I He is a preacher to me. God spake in times past by the prophets. He is speaking to us now by the Son; and Christ in the heavens is the apostle of Christianity. And what is His subject? Salvation. That salvation which, as the purger of our sins, He wrought out for us, and which, as the apostle of our profession, He makes known to us. There is more furnishing of the heavens for you.

Then, verse 5 returns to the theme of chap. 1. It goes on with the distinctive glories of Christ, as supereminent, above angels. " For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come." What is "the world to come"? It is the millennial age which we read of in Psa. 8 We have three conditions of the Son of man here. " A little lower than the angels;" "crowned with glory and honor;" and " set over the works of God's hands." So that the world to come is not put in subjection to angels, but to the Son of man. Now you find that you have an interest in this glorified man. I was saying that if I went to a distant land, and described to you its scenic wonders, you would desire a sight of them. But this epistle shows you that you have a personal interest in these glories. Is there a single point that the Son of man has traveled, in which you have not an interest? The apostle traces it here for you. So that, again I say, this epistle is opening the distant heavens to your view, and showing you the glories that attach to Christ, and that you have an immediate, personal interest in those glories.

In verse 10 a new thought comes in. " To make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Only pause here for a moment. It became the glory of God to give you a perfect Savior. Do you believe it I What thoughts rise on the soul when we come to that! Are you in possession of Him, so that you never in a single thought are tempted to look beyond Him? We have got an unquestionable, infallible salvation, one that will stand the shock of every coming day.

From ver. 11 we further see our interest in the glorified man. " Both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Not ashamed! Tell it out that earth and heaven may hear! This glorified man is a brother of the elect of God. He is " not ashamed," because of their dignity. Not merely because of His grace, but because of their personal dimity. He has appointed me a share of His own throne. Is He ashamed of His own doings-of His own doings of His own adopting? Do not get creeping, cold thoughts, as you read Scripture. Our thoughts of Christ should be such as to take captive our whole man-to bear us on eagle's wings. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Christ raising and leading the song of the ransomed ones, and not ashamed to be found in their company! "And

again, I will put my trust in Him." He did that when He was here, and we do it now. "And again, behold I and the children which God hath given me." There is our interest in the glorified man.

Then we return to see what He was in humiliation. " He took not on angels; but He took on the seed of Abraham." He left the angels where He found them. The angels excelled in strength. They kept their first estate; and He left them there. Man excelled in wickedness; and He came and linked Himself with man. Then verse 17 introduces us to another glory that attaches to Christ in the heavens. We see Him there as our High Priest, ever waiting with reconciliation for sins and succor for sorrows. The epistle teems with divine glories. It is massive in glory and ponderous in the divine thoughts that press into its short space.

CHAPS. 3. AND 4.-We were observing, that one leading characteristic of this epistle is, that it gives us a look into heaven as it now is-not as it was in Gen., 1. and not as it will be in Rev. 4 or 21. The heaven of Gen. 1. had no glorified man in it-no apostle-no high priest. The heaven of Hebrews has all these. That being the general character of the epistle, we looked at the Lord Jesus as in that heaven. Then, we were observing, how the Lord is there as a glorified man-as the purger of our sins-as our apostle preaching salvation, and as the high priest making reconciliation for sins. Every page is fruitful in casting up the glories of the Lord Jesus now in heaven.

Now we will take up chaps. 3. And 4. Having been introduced to the heavens where Christ is, and to the Christ that is in those heavens, the chaps. 3. And 4. turn a little round on ourselves, and look a little sharply at us, and tell us to take care now that we are traveling along the road in company with Him. The first thought is, that we are to consider Him in His faithfulness. The exhortation here is commonly misunderstood. For what are we to consider the apostle and high priest of our profession? Is it to imitate him? The religious mind says so. But that is not the point of the passage at all. I am to consider Him as faithful, for my sake, to God; faithful so that I might be saved eternally. If I do not consider Him so, I have more than blunted the point of the passage, and lost the sense of grace. The word should be, not " was faithful," but, "is faithful," or " being faithful." Not in walking down here, but now in heaven. I look up and see Him discharging these offices, faithful to Him that appointed Him. What business have I to imitate Him in His high priesthood? I am to consider Him for my comfort. What a constellation of grace there is in all that! The grace of God that appointed Him, the grace of the Son that discharges the work, and the grace that opens chap. 3. is infinite in magnificence. Could there be sublimer exhortation or diviner doctrine? We get the Son in the highest heavens,--there seated as the purger of our sins-the apostle, and high priest of our profession-and could any exhortation be more divine than that which tells me to sit still and look at Him in His faithfulness up there?

Then, in verses 3 and 4 and onward, we get further glories unfolded, in contrast with Moses. The first dispensation is here called a house. It was a servant to serve a coming Christ-Moses and the house are identical. All the activities of that dispensation were worth nothing, if they did not bear testimony to a coming Christ. Therefore, it was a servant. When the Lord comes, on the other haul, He comes as a Son, to claim that which is His own, as His own; and the whole thing, now depends on this: Will the house owner which He is set be faithful to Him? What is your faithfulness? To continue in confidence, and hold the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end. " Christ for me-Christ for me!" I '11 take nothing but this all-sufficient Christ. Cling to Him day by day till the wilderness journey is over. Then you are part and parcel of that house over which He presides of a Son. He

not only presides over it, but He claims it as His; own-a dearer thought. It is quite right to be subject to Him; but He tells you to lie near His heart. Faithfulness is not merely being subject to the headship of Christ. If am lying on His bosom, then I am faithful. So that when the Spirit comes to exhort, in chaps. 3. And 4., He has no left the high and wondrous ground of chaps. 1. And 2. Then having come to that point, He turns aside to Pa. 95. If you begin to read at Psa. 92, and read to the close of Psa. 101, you will find it a beautiful little millennial volume. It is exhortings and awakenings of the Spirit of faith in Israel; summoning them to look forward to the rest of God. How is that brought in here The wilderness journey of Israel is a beautiful lively picture of the journey the believer is now taking from the blood to the glory. People, sometimes, at the opening of chap. 4., turn in on themselves. But rest to the conscience is not the thing that is thought of at all. It assures us that we are out of Egypt, and looking towards Canaan. The danger is, not lest the blood should not be on the lintel; but lest we should break down by the way, as thousands did in the wilderness. It never calls you to reinvestigate the question of having found rest in the blood-but, take care how you travel along the road. When He speaks of rest, it is the rest of the kingdom He talks of-not the rest of the conscience. Then He calls the whole age, through which we are passing, one day "To-day." It was a short day to the dying thief-a short day to the martyred Stephen. A longer day to Paul, and a longer day still to John; but, let the wilderness journey be short or long, it is one day, and you are to hold by Christ to the very end. If you are to be partakers of Christ, you must hold fast to the end. Now, what is the Christ of verse 14? A Christ crucified? No; Christ glorified. You are made partakers of Christ in the kingdom, if you hold fast by Christ crucified. Let this "to-day" ring in the heart and conscience every hour. Holding to a crucified Christ is my title to the rest of a glorified Christ. Two things contest this with you-sin and unbelief. Do not you recognize these two enemies as you pass along I Shall I continue in sin? Amos 1 to give place to one wrong thought? I may be overtaken-but am I to treat them other than as enemies 4 Then unbelief is an action of the soul towards God. You and I do not know what saintly character is-what it is to be between Egypt and Canaan-if we are not aware that those two things stand out to withstand our passage every day.

Chapter 4 still pursues the subject. The Christ of chapter 3: 14 is the rest of chap. 4.; Christ, glorified-rest, glorious. He has us out of Egypt. The exhortation attaches to a people out of Egypt. We have left the blood-sprinkled lintel behind. The glorious Canaan is before us. Take heed lest you come

short of it. "Unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them." The gospel, not of the blood of Christ, but of the glory of Christ. It took one form in the ear of the Israelites, and it takes another form to us; but to them, as to us, rest was preached. Then he beautifully falls back on the Sabbath rest of the Creator. The blessed Creator provided Himself a rest after creation. He promised Himself a rest in Canaan after bringing them through the wilderness. Adam disturbed His creation-rest. Israel disturbed His Canaan-rest. is He therefore disappointed in His rest? No; He has found it in Christ. The secret of the whole book of God is, God retreating into Christ, when man in every way had disappointed Him. Christ is the one who has worked out that rest, and who holds it now, and it remains with Him both for God and for His saints. "Therefore it remains that some must enter therein." It is no longer a fallible thing depending on Adam or on Israel; therefore, let us take care that we do not come short of it.

Now we get two ways in which to use Christ. We had two enemies in the end of chapter 3.; now we have two uses of Christ in the end of chapter 4. We are to use Him as the Word of God, and as the High Priest of our profession. Is that the way I am using Him? These two uses stand opposed to sin and unbelief. Let the word of God discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. Instead of giving place to your lusts and vanities, invite the entrance of the two-edged sword, that makes no allowance for a single bit of sin. And when you have dragged out the enemy-found some favorite lust lying in this corner, and some unsuspected vanity in that-what are you to do with them I Take them to Christ, and let His High Priesthood dispose of them in the mercy and grace that are in it. There we pause for the present. We have seen the heavens opened, and looked in and found there a man arrayed in glories, every one of which I have an interest in. Then comes the exhortation. Two enemies beset you. Take care. Instead of yielding to them, make use of the two-edged sword; and when you have found them out, take them to Jesus. There is a beautiful suitability between the Christ that is exhibited up above in chapters 1. And 2, and you and I, as we are exhibited here below in all the characteristics of chapters 3. And 4.

CHAPS. 5. AND 6.-We will read now to the 10th verse of the 5th chapter; and from there until the close of the 6th, we may observe that the apostle turns aside to a parenthetical warning. He is full of that style; and our style with one another is full of it. Such little breaks and interruptions in a discourse are always grateful to us. In the first ten verses of the 5th a most weighty matter is introduced to our thoughts. In the first verse we get a general abstract thought of priesthood. It is that thing which serves men in their relationships to God. Then the character of service is presented to us. " That He may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins;" that is, that He may conduct both eucharistic services and penitential or expiatory services before God. He stands to conduct our interests with God, in whatever form. He is " taken from among men," that He may have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. He is not taken from among angels. Therefore we read in Timothy, " the man Christ Jesus." God, in ordaining a priest for us, has chosen one who can have compassion. We find, at the close of the 7th chapter, that the Lord Jesus was separate from infirmity. But the priest here was one who by reason of infirmity could sympathize. The Lord. Jesus had to learn how to sympathize, as well as to learn obedience, by the things which He suffered.

Under the Old Testament Scriptures, two persons are distinctly set in the office of the priesthood. Aaron, in the 8th and 9th of Leviticus, and Phinehas in the 25th of Numbers. The difference between them was this. Aaron was simply called into the priesthood.? Phineas acquired a title to it. When we come to the Lord Jesus, we find that both these, Aaron and Phinehas, are seen in Him. He was " called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron was a mere called priest. The priesthood of Num. 25 stands in contrast with Aaron's. Phinehas was not called, as was Aaron, but he acquired his title. How did he do this? He made an atonement for Israel, in the day of their great breach, touching the daughters of Baal-peor, and enabled the Lord to look with satisfaction again at His erring camp. Phinehas stood forward to avenge the quarrel of righteousness, and to make atonement for the sin of the people. " And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas bath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel; wherefore say, Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood." Nothing can be finer than this. You could not have a more magnificent light in which to read the Christ of God. than in that act of Phinehas. Aaron was never in this way entitled to a covenant of peace. So you have these

two Old Testament lights, in which to read the priesthood of the Lord Jesus. He was the true Aaron, and the true Phinehas. Both these are brought out here. The blessed Lord Jesus was called into office, as was Aaron; but He was in office because He made an atonement. This earth was like the outside place of the temple, where the brazen altar was. The Lord Jesus is now seated in the sanctuary of the heavens, which God has pitched, and not man, because He has passed by the brazen altar on earth. He has passed it by and has satisfied it. Nothing can be simpler, and yet nothing can be more mysteriously grand. How did God bear witness to the satisfaction of the brazen altar? By rending the veil. Then it is an easy thing to pass in. If God has rent the veil, am I to let it be rent for nothing? If it be now rent, I have as much right to go inside as the Israelites of old were bound to keep outside. By satisfying the altar, He has passed by the rent veil, into the sanctuary in the heavens. All that is brought out here. He glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest. Why is it a matter, of honor to be made a High Priest? You'll tell me, that nothing can dignify the Son of God; and I grant it. But let me ask you, Do not men know what it is to have acquired honors, as well as hereditary honors? The son of a nobleman goes to battle; and may he not acquire honors as well. as his hereditary family dignities And tell me, which will he value the most Those which he has acquired. He himself is more honored by them. His hereditary dignities are his, and no thanks to him; but his acquired honors are more especially his own. Divine things are illustrated by human things. Who can add anything to Him who is God over all, blessed forever? But the Son has been in the battle, and acquired honors that would never have been His, if He had not taken up the cause of sinners; and dear and precious honors they are to Him! That word "called" is very sweet in the original. God "saluted," "greeted," Him, when He seated Him in the sanctuary, as He greeted Him when He seated Him on the throne: "Sit thou at my right hand." The epistle, to the Hebrews shows, in the opened heavens, a throne as well as a sanctuary.

In the 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, we find some very weighty truths, connected with ourselves. "Who, in the days of His flesh" (let us mark that with holy reverence), "when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death."—The scene of that conflict was eminently marked in Gethsemane. What was the transaction there? He properly shrank from undergoing the judgment of God against sin. "And was heard for His piety." He was heard, because death, the wages of sin, had no claim on Him. His claim to deliverance was allowed. Instead of the judgment of God being sent to wither His flesh, an angel was sent to strengthen Him.

Yet He suffered death. He might have claimed His own personal exemption from it, yet He went through it. He learned obedience to His commission by traveling from Gethsemane to Calvary, and He now presents Himself to the eye of every sinner on earth as the Author of eternal salvation. We see the Lord in Gethsemane pleading, as I may express it, His title against death. His title is owned; yet, though death has no claim on Him personally, He says, "Thy will be done!" He might have gone from Gethsemane to Heaven; but He went the rather from Gethsemane to Calvary; and so, being made perfect there, He became the Author of eternal salvation to all who receive Him. Then, when the altar was satisfied, the sanctuary received Him, and there He is. In Creation, God planted a man in the garden in innocence; in redemption, God has planted a man in heaven, in glory. There is a glory that excelleth. The glory in redemption leaves the glory that was once in Creation as a nothing.

Now we have got down to verse 10. Observe, that the language of verse 10 is taken up in verse 20 of chapter 6., and the argument there has not advanced beyond this verse 10. Supposing, then, I were to take you to chaps. 1, 2. And 3. of 1. Cor you would find the apostle there hindered in his teaching. " You are carnal; I cannot teach you with the rich treasures I have, stored up for the Church." It is so here; only there the evil that hindered was moral: here it is doctrinal. It was very difficult for the Hebrew to detach himself from the things in which he had been educated. He was " unskillful in the word of righteousness." The legal mind is apt to take up righteousness as Moses did, as a thing' demanded from us. God takes it up as a thing that He will give us. And, in the next chapter, finding this hindrance among them, He sounds an alarm, as in the opening of chap. 2., de sounded an exhortation. A carnal mind and a legal mind are two great villains. They are both little foxes that spoil the vintage of God. " Now," says the apostle, " you must leave these things. I must put you down to another Volume, and that volume is perfection." "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened," etc. That is, " It is not within my reach to do it." We must leave it to God,, whether they be brought back or not. It is just between themselves and God. It is a terrible thing, having known Christ, to go back to ordinances; but I have no warrant to (say that it will not be forgiven in the person of many who have thus been ensnared, but have come back.

CHAP. 7.-To look carefully at the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is important to our souls. Therefore, for the present, we will lay aside the parenthesis at the close of chap. 6., and read part of chap. 5. and the whole of the chap. 7. We were looking at the priesthood of the Lord Jesus as reflected in Aaron and Phinehas. Aaron, we saw, was simply called into his office-Phinehas earned his office. We will now look at the Melchisedec phase of the same priesthood.

Supposing I said to you, that this world is a scene of forfeited life-you would understand me. Life is but suspended death. To return to life is to return to God. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. Sin worked the forfeiture of life; consequently, if I can make a return to life, I make a return to God. In two characters God visits this world-as a Quickener, and as a Judge; and chap. 5. of John tells us, that we are all interested in one or other of these visits. Now, it is the office of this epistle to let every poor believer in Jesus know that he has returned to life, and that his business now is with the living God, and with God the quickener. " The living God " is an expression that occurs often in this epistle. " Departing from the living God" -" To serve the living God"- " The city of the living God." The living God thus occupies the field of my vision both now and in glory. I am now not to depart from Him, which intimates that I have got back to Him. I have escaped from the region of death, and got back to the region of life; and by and by in glory I shall find " the city of the living God." The question is, How have I got back to Him I The epistle beautifully unfolds that. It is a magnificent moral subject to trace the Lord Jesus in His ministry through the four gospels, and see Him from the beginning to the close of His history displaying Himself as the living God in this world.

To mark Him at Gethsemane-to mark Him giving up the ghost-then as the living God rising from the tomb, and bestowing the Holy Ghost. We see the living God in a scene pregnant with death. It is the office of this Epistle to the Hebrews very specially to present Christ as the living God. The apostle is full of the death and the cross of Christ. It would not be the Epistle to the Hebrews if it did not take up Christ in His vicarious character. But though we see the Lamb on the altar, we see the vacant sepulcher too. We have remarked before, that the Lord Himself always attaches to the story of His death the story of His resurrection. " The Son of man shall he betrayed unto the chief

priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death... and the third day He shall rise again." We have the same thing here, only in a doctrinal, and not an historic way. The cross is often named, but always in company with the ascension. Take the opening of the epistle. " When He had by Himself purged our sins." How did He purge them? By death. Death looks at you at the very opening of this epistle; but at once you read, " Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Again we read, " That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Does the story end there No. He is " crowned with glory and honor." What is done historically in the gospels, is taken up doctrinally in the Hebrews. The Holy Ghost is considering the living God in the person of Jesus, as Jesus was exhibiting the living God in His own person. So again in chap. 2., " That through death"-death looks again at you; but what follows? "He might destroy him that had the power of death." Have I not again the empty sepulcher, as well as the altar and the Lamb? I go, in this epistle, to find an empty grave; but not as " Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary." I expect to find it empty. Their mistake, dear women, was, that they expected to find it full. I go expecting to find it empty, and I do find it so. When I see the Lamb on the altar, and the empty sepulcher, I have got hold of victorious, infallible life. That is the rock-life of which the Lord spoke to Peter. In chap. 5, we find, that in Gethsemane He transacted the question of His title, and was heard for His piety. He had a moral title to life. Then He surrendered that moral title and took His vicarious place. From Gethsemane He walked on to Calvary. Gethsemane was a wonderful moment. There the great question of life and death was settled between God and Christ; and, instead of taking the journey He was entitled to up there, He went along the dreary road our sins put Him on down here. There is exceeding blessed interest about all that.. At Calvary, again, we find Him in death; but the moment He gave up' th6 ghost, everything felt the power of the conqueror. He had gone down into the darkest regions of death, but the moment He touched them, every one of them felt the power of the conqueror. The earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened, and the bodies of the saints arose. If we look in chap. 20. of John, we see, not merely the vacant tomb, but the tomb strewed with the tokens of victory-the linen clothes lying, and the napkin, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapt together in a place by itself. We shall never be able to-read the mystery of the Christ of God, if we do not remember Him as the living God in the midst of death, getting victories worthy of Himself. We see Him in death rending the veil. In the grave we see the napkin lying wrapped together by itself, to tell the story of conquest. We see Him then with His disciples, and He is exactly the living God of Gen. 1 We find God there breathing life into the nostrils of man-the head and fountain of life. In John 20 the Lord shines under our eye as the head and fountain of infallible, unforfeitable life, breathing on the disciples and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." In this epistle we find Him in that character--as entitled to life, and as holding it for us. That is His Melchisedec priesthood. He is not merely the living God. He might have been that if He had gone to heaven from Gethsemane; but He went to heaven from Calvary, and is now there as the living God for us; and God. is 'satisfied-to be sure He is satisfied. How could He be otherwise I Sin has been put away, and the blessed God breathes the element of life. It is, 'so to speak (with worshipping hearts may it be spoken), His native element; and He is satisfied. And God has expressed His satisfaction. But how When Christ rose, in the face of the world that said, " We will not have Him to reign over us;" God said, " Sit thou at my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool." That was His satisfaction in a rejected Christ. When Christ ascended the heavens in another character, as having made atonement, He put Him in the highest heavens with an oath, and built a sanctuary for Him-" The true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man." Is it

possible for Him to

show us in more interesting form, that He is satisfied with what Christ has done for us?

Are the services of such a High Priest enough for me.? They must be so. I am in connection with life, and every question is settled between me and God. He is King of Righteousness and King of Peace, and He dispenses all you want in the royal authoritative virtue of His own name.

The moment you get the living God expanded in this epistle, you find that everything He touches He communicates life for eternity to it. His Throne is forever and ever -chap. 1. tells you that. His House is forever and ever-chap. 3. tells you that. His Salvation is eternal-chap. 5. tells you that. His Priesthood is unchangeable-chap. 7. tells you that. His Covenant is everlasting-chap. 9. tells you that. His Kingdom cannot be moved-chap. 12. tells you that. There is nothing He touches that He does not impart eternity to. To entitle the Epistle to the Hebrews, in a word, we might say, it is the Loaded Altar and the Empty Sepulcher.

Christ- has not put Himself in possession of life to keep it to Himself. The living Jesus in the highest heavens says, " Now that I have got life, I will share it with you." Oh the depth of the riches

CHAP. 8.- We meditated as far as verse 7 of chap. 6., and there we left it, taking up chap. 7. Now we will read the close of chapters 6. And 8. But before we pursue the doctrine of the epistle, we will look a little at what we called the hortatory parenthesis in chap. 6. At verse 10 of chap. 5. we left the doctrine, and from that to the close of chap. 6. is a parenthesis. The apostle, having turned aside to exhort them, we were observing that the thing he feared in the Hebrews was not moral, as in the Corinthians, but doctrinal pravity. And do not we see such moral varieties around us now? One has a Corinthian bias; another has a Galatian bias. The thing he feared in the Hebrews was giving up Christ as the object of their confidence.

What is the dressing that God is giving your heart now (Ver. 7.) It is not law, but grace. Moses was on the principle of law-the Lord Jesus was on the principle of grace; and free, happy, grateful hearts are the herbs meet for such tillage. How is your soul before God? Do you apprehend Him in judgment or in grace? Is the communion of your soul with God in the liberty of grace, or in the fear of a coming day of judgment? If the last, it is not yielding herbs meet for Him by whom it is dressed. Thorns and briers are the product of nature. They are the natural product of a corrupt scene, whether it be the earth I tread or the heart I carry within me. Supposing I am acting in a legal, self-righteous mind, dealing with God as a Judge, is not that natural? But these are all thorns and briers. But if I walk in the filial confidence of one who has trusted in the salvation of God, that is the earth yielding fruits meet for Him by whom it is dressed.

Now what is the ground of the apostle's persuasion of " better things" touching them in verse 10? Not confidence in the simplicity of their apprehension of grace, but that the fruits of righteousness were seen among them-beautiful things that accompany but never constitute salvation. Therefore the apostle, seeing this beautiful fruitfulness, says, "Though I am sounding an alarm, I do not attach it to you." Having got on that ground, he pursues it to the close of the chapter, and does not return to what is doctrinal till he reaches chapter 7. He prays them to continue to minister to the saints. Does your knowledge of Christ lead you to two things-secret communion of soul with Him, and practical energy of Christian walk and fruitfulness? " Now," says he, " do you go on with the beautiful practical work you have begun. Do not be slothful, but followers of them who, by faith and

patience, inherit the promises." Then he brings out Abraham as one who did not slack his hand to the end. Abraham not only got the promise in Gen. 15, but went on in patience till it was confirmed by an oath in Gen. 22. We are called not only to faith, but to the patience of faith. May you not have a consolation, and yet not a strong consolation.? We see it in Abraham. He had a consolation in Gen. 15, and a strong consolation in Gen. 22 A saint once said to me, " In that last sickness the Lord brought me so near Himself, that I felt as if I had never believed before." The apostle would have us like Abraham (in Gen. 22), that " we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to take hold upon the hope set before us." This passage is commonly misquoted. It is not a sinner running to the blood for refuge, but a saint running to the hope of glory from the wreck of every prospect here. This is enough to try us. Do you and I sit on the wreck of everything here? Are we promising ourselves hopes for to-morrow? Abraham was a man who fled from every prospect here to lay hold on the hope of glory. The apostle says, " Lay hold on the hope, not on the cross." The word of God has an intensity that commonly escapes us Now he returns to the Levitical figures. Does your hope enter within the veil? Have not you a hope about to-morrow? What is the thing the expectation of your heart hangs about? Is it the hope of the return of Christ, or the promise of to-morrow?

" Whither the Forerunner is for us entered." The Lord Jesus is here brought out in a new character. We see Him in heaven, not only for us as our High Priest, but to secure a place for us with Himself. Oh, if we could unfold the glories of the present dispensation! It is full of. glories. Jesus is now in heaven in the glory of a Forerunner-a, High Priest-the Purger of our sins. There He sits arrayed in glories. He will put on other glories in the millennial heavens. He will also be King of kings, and Lord of lords on the millennial earth. He is not that now; but there are glories in which He is displayed to the eye of faith. Do you go and meditate, broken-heartedly, on the glories of "these last days," as they are called in this epistle.

But we pass on to Chapter 8 " We have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the true sanctuary, which the Lord pitched and not man." What exquisite words! What glories filled the heavens in the days of creation! The sun and moon and stars were set there. His fingers garnished them. And pray have not they garnished the present heavens? If there were glories set in the superficial heavens by the fingers of God, there are glories set in the interior heavens by the grace of God. One of these glories is a tabernacle which the Lord has pitched there. Christ came down from the eternal bosom to glorify God on the earth. Was there anything too brilliant in the way of glory, in which to array such an one? What intercourse we get here between God and His Christ -between the Father and the Son! And among the glories that awaited Him there, was a temple pitched by the Lord Himself. The sun comes out of his chamber to run his course. The Creator built a habitation for the sun in the heavens. (Psa. 19) God in redemption has built a habitation for the High Priest; and He is seated there in the highest place of honor. Christ could not be a Priest here. The place was divinely occupied. It has been foolishly said He could not go into the holiest. Surely He could not, for He came of the tribe of Judah. Did He come to break God's ordinances or to fulfill all righteousness? What business had He in the holiest? A priest of the tribe of Levi, if he found Him there, would have been entitled to cast Him out. He was entitled to everything; but He came as a subject, self-emptied servant. Did He intrude on the two poor disciples at Emmaus? Much less would He, a Son of Judah as He was, intrude in God's house.

Here we pause a little., In this epistle we find one thing: from the beginning to the end, the Spirit is taking up one thing after another, and laying it aside to make room for Christ; and when He has made room for Christ, and brought Christ in, He fixes Him before us forever. And we must all submit to it. Has not God laid you aside, and brought in Christ in your stead? Faith bows to this. It is what He has done in every believing soul. So in chap. 1, He lays aside angels. " To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool I" Oh how faith consents to it! Oh how angels consent to it Next we see Moses laid aside. "Moses verily was faithful as a servant; but Christ as a Son over His own house." We can part with Moses because we have got Christ -as the poor eunuch could part with Philip because he had got Jesus. Then in chap. 4. comes out Joshua. But he is laid aside also. " If Joshua had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day." Christ is set before me as the true Joshua who really gives me rest. Then Aaron is set aside, to let in the priesthood of Christ; but when I have it before me, I have it forever, He is the administrator of a better covenant. The old covenant is doge away, because the Lord has nothing to say to it. And, at the close, we read the beautiful utterance, which might be the text of the epistle, " Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." He, being brought in, is " the same forever." What a magnificent thought it is, to think of God bringing in the blessed Jesus to the displacing of everything! That is perfection, because God rests in Him. This is exactly the sabbath of old, when God rested in creation. Now God rests in Christ, and that is perfection; and if you and I understand where we are, we are breathing the atmosphere of perfection-an accomplished work-a sabbath. There is nothing more fruitful in glorious luminaries, than the Epistle

to the Hebrews. It is an epistle of untold glories, and of inestimable value to the conscience of the awakened sinner. It is the title of my soul to breathe the atmosphere of heaven itself; and if I do not do so, shall I put a cloud on my title because my experience is so poor?

Now, at the close of chap. 8., we see another thing set aside-the first covenant. The covenant that Christ ministers never waxes old. " Your sins I'll forgive, your iniquities I'll pardon." There is no wrinkle on its face. No gray hairs upon its brow.

The Lord touches everything, and fixes it before God forever; and God rests in it. He perfects everything He touches. While everything gives place to Him, He gives place to nothing. And would not you have it so Would not John the Baptist have it so? When they came to him and said, "Rabbi, He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold, the same baptiseth, and all men come to Him." He answered, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." This ought to be the instinctive utterance of your heart and mine. If the Spirit has dealt with you in your soul, you ought to say, "Blessed be God for it! He has set me aside to bring Jesus in." There is wonderful unity between the discovery we get here, and the experience of our own souls. We shall never get to an end of these glories, till we are lost in an ocean of them by and by-a sea without a shore!

CHAPS. 9. AND 10. 1-18.-We closed at chapter 8.; and, pursuing the structure of the epistle, we will now read chap. 9. and down to verse 18 of chap. 10. This is the last section of the doctrinal part; and then, to the close, we get moral exhortations. From the opening of chap. 9. to verse 18 of chap. 10. is one argument.

Suppose we linger a little over the structure of the epistle. Did you ever present a little distinctly to your mind the / glories that belong to the Lord Jesus There are three forms of glory that attach to Him-moral glory, personal glory, and official glory. From the manger to the cross was the exhibition of His moral glories. In " these last days " the Lord is exhibiting some of His official glories, and by and by He will exhibit more of them, as in millennial times. The prophets of old spake of His sufferings, and the glories which should follow-not glory. But His personal glory is the foundation of every one of these. This is a grand subject for our constant meditation-the glories of the Lord Jesus, from the womb of the virgin to the throne of His millennial power. All through life He was exhibiting His moral glories. The scene for these is past now, and He has taken His seat in heaven; but that has only given Him an opportunity 'to display others. The four gospels give me a view of His moral. glories here. In the Epistle to the Heb. 1. see Him seated in heaven now, in a constellation of official glories. In other writings we get His coming glories. Whenever you see Him, you cannot but see Him in the midst of a system of them. In these chapters, 9. And 10., you get what He is doing on the cross, the foundation of every one of His present glories. In the first eight chapters we get a varied display of the conditions of the Lord Jesus now in heaven; and now, as the sustainment of all these, in chapters 9. And 10. we have an account of the perfection of the Lamb on the altar.

Do you ever make " these last days" a subject of thought? Why is the Spirit entitled to call the age through which we are passing the " last days"? We shall have other days after these. Why, then, does He call them the last days? Beautifully so-because God rests in what the Lord Jesus has accomplished, as thoroughly as He rested at the close of creation, in the perfection of His own work. It is not that, in the unfolding of the economy of God, we shall not have other ages; yet, in the face of that, the Spirit does not hesitate to call these. the " last days." In all the Lord has done He has satisfied God. He perfects everything He touches, and makes it eternal, and God does not look beyond it. Everything is set aside till Christ is brought in; but there is no looking beyond Him. " Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Now, the moment I get God resting in anything, I get perfection; and the moment I get perfection, I am in the last days. God has reached satisfaction, and so have I. Christ may be unfolded in millennial days; but it is the very same Christ that we have now. Shall I get Moses then, or Joshua? They are all (treated in the light of Christ) "beggary elements." All give place, one after another; but Christ being introduced to the thoughts of God, God rests in Him; and when you come t...) see where you are, you are in God's second sabbath-and see how one thing exceeds the other! The rest of the Redeemer is a much more blessed thing than the rest of the Creator. In Christ you have got 'perfection-the rest of God and you are in the "last days." Now, when we come to chapters 9. And 10. we see Christ, not properly or characteristically in heaven, but on the altar. The glories that surround Him now have been given to us one after another-the glory of the priesthood, the glory of the Purger of our sins, the predestinated Heir of the world to come, the Apostle of Salvation, the Dispenser of the Covenant that never gathers age to itself, the Giver of the eternal inheritance-these are the glories of " these last days." In chapter 9. verse 10 we see the cross that sustains them all. How blessed it is to track, from Matthew to John, a path of moral beauty! Was the Lord Jesus in office here? No; He was here in subjection. When I have looked at Him thus, I am invited to look upwards. Is it One traveling in moral beauty I see there? No; not that specially; but it is One who has been seated at the right hand of the Majesty with an oath, in the very midst of glorious beauties--One whom the satisfied, unrepenting heart of God has seated there. It was the testing purpose of God that seated

Adam in Eden. It is the unrepenting heart of God that has seated Christ in heaven.

And now we come to read the perfection of His work as Lamb of God, as the grand foundation of all these glories. He would not have perfected His moral glories here if He had not gone on to the cross and died there. He would not have had His official glories in heaven if He had not gone on to the cross and died there. When the Lord Jesus was hanging as the Lamb of God on the accursed tree, and over His bleeding brows was written the inscription in every language, " This is the King of the Jews," they sought to blot it out; but God would not have it blotted out. He would have the whole creation know that the cross was the title to the kingdom. The inscription that Pilate wrote on the cross, and God kept there, is very fine.

Supposing the cross sustains the glory, according to the inscription, now tell me what sustains the cross itself Is the cross without a foundation? The secret comes out in these chapters. As the cross sustains your hopes, it is the person that sustains the cross. His personal glory is the sustainment of the cross. If He was less than God manifest in the flesh, all He did was no more worth than water spilled upon the

ground. Of all the mighty mystery of official, millennial, eternal glories, the cross is the support, and the person is the support of the cross. He must sustain His own work, and His work must sustain everything. This is just the argument of these chapters. There was a veil hanging between the place where the priests ministered, and the mystic dwelling-place of God. The veil, was the expression, that that age gave a sinner no access to God. Were there not sacrifices I Yes, there were; and God's altar was accepting them. But they were "gifts and sacrifices that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience." Beautifully, then, at this point He comes to your heart, and demands a note of admiration. " For if the blood of bulls... sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Supposing we inspect the Old Tabernacle, and see the beggarliness of all its elements, that the blood of bulls could not bring you into the presence of God; and from the beggarliness of all that, look at the satisfyingness of the blood of Jesus, will you not exclaim, " How much more shall it purge our consciences? " That is the way you are to come to the cross, laying doubtings and questionings aside, and losing yourself in admiration., The thing the Spirit does is to take you gently by the hand, and lead you up to the altar at Calvary, and tell you who is the victim that is bleeding there. None but one who was personally free could say, I come to do thy will." Have you any right to a will? Has Gabriel or Michael? To do God's pleasure is their business; but here was One who could offer Himself without spot to God. " How much more," then, shall such a sacrifice purge our consciences, and introduce us at once to the living God? That entitled me to say, that while we look at His glories, His official glories, we see that the cross is the sustainment of them all. But if the soul does not know the personal glory of the Lord, it positively knows nothing. That is the secret you get here. He for whom God prepared a body, satisfied the brazen altar, before He went into the holy sanctuary to do the business of God's Priest. And atonement flows from satisfaction. If I find out that Christ's sacrifice has answered the demands of the brazen altar, I see that my reconciliation is sealed and settled for eternity.

The Epistle to the Ephesians tells you to stand upon this, and look round about you at the glories of your condition. The Epistle to the Hebrews shows you the glories of Christ's condition in the compass of about 300 verses. What a world of wonders is opened! You sustained by what He has done; and what He has done sustained by what He is.

CHAP. 10. 19-39.-We are coming now to another beautiful part of the epistle, and, as we hinted, to a new division of it. We will read from verse 19 to the close of chap. 10. You may have observed the general structure of the epistles. Take the Ephesians for instance. In the first three chapters we get doctrinal truth, and in the last three the moral application of it. So, in Colossians, Galatians, Romans, etc. Now, in Hebrews it is the same, and we are just entering now on the practical application of what has gone before.

" Now the full glories of the Lamb adorn the heavenly throne," as a beautiful hymn of Dr. Watts says. Constantly through this epistle we have been looking up and seeing this. But, let me ask, do you see glories anywhere in " these last days" that are not attaching to the Lord in heaven? You will tell me that all glory belongs to Him, and I grant it; but I tell you you ought to see glories attaching to yourselves. Such is the wondrous working of God, that He has made the poor sinner a glorious creature. These same last days that have set Christ on high, in the midst of glories, have set the poor believing sinner down here in the midst of glories. I want that you and I be girt up to an apprehension of them. We do not wait for the kingdom to see glories. Is it no glory for you to have a purged conscience? Is it no glory to be fully entitled to be in the presence of God, without a blush? No glory to call God father? To have Christ as your forerunner in heavenly places? To enter into the holiest -without a quiver of conscience? no glory to be introduced into the secrets of God? If we can lift up our heart and say, " Abba, Father," if we can lift up our heart, and say, " Who shall condemn " or " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" if we can believe that we are bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh; that we are part of Christ's fullness, will any one say there is no glory in all that? So that this epistle introduces us to most precious thoughts. It tells me to look up and see Christ adorning the throne, and to look down and see the poor sinner shining on the foot-stool. The world sees nothing of these glories. We only apprehend them in the glass of the Word by faith; but I do say boldly, that I do not wait for the kingdom to know what glory is. I look up and see the Lamb in acquired glories. I look down and see the saint in gifted glories. Now the moral application begins. " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." There I look at myself; and will any one say there is not glory in such a condition? That is my title. Now the exhortation is, that you are to enjoy your title. To enjoy is to obey. The first duty you owe to God is to enjoy what He has made you, and what He has given you. " Let us draw near." Use your privilege, as we say. It is the first grand duty of faith, and I am bold to say it is the most acceptable duty of faith. How narrow we are to enjoy these glories. Do you ever look at yourself in the glass of the word? We are very much accustomed to look at ourselves in the glass of circumstances-in the glass of relationships. If we say, in the secret of our hearts, with exultation of spirit, " I am a child of God;" if with exultation of spirit we say, " I am a co-heir with Christ," that is the way to begin obedience. Here it is exactly that. " Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith." We should look on ourselves as the priesthood of God. The priests of old were washed when they were put into office. Then every day their feet were washed, before they entered the tabernacle to serve the Lord. The pavement of God's own presence was not stained by the foot of the priest. He went in, in a character worthy of the place. Are you occupying the

presence of God all the day long, in the consciousness that you are worthy of the place? How will you be presented before Him by and by? Jude tells you-" Faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." You ought to know that you are in His presence now, faultless or without spot. We cannot put ourselves in the flesh too low; and we cannot put ourselves in Christ too high. If one may speak for another, we find it much easier to degrade ourselves in the flesh, than to magnify ourselves in Christ. That last is what the Spirit is doing here. Now He tells me, having got into the Holiest, what to do there. If I know my title to be in the presence of God, let me know also that I am there as the heir of a promised glory; I am there to be kept there till the glory shines out. We are the witnesses of a class of glories, just as the Lord Jesus is the witness of a class of glories. We are in a wealthy place; and, having got in there, we are to hold our hope without a quiver. " Let us hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering " (as the word should be). If we got in without a quiver, we are to hold our hope without a quiver. That is what God has called us to. We are there with boldness; and being there, we are to talk of our hope. And we are to talk of charity also, " to provoke unto love and to good works." What exquisite service! Who can utter the beauties of these things? Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together; but exhorting one another." When you get into the house, what are you doing: together? Are you to be down in the depths of conscious ruin? No; but exhorting one another to love and to good works. These are the activities of the house. We dwell together in one happy house, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we point to the sky and say, " Look! the dawning of morning is near; the sky is breaking." We want a great deal more to exhort one another to know our dignity in Christ than to know our degradation in ourselves. It is very right to know ourselves poor worthless creatures. Confession is very right; but to gird up the mind to the apprehension of our dignity is much more acceptable and priestly work than to be ever in the depths. " Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee." Here we see ourselves accepted; holding our hope without wavering; exhorting one another; and saying, as we point to the eastern sky, " The dawn is coming."

Then, having thus conducted us to ver. 25, he brings in a solemn passage about willful sin. We read the counterpart of this in Num. 15, where presumptuous sin is looked at. Under the law there were two characters of offense. A man might find a thing that was his neighbor's, and deal falsely about it; or he might lie to his neighbor, and there was a trespass-offering provided. But when a man picked sticks on the sabbath-day, he was to be stoned at once. There remained nothing for him but " a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation." It was presumptuous sin, flying in the face of the legislator. This is the presumptuous sin of the New Testament. It is running in the face of the God of this dispensation, as the gatherer of sticks ran 'in the face of the God of the law. We are not to be careless about sin. If we do the least sin, we ought to be broken-hearted about it. But that is not the thing contemplated here. It is a defection from Christianity.

Then, having come to ver. 31, he exhorts them to " call to remembrance the former days." Let me ask your souls, " Do you all remember the day when you were illuminated? One might say, " The light shone brighter and brighter upon me." I believe Timothy may have been such an one. Timothy, I have often thought, under the education of his godly mother, may have passed gently into the flock of God. But most people know the moment of their illumination; and if there is a moment of moral energy in the history of the soul, it is the day of its quickening. Why do not you and I carry the strength of that moment with us? Is He a different Jesus that we have now? When I know that the day was when all was over between God and me, and that now the day has come

when all is over between the world and me, that is practical Christianity. What was that day that He called on them to remember? The day when, being illuminated, they "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods." Why was this? How does He account for it? Their eye was on a better inheritance. Let me grasp the richer thing, and the poorer thing may pass away for aught I care. We can account for victory over the world just as easily as we can account for access to God. That, let me say, is just the knot that this epistle ties. It puts you inside the veil, outside the camp. In the wondrous divine moral character of Christianity, the grace and the blood of Christ work exactly contrary to the lie of the serpent. The lie of the serpent made Adam a stranger to God, and at home in this polluted world-inside the camp and outside the veil. Christianity just alters that. It restores us to citizenship in the presence of God, and strangership in the world; and ver. 35 of this chapter is the one verse in this epistle that knits these things together.

Hold fast your confidence, and it will be the secret of strength to you. Where do we see victory over the world? In those who are happiest in Christ. Why are you and I so miserably down in the traffic of the world? Because we are not as happy in Christ as we ought to be. Give me a soul that has boldness and joy in God's presence, and I will show you one that has victory over the world.

Now, the apostle tells us, that a life of patience intervenes between the day of illumination and the day of glorification. I am not to count on a path of pleasure-a path of ease-a path of prosperity-on being richer or more distinguished to-morrow than today; but I am to count on a path of patience. And is not there glory in that? Yes; there 's companionship with Christ. No greater glory is or can be yours than to be the companion of your rejected Master. That is your path. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." He was not ashamed to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They were strangers here; but if we become citizens here, instead of strangers-strike alliance with the world-He who could say, "I'm the God of my strangers," can say of the citizen of the world, "I have no pleasure in him."

May you and I exhort one another to love and to good works, and, pointing to the eastern sky, say, the day is dawning. Amen.

CHAP. 11. -We have reached chapter 11. I think we observed that chap. 10: 35 was a connecting-link between the two great thoughts of the epistle-that Christianity puts you inside the veil and outside the camp-that is, it undoes the work of Satan, which estranged you from God, and made you at home in a corrupted world. The religion of the Lord Jesus just comes to upset his (Satan's) work. Nothing can be more beautiful than the antithesis which thus shows itself between the serpent and the serpent's bruiser,

The "great recompence of reward" shows itself in the life of faith that we are now going to read about. We are called, as John Bunyan says, "to play the man." If happy within, we are to be fighting without. This chap. 11. shows us the elect of all ages "playing the man" in the power of this principle of confidence. "Cast not away your confidence," for it thus shows that it "has great recompence of reward." Faith is a principle that apprehends two different things of God. It views Him as a justifier of the ungodly, as in Rom. 4; but here it apprehends God as "the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." The moment you apprehend God by a faith that does not work, you enter on a faith that does work. And while we rightly cherish a faith that saves our souls, let us not be indifferent to a faith that serves our Savior. How boldly we sometimes assert our title, but do we value our inheritance? It is a poor wretched thing to boast in our title, and yet show that the heart is

but little moved by the hope of the inheritance. Just so, if I boast of a justifying faith, it is a poor thing to be indifferent to the faith that we have here in chap. 11. " Now faith is the confidence of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Then you are told, that it was the strength of all the worthies in old. times, who through it " obtained a good report." It is another proof that, as we have said, everything in this epistle is set aside to let in Christ. Here faith comes in to set aside law. If I take up the law as the secret power of my soul to do anything for God, I am not doing it for God but for myself. The law might chasten and scourge me, and call on me to work out a title to life. But that would be serving myself. Faith sets law aside. Then, having established faith as a working principle, he begins to unfold the different' phases of it from the beginning. I believe ver. 3 may have a reference to Adam. If Adam was a worshipper in the garden, it was by faith. He may have looked behind all the wonders that surrounded him, and apprehended the Great Artificer.

Now, some say, they can still worship God' in nature but when we left innocency we left creation as a Temple, and we cannot go back there. Nature was a Temple to Adam; but if I go back to it, I go back to Cain. Here we come to Abel and to revelation. We are sinners; and revelation, which unfolds redemption, must build us a temple. You must take your place as a worshipper in the temple that God in Christ has built for you.

Then we come to Enoch. Enoch's was an ordinary kind of life; but he spent it with God.

We are told in Genesis that he walked with, God, and here we are told that he pleased God. As the apostle says, in 1 Thess. 4, " Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God." To walk with God is to please Him. Can anything be more welcome to us, than the thought that we can give complacency to God? There was nothing in Enoch's life to make history; but whatever condition of life may be ours, our business is to walk with God in it. It is beautiful thus to see an undistinguished life going before a life of great events. You may hear some say, " A poor unnoticed thing am I, compared with some who have been distinguished in service for the Lord." "Well," let me reply, " you are an Enoch."

Now, Noah's was a very distinguished life. Faith laid hold on the warning. Faith does not wait for the day of glory, or the day of judgment, to see glory or judgment. Faith in the prophet did not ask for his eyes to be opened.

Faith here for one hundred and twenty years seemed to be a fool. Noah was building a ship for dry ground; and he may well have been the mockery of his neighbors; but he saw the thing that was invisible. How rebuking to us! Supposing you and I lived under the authority of coming glory -what fools we should be!

But I should not have passed over the word I took for my text. " He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Again, I boldly say, you would not have had that definition of faith in Rom. 4., " A rewarder of them that diligently seek Him!" " Why what legal language! some would say, if they read it in a book. Ah, but it is beautiful in its place. The faith of a saint is an intensely working thing. Will God be a debtor to any man? No. He will pay to those who sow bountifully.

Abraham's life is the next; and a picture of the varied exercises of faith. There was a magnificence in his faith-a victorious quality-a fine apprehension-all these qualities of faith come out in the life of Abraham. He went out blindfold; but the God of glory led him by the hand. So he came to the land; but to him not a foot of it was given. He must have the patience of faith; but whatever fell from the

lips of God was welcome to Abraham. Abraham walked all his life in the power of the recollection of what he had seen under the hand of the God of glory. Now, supposing I tell you that the vision of Stephen has gone before every one of you. You need not be expecting the same vision that Stephen saw, but you have seen it in him. They may carry you to the stake, but you may say, " I have seen heaven opened over me, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." If you and I are simple, true-hearted people, we shall just go forth as Abraham did when he had seen the God of glory.

Then Sarah's was another kind of faith. We must see God as a quickener of the dead. Noah understood God so. The Israelites, under the blood-stained lintel, received Him in the same character. Death was there, and attached to every house in the land; but the Israelites knew God as a quickener of the dead. That is what Noah, Abraham, Sarah, apprehended of God. If I make God less than a quickener of the dead, I make myself more than a dead sinner. It is as a quickener of the dead I must meet with Him.

The 13th is a beautiful verse. The first thing to do to a promise is to apprehend it-then to exercise faith about it-and then to receive it by the heart. They " embraced" them. Their hearts hugged them. How far has my heart hugged the promises? One knows his own " leanness." But surely the closer we hug them, the more blessedly we shall consent to be strangers and pilgrims in this world. This is a wonderful picture of a heart put into faith. Did they speak of strangership because of leaving Mesopotamia? No; but because they had not reached heaven. They might have found their way back. Abraham could tell it to Eliezer; but that would not have cured their strangership.

Supposing there were a change in your circumstances, would that cure your strangership? Not if you are among God's people. Mesopotamia was no cure. Nothing could cure, end, or close their strangership but the inheritance. On they went to heaven; and God was not ashamed to be called their God.

In chap. 2. we read that Christ is not ashamed to call us brethren. Now, we read that God was not ashamed to call these strangers His people. Why is Christ " not ashamed to call them brethren "? Because they stand in one divine eternal purpose with Him. One family embraces the elect and Christ. How could He be ashamed of such people? And if you have fallen out with the world, God is not ashamed of you. For God Himself has fallen out with it, and He could not be ashamed of you, because you are one mind with Him. Therefore, when they said they were strangers, God called Himself their God. Our hearts are terribly rebuked here. How much lingers in them of striking alliance, and making friendships with the world! Then we see Abraham in another light. Every hope of Abraham depended on Isaac. To give up Isaac seemed not only to become a bankrupt in the world, but to become a bankrupt in God. He might have said, " Amos 1 to become a bankrupt in God and in Mesopotamia." There could not have been a higher stretch in the believing principle. Have you ever feared God making you a bankrupt in Himself? Has He turned away never to return?

Well, he got him back in a figure, sealed as a fresh witness of resurrection. Do we ever lose anything by trusting God in the dark? If ever any one trusted Him in the dark, it was Abraham.

After passing him we come to Isaac. Isaac showed his faith by blessing Esau and Jacob concerning things to come. This is the little single bit of his life that the Spirit looks at. If we inspect

his life, we shall find that that is the eminent work of faith in it. That act shines out under the eye of God.

Jacob is more remarkable, as Noah had been more remarkable than Enoch. His was a very eventful life; but the only thing we get here is, " By faith he blessed both the sons of Joseph." This is exquisitely beautiful. It shows how much in Christian life may be rubbish. I do not believe Jacob's life was an exhibition of a servant of God. It was an exhibition of a saint who went astray, and whose whole life was occupied in getting back; and we do not get this act of faith till we come to the close, when he " blessed both the sons of Joseph." There he came in contact with things unseen, and things that came across the current of nature. His life was the life of a man recovering himself; and, just at the close, he did this beautiful service of faith to God in the face of the resentments of his own heart, and the appeal of his son Joseph.

But Joseph's is a lovely life-a life of faith from the beginning. Joseph was a holy man throughout; but there was magnificent outshining of faith just at the close. He had his hand on the treasures of Egypt, and his foot on the throne of Egypt; yet, in the midst of all that, he spoke of the departing of his brethren. That was seeing things invisible. That was the one thing the Spirit has signalized as an act of faith. Why did he talk in this way? He might have said, " Ah, I do not walk by sight I know what is, coming, and I tell you you will go out of this land, and, when you go, take me with you."

The general course of his life was unblameable, yet we do find in his words as he was departing the finest utterance of faith. And now, that is what you and I want. Do you want to be righteous only? You must be so; but will that constitute a life of faith? You must seek to get under the power of things hoped for-things unseen-the expectation of the Lord's return; and till you do so in some energy, you may be blameless but you are not walking that life of faith by which " the elders obtained a good report." Thus, so far we see faith as a working principle. Not the faith of the sinner, which is a no-working faith. The moment the no-working faith has made me a saint, I must take up the working faith, and live in the power, of it:

But we must go on. We will not forget what we hinted -that the whole of this chap. 11. depends on, and is the illustration of, the 35th verse of chap. 10. The stronger our faith is, the more our soul is in the possession of mighty moral energy. This chapter shows how this principle of faith gained the day. Do not read it as if it were the praises of Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others. It is the praises of faith as illustrated in Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others. What a simple, blessed thing Christianity is! I stand in admiration of it, when I see how the devil has wrought a twofold mischief in putting us outside the veil-inside the

camp; and how Christ has wrought a corresponding twofold remedy. Do I rejoice in the thought, that I have gained God, though at the loss of the world? That is Christianity.

" By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child." What is the meaning of that? It means, that when he was born, there was an expression in his countenance that faith read. " Beautiful to God," is the word. There was a certain beauty in him that awakened the faith of Amram and Jochebed; and they were obedient to it. Was there not a beauty in the face of the dying Stephen? I ought not his murderers to have been obedient to it? They stand in moral contrast to Moses' parents. Under the finger of God they saw the purpose of God, and hid the child.

Now, in Moses we see a beautiful power of faith. It got a threefold victory-three splendid victories, and the very victories you are called to. First, his faith got the victory over the world. He was a foundling, picked up from the Nile, and adopted as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. This was personal degradation translated into adopted magnificence. What did he do with it? He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. What victory over the world that was! We like those things that put worldly honor on us. Moses would not have it; and, sure I am, faith is set to the same battle-field, and challenged to get the like victory to this day. Next we see Moses getting victory amid the trials and alarms of life. "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." What a terrible thing the life of faith is to nature! You have got a victory to-day-you must stand again to-morrow. "That we may be able to withstand.. and having done all, to stand." Here the pressure of life was coming on Moses, after the attractions of life had got their answer. Then, in the third instance, Moses had an answer for the claims of God. It is magnificent to see a soul braced in the power of a faith like this. "Through faith he kept the passover." The destroying angel was going through the land, but the blood was on the lintel. From the very beginning grace has provided the sinner with an answer to the claims of God; and it is the simple office of faith to plead the answer. God provided the blood, and faith used it. Christ is God's provision. He is God's great ordinance for salvation; and faith travels along with Him from the cross to the realms of glory.

Then "by faith they passed through the Red Sea "-by faith the walls of Jericho fell down-" by faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." And what more shall we say? Time fails-we cannot go through the story. It is the story that animates the whole of Scripture. The story of grace and faith-grace on God's part and faith on ours-gives animation to the whole book of God. We are never called outside the camp till we are inside the veil. The early chapters of this epistle show the sinner his title to a home in God's presence; and then you are to come forth from that home, and let the world know that you are a stranger in it. That is the structure of this beautiful epistle. It tells us our title to be in God's presence, before it opens the calling that attaches to us.. Before Abraham was called out to a land that he knew not, the "God of glory" appeared to him. Does he ever send a man a warfare at his own charges? Does He ever send you to fight with the world before you are at peace with Himself. Everything is for me from the moment I turn to God. I am called in God, to everything that is for me. I am come "to mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," etc. This is chap. 12.. Before ever David was hunted as a partridge, he had the anointing oil of God upon him.

We must linger a little on the two closing verses. They are very weighty, precious, pregnant verses. These elders obtained a good report, but with the good report they did not obtain the promise. It reminds me of the prophet Malachi. "A book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." They are not His made-up jewels yet, but He has their names in His book, and He will make them up and display them as His jewels by and by. So with - these elders. Why have they not yet obtained the promise? Because we must first come in, in the rich furniture of this evangelic dispensation, or all they had in their beggarly dispensation would never have done for them. We find the word "better" constantly occurring in this epistle. "A better testament "- a better covenant some better thing for us "- which speaketh better things than that of Abet " And we find the word "perfect " in constant use also; because now everything is perfected. Everything is perfected that gives God rest, as we have already said, and

God is not looking for any satisfaction beyond what Christ gives Him. He has His demand answered, His glory vindicated, His character displayed, and all in Christ. Now, what is this "better thing" in the last verse? If we had not brought in our Christ, so to speak, nothing would have been done. God having introduced Christ in this dispensation, all the old saints that hung on it are perfected. For, in, one light of it, we look at this epistle (as we will now do briefly and rapidly) as a treatise on perfection. Thus, in chap. 2. we read, that it became the glory of God to give us a perfect Savior; not merely my necessity, but God's glory required it. " It became Him "-consulting for His own glory. It became Him to give the sinner an author to begin salvation, and a captain to close it. The difference between an author and a captain is just the difference between Moses and Joshua. Moses was the author of salvation, when he picked up the poor captives in Egypt; Joshua was the captain of salvation; when he carried them across the Jordan, right into the promised land. Christ is the One who carries us both through the Red Sea and the Jordan, the One who did the initiative work of Moses, and the consummating work of Joshua.

Then, in, chap. 5. we read, "Being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation." Not moral perfection-- we all know He was morally stainless-but perfection as " the author of salvation." He would never have been perfect thus if He had not gone on to death; but as It behooved God to give us a perfect Savior, so it behooved Christ to make Himself a perfect Savior. Then, in chap. 6., " Let us go on unto perfection," the apostle says; that is, let us "read our lesson on this subject." Some read this, as if they were to go on till they got no more' sin in themselves. That has nothing to say to it. It is as if the apostle said, " I am going to read you a treatise on perfection, and you must come and learn it with me." Then he goes on with the subject in chap. 7. He says, you cannot find this perfection in the law. " The law made nothing perfect." You must look elsewhere. By the law here is not meant the ten commandments, but the Levitical ordinances. In the midst of these beggarly elements you must look elsewhere for perfection. Chapter 9 thus shows you that it is in Christ, and tells you that the moment faith has touched the blood, the conscience is purged; and chap. 10. tells you that the moment Christ touches you, you are perfected forever. Not in moral stainlessness in the flesh, there is no such thing here. The moment Christ touches the apostleship, He perfects it. The moment He touches the priesthood, He perfects it. The moment He touches the altar, He perfects it. The moment He touches the throne, He perfects it. And if He perfects these things, He will, as to your conscience, perfect you a poor sinner. So this epistle is, in one great light, a treatise on perfection. God gave you a perfect Savior; Christ made Himself a perfect Savior. Let me go on to perfection. If I seek it in the law, I am in a world of shadows. When I come to Christ, I am in the midst of perfection. " And there I stand, poor worm," as Gambold says.

Therefore, these saints could not get the inheritance till we came in, laden with all the glories of this dispensation. But now they can share the inheritance with us, when the full time comes. What glories shine, in this epistle! What glories fill the heavens, because Christ is there! What glories attach to us because Christ has touched us! Is it no glory to have a purged conscience-to enter into the holiest with boldness-to say to Satan, Who are you, that you should finger God's treasure? We creep and crawl when we should be getting into the midst of these glories and encouraging our hearts.

CHAP. 12.-We will now read chap. 12. We have looked at the doctrine of the epistle. We are now eminently in the practical part of it; yet the blessedness of the doctrine shines out too. I would just

say this first-We have been looking at the various characters in which the Lord has entered heaven. Now here, in ver. 1, we get Him in heaven in another character. Do not many crowns belong to Him? Won't you put a -royal crown-a priestly crown-on His head? Can you put too many crowns there? What a cluster of glories fill the eye, as we look at Christ in heaven by the light of this magnificent epistle Now, among other characters, we see Him there as the One who perfected a life of faith on earth, " the Author and Finisher of faith." The counsel of God is busy in crowning Jesus. It is the delight of the counsel of God to crown Him, it is the delight of the Spirit of God to exhibit Him as crowned, and it is the delight of faith to see Him crowned. God, the Spirit, and the faith of the poor believing sinner, all gather round Him, either to crown Him, or to delight in seeing Him crowned.

Now, we see Him owned in heaven as. the One who perfected the life of faith. He passed through it to perfection from the manger to the cross, and is so accepted in the highest heavens. That of course put Him in collision with man. " Him that, endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself." This is beautifully pregnant with the thought that He was "separate from sinners." You would not dare to take that language to yourself. It is too lofty a style for any but the Son of God to take. Was anything like that said of Abraham or Moses? No. the Spirit would not have talked so of one of them. So, when you put the Lord Jesus in the wear and tear of life, in company with martyrs, you see Him, as in all other things, taking the pre-eminence. It is so natural for the Spirit to glorify Christ! If He is looking at Him officially, as in the first part of this epistle, it is easy to look at Him with many, many crowns upon Him. Or looking. at Him here, it is easy for the Spirit to put this crown of peculiar beauty on His head. He " endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself." It is a description which your heart would condemn you for taking to yourself, though you might be called to the stake.

The cross, in one aspect, was martyrdom. Jesus was as much a martyr at the hand of man, as He was a victim at the hand of God. It is as a martyr we see Him here, and as such we are put in company with Him. " Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." You have no deeper enemy than your own heart to strive against. It was sin in the Pharisees, sin in the multitude, sin in the chief priests, that carried the Lord Jesus to the cross. But He never had a bit of sin in Himself to strive against. It was sin in others. The apostle then goes on to put you, as a chastened sufferer, in company with the Father. Here we drop company with Christ. For He never was under the chastening of the Father. The moment I get under the scourging and education of the Father, I have dropped out of company with Christ. I am deeply in His company when traveling the path of the martyr. I am not a step in His company when I am under the chastenings of the Father.

So from ver. 5 onward you are in company with your heavenly Father. Oh, these sacred, divine touches!-that know when to introduce Christ, and when to let Him disappear! How, or in what form of excellency to display Him, and how to let Him out of sight! There is a glory, a completeness, in the very way in which the task of the Spirit is executed. He walks through life, enduring the contradiction of sinners. I walk through it, striving against sin. Then I am in company with the chastening of the Father-all resulting in a blessed participation in His holiness, but Christ is not there with me. If you put all the wit of aggregated intellects together, could it give you these divine touches that glitter in the Book of God I

In ver. 12 we are exhorted not to let our hands hang down. There is no reason why it should be so. Though you are under the scourge, there is not one single reason why your hands should hang down, or your knees be feeble; for the Spirit has shown you yourself first in company with Christ, and then with your Father who loves you. Is there any reason why you should travel as if you did not know the road? This is a beautiful conclusion. We all know how the hands will hang down ' but I set my seal to every word of this, and say, " Truth, Lord." There is no reason that we should be faint-hearted. Then having come to that, he looks round. Do not let your own hands hang down; and, in connection with others, follow peace;-in connection with God; follow' holiness. " What communion hath light with darkness? what concord hath Christ with Belial? " Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you." If you consult' at your leisure Deut. 29, you will find a root of bitterness there spoken of; but it is a different kind from this. There, it arose from some man taking up false gods-here it is from failing of the grace of God. The whole epistle has it as its bearing and purpose, to nail your ear (in Scripture language) to the door-post of Him that is, speaking of grace. It is not a lawgiver that is heard, but one who is publishing salvation from the highest heavens. Angels and principalities and powers are made subject to the Purger of our sins; and the Purger of our sins has taken our conscience up to the highest heavens, and every tongue that could lay a charge against us is silenced, as we read in Rom. 8 (See also 1 Peter 3:21,22.) Now, take care lest you fail of the grace thus published. It may end in the profaneness of Esau. It has been said by another, that this reference to Esau must have been very striking to the mind of a Jew. " If you fail of the grace of God, you will be left in the position of one whom your nation repudiates." I do not care what you take up in His stead, if you slip away from Christ, you may be to-morrow in the position of the reprobate Esau. How does Esau stand before you? As the type of that generation who by and by will say, " Lord, Lord, open to us." But their tears will be as ineffectual as Esau's by the, bedside of his dying father. He came too late. So, when once God has risen up and shut to the door, they will find no place of repentance. This ver. 17 is very solemn. It tells me that that action of Esau's is the presentation to our thoughts of that which is still to be realized in an Esau generation, and only in such. " Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." Esau despised his birthright, and this generation have refused the grace of God, and despised the Christ' that has passed through the world, and died for sinners.

After this, in the 18th verse, we get a magnificent sight of the two dispensations. It is as if the apostle had said: I have been showing you a martyr path, but now I tell you, that the moment you look to God, everything is for you. The martyr path and the chastening of the Father are only further proofs of love. Now, leaving Christ and the Father, we come to God; and you see that all the eternal counsels of God have clustered to make you a blest one, as they have clustered to make Christ a glorious One. Do not be afraid. You are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire. Turn your back on it. The more advisedly I have turned my back on it, the more advisedly I have met and answered the grace and wisdom of God, and rendered the obedience of faith. Am I to be turning round my head-to be looking over my shoulder-to be giving it some glances Is that the obedience of faith? Then as to my face. Where is that turned to? To a. cluster of blessedness. I was introduced by my own self-confidence to law, and found not a thing for me. Now I have turned my face right round,, and I see everything for me. "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God-the heavenly Jerusalem-to an innumerable company of angels --the general assembly and Church of the first-born-to God the Judge of all."

The Lord, even in judgment, is for us; for it is one office of a judge to vindicate the oppressed. Then, "the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling." Everything is for, you. And that is where your face is undivertedly to direct itself. Let your face be right fully turned to the one hill, and your back be right fully turned to the other hill.

But here, at this place, in chap. 12, you are at the very beginning of the epistle again. In chap. 2. we read: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" Now we read: "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." From the beginning to the end the Spirit is nailing your ear to the door of the house of the master of grace.

Then it very solemnly closes-"Our God is a consuming fire;" that is, the God of this dispensation. From the fires of Sinai there was a relief, by turning and taking refuge in Christ; but there is no relief if God's relief is despised. If you, turn away from the relief this dispensation brings in, there is no more relief. "Our God is a consuming fire."

What, I ask you, puts you in company with God like simplicity of faith? As we said before, the purpose of the eternal counsels, and the joy of the Spirit, is this-to put crowns on the head of Christ; and when I am simple in faith, I am delighting to fill the field of my vision with these glories. Thus I am put in the most dignified company I could be in-God and the Holy Ghost. The Lord grant that you and I may be there! If we know these things, happy, thrice happy are we if we rest in them!

CHAPTER 13-We are closing the epistle, and we get what is common in all the epistles-some little details. It is eminently the structure of Paul's epistles, to begin with doctrine, and close with exhortation. So it is here. "Let brotherly love continue." Then, a brother may be a stranger: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." And to encourage them to that duty they are reminded that some in their own history entertained angels unawares. Then, another duty-"Remember them that are in bonds," and the encouragement follows-"as bound with them." Take your place in the body of Christ as His prisoners, not prisoners corporeally, but mystically. When he speaks of suffering for Christ's sake, he appeals to you in your mystic place; but when he speaks of suffering adversity (v. 3) in a common, ordinary way, he appeals to natural life, "as being yourselves also in the body."

Then we get the divine duties of, purity and unworldliness. Unworldliness is expressed in the words: "Content with such things as ye have," not seeking to be richer to-morrow than to-day. Then the Lord speaks in verse 5, and you answer Him in verse 6. It is the response of faith to grace-the reply of the heart of the believer to the heart of the Lord God. Then comes the duty of subjection-"Remember them which have the rule over you." Not a blind following of them, as when they were heathen (1 Cor. 12:2) following dumb idols. Are you to be led blindfold? No; you are to be led intelligently. "No one calls Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." We are living people of a living temple. So it is, "considering the end of their conversation." They died in faith, as they preached faith.

Now he leaves all that, and starts in verse 8 from another point; and this verse 8 may be called the motto of the epistle. Only in one light, I grant. What I mean is, that, as we have seen before, the Spirit of God in this epistle is looking, at one thing after another-taking a passing glance at angels, at Moses, at Joshua, at Aaron, at the old covenant, at the altars with their victims, and setting

every one of them aside to let in Christ. And you would not have it otherwise. With your whole heart and your whole soul you set your seal to that. Let all go to make room for Christ; and when Christ is brought in, do not let Him go for anything. This is what you get in verse 8. He is gazing for a moment at the object of the epistle. " I have displaced everything to let Him in, and now keep Him before you." It is a most blessed peroration of the whole teaching of the epistle.

Then there comes a corollary-a conclusion to that: " Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines," doctrines

foreign to Christ. You have got everything Christ; take care to hold fast by Him. Then, if I get Christ as my religion, I get grace. " It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." The Lord is set before you and me as the sum of our religion, and that religion is a religion that breathes grace to the poor sinner. Now do not read ver. 9 as if you could, to some extent, establish your heart with meats. Observe the punctuation; a semicolon after "grace" cuts it off from the close of the verse. Meats do nothing for you; as he tells you in another place: "Touch not, taste not, handle not." They bring neither profit nor honor to you. Suppose you accumulate carnal religious observances. If the 2nd of Colossians tells me there is no honor in them, this tells me there is no profit in them. When probed and searched out, they are all to the satisfaction of the flesh. The moment I get the Lord brought in, I get the heart established with grace. Did you ever hear it remarked, that not a single religion on earth takes grace as its secret, but the divine religion It is keeping God quiet if you can with them all. God's religion is the only religion ever thought of, that takes grace for its basis. This is exactly contemplated here. Do not be carried about by doctrines foreign to Christ. " We have an altar." What is the altar of this dispensation It is an altar exclusively for burnt-offerings-eucharistic services. The Jews had an altar for expiatory sacrifice. We have no such altar. Christ has been on the altar of expiation, and now we, as priests, minister at an altar of eucharistic services. We remember that the Son of God has bled, and we serve at an altar where we know sin as canceled, blotted out, thrown behind the back; and there, at your altar, you are rendering a constant service of thanksgiving. But they that go back to the services of the tabernacle have no right, no competency to stand as priests at the altar of this dispensation. Many a loved and loving soul is struggling with a legal mind; but that is a very different thing from displacing Christ for anything, as the Galatians were doing, putting a crutch under Him. The Spirit in this epistle does not quarrel with the poor struggling soul; but if you are seeking to offer expiatory sacrifices, and not holding your altar jealously for eucharistic services, you are blaspheming the sacrifice of the Son of God.

Now, having put you at your altar, and also within the holiest, He shows you your place outside the camp. Jesus was accepted in the holiest by God, and He was put outside the camp by men. You are exactly to be with Christ in both these places. That is where this dispensation puts you and if ever moral glory attached to a creature of God, it is that which attaches to you at this moment. Called outside the camp with Him, to bear His reproach!, Are angels in such conditions I Did He ever say to them, " Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations"? Angels are never invited to be the companions of His sorrow. He has never put such honor on angels as on you. Therefore, by and by, the Church will be nearer the throne than angels. " Here we have no continuing city." Christ had none. But further-

We see in verse 16 another beautiful thing-another character of service for your altar, " To do good and to communicate forget not." In various Scriptures we find, that the more joy we have in God,

the more large-hearted we shall be to one another. It is the very character of joy to enlarge the heart. As in Nehemiah, chap. 8., where the prophet tells the people, " Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength. And the people went their way to send portions and to make great mirth." A man that is happy himself can afford to look round and make others happy with him.

After this, the apostle comes to those who have present rule. Those in verse 7 are those who had died. Is this a blind subjection, I ask again? No; you are to take knowledge of them. "They watch for your souls." Office without power, without the unction of the Holy Ghost, is a thing this dispensation does not know; and if we know it, we have got into the corrupt element of it, and out of God's element. It is a part of your fidelity to God, to keep the dispensation in purity; and mere official authority is an idol.

This vessel of the Holy Ghost, this mightiest servant that ever served in God's name, comes down to the feeblest saint; " pray for us," and he asks it on the authority of a good conscience. Could you ask another to pray for you if you were purposing to err? I will answer for it you could not. And here it is on the ground of a good conscience that the apostle asks prayer. Then he gives them a subject of prayer. Oh the familiarity of Scripture! You are not taken out of your own world of affections and sympathies. Then he breaks out into his doxology.

Now, if we remember what we were saying to one another, we shall find here something new and strange. We get the Lord in this ver. 20 in resurrection, not ascension. The great theme of the epistle is, as we have seen from the beginning hitherto, Christ displayed in, heaven, but here the apostle does not go beyond resurrection. Why in closing does he bring down Christ from heaven? He has been keeping our eyes straining after Him into heaven, and just at the close, he brings Him down to earth. Yes; for it is very sweet to know that we need not travel beyond death and resurrection, to come in contact with the God of peace. You have reached the God of peace when you have reached the God of resurrection. Resurrection shows that death is abolished. Death is the wages of sin; and if death is abolished, sin is abolished, because death hangs on sin as the shadow on the substance. The covenant is called " everlasting," because it is never to be displaced. The old covenant was put away. The new covenant is ever new, never abrogated. The blood is as fresh this moment to speak peace to the conscience, as when it rent the vail. So, when we come to daily life, we are brought down to be in all simplicity in company with the God of peace that has raised the Great Shepherd from the dead by the blood that has sealed remission of sins forever. So you may forget sin. In one great sense we shall remember it forever, but as far as that which constitutes your condition before God, you may forget it forever. Then he prays that God may adjust and mold us to do His will. What poor adjustment there is in you and me, compared with that -verse! We are awkward in our business, as if we were not at home in it. And then, at the last, he just closes by a few common words to the brethren. " Grace be with you all. Amen."

CONCLUSION. -We may remember that I have observed several distinct lines of thought running through this epistle. In taking leave of it, we may consider it, and see how these various lines all meet in harmony, and give us, in result, a conclusion infinitely divine. The lines of thought are these:

1st. The Spirit is displacing one thing after another to let in Christ.

2nd. Having brought in Christ, the Spirit holds Him up in the varied glories in which He is now filling the heavens.

3rd. The Spirit shows how, Christ being brought in, He acts on everything to perfect it; that whatever a glorified Christ touches He perfects; and among other things, He perfects our consciences.

4th. This being so, on the ground of my reconciliation as a sinner, I am introduced to a temple of praise.

These four things May be looked at independently, yet it is very blessed to see that they acquire fresh glory when seen in connection one with another. Now, I do say, there is a magnificence in such a divine writing that needs nothing but itself to tell its glory. I am in contact with something that is infinitely the mind of God, with some of the most wondrous discoveries that God can make of Himself to me.

But ere we quit our sweet and happy task, we will look a little particularly at these four things. In chaps. 1. And 2. the Spirit displaces angels to let in Christ. In chaps. 3. And 4. He displaces Moses and Joshua. In chaps. 5, 6. And 7. He displaces Aaron. In chap. 8. He displaces the old covenant with which Christ has nothing to do. In chap. 9. He displaces the ordinances of the old sanctuary, with its altars and services, to let in the altar where Jesus as the Lamb of God lay. One thing after another He takes up and sets aside to make room for Jesus. This is a delightful task to the Spirit God knows His own delights. If the Spirit can be grieved He can be delighted too. Then, having brought Christ in, what does He do with Him '1 He keeps Him in forever. Christ has no successor. When the Spirit has got Him in He gazes at Him. And what is it to be spiritual? It is to have the mind of the Holy Ghost. Have you ever delighted to get out of the house, to make room for Jesus I Indignantly the Spirit talks of the things we have been looking at, as " beggarly elements." Have you ever treated them so I The Spirit sees no successor to Christ. In the counsels of God, there is none after Him. Is it so in the counsels and thoughts of our souls?

So, having kept Him in, He gazes at Him. And what does He see in Him I He sees glory upon glory. In chap. 1. He sees Him seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high, as the Purger of our sins, and hears a voice, saying, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." He looks in chap. 2. and sees Him as our Apostle talking to us of salvation, Then He finds Him as the Owner of an abiding house, as the Giver of eternal rest, and sees Him in the sanctuary above seated there with an oath, and hears God uttering the salutation, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." In these various ways the Spirit delights in Christ. Then, in chap. 9., we see Him looked at in the heavens as the Bestower of the eternal inheritance, having first obtained eternal redemption. In chap. 10. we see Him seated there in another character, with this voice saluting Him, " Sit thou on my right hand, till I make Thy foes Thy footstool" Have you ever in spirit followed Christ up to heaven, and heard these voices addressing Him? We want to give personality to the truth. We are terribly apt to deal with it as mere dogma. I dread having it before me as a thing I could intellectually learn. In this epistle, it is the person that is kept before you; it is a living one you have to do with. These are heavenly realities. Moses pitched a temple in the wilderness. Solomon pitched a temple in the land; God has pitched a temple in heaven. And oh, how it shows what an interest God has in the sinner, when for our priest He has built a sanctuary, and that because He is our priest, and about to transact our interests. Then, in chap. 12., when He had ascended, He was

received and seated in heaven as the Author and Finisher of faith.

That is the second line, and we see how it hangs on the first. The Spirit, having fixed Christ before us, displays Him to us.

The third thing we get in this epistle is perfection. If I get Christ perfect a Savior, I get myself perfect as saved. If I am not saved, Christ is not a Savior. I am not speaking now of a feeble mind struggling with legality, but of my title and I have no more doubt that I have a right to look on myself as a saved sinner, than that Christ has a right to look on Himself as a perfect Savior. Salvation is a relative thing. If I take myself as a sinner to Christ, and doubt that I am saved, I must have some doubt of the perfection of His Savior-character. But we have already looked at the epistle as a treatise on perfection. It became God to give me none less than a perfect Savior. Wondrous! He has linked His glory with the perfection of my conscience before Him! He has condescended to let me know that it became Him! Does it become you to come and serve me in some capacity? You might do it through kindness, but I should not think of saying so. Yet that is the language God uses.

So then, in the third place, we find the epistle a treatise on perfection. Not, however, the perfection of millennial days.

Christ will be the repairer of every breach. But the greatest breach of all was in the-conscience of the sinner. There is mischief and confusion abroad in creation still. There is mischief abroad in the house of Israel. Christ has not yet set to His hand to repair that. There is a breach in the throne of David-Christ has not yet applied Himself to heal that. But the mightiest breach of all was between you and God. By and by He will turn the groans of creation into the praises of creation; but He has begun His character as a repairer, by applying Himself to repair the breach that separated you from God; and now we have boldness to enter into the holiest.

And then, in the fourth place, we find in this epistle the Spirit doing nothing less now than building a temple for praise. Is He about to tack up the vail again, which the blood of the Lamb of God has torn in two? Is He going to revive the things that He has indignantly talked of as "beggarly elements"? Unspeakably glorious is this fourth and last thing. The Spirit of God has built a temple for you to praise Him ' the fruit of your lips giving thanks to His name. What have we not in this epistle! Though we may look on each line of thought independently, yet they do lend to each other exquisite and increased glory. The Spirit is, as it were, making a whip of small cords, and telling all to be gone, to make room for Jesus. Of course I know they were willing to go. John the Baptist uttered the voices of them all, when he said, "He that bath the bride is the Bridegroom: but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." Moses, Aaron, angels, all were delighted to be put out of the house for Christ.

These things are combinedly serving your soul by introducing you to deeper apprehensions of the Christ of God. What a servant to our souls the Holy Ghost is in this dispensation!-as the Lord Jesus was a servant from the manger to Calvary.

I believe we each need individually to be fortified with truth. We do not know how far Romanizing and infidel errors may be getting ahead. If we have not the truth, we may be the sport of Satan to-morrow. I will give you an instance of it. The Galatians were an earnest, excited people (and I

do not quarrel with revival excitement); they would have plucked out their eyes for the apostle; but the day came, when he. had to begin afresh with them from the very beginning. " My little children, of whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you!" There was excitement without a foundation of truth; and, when mischief came in, the poor Galatians were next door to shipwreck-and this epistle is a witness to the same thing. The Hebrew saints were unskillful in the word. But we must be fortified by truth. A state of quickening wants the strengthening of the truth of God.'

And now what shall we say 'I Oh the depth of the riches! Oh the height of the glory! the profoundness of the grace! the wonder of the wonders! God unfolding Himself in such a way that we may well cover our faces, while we trust Him in silence, and love Him with the deepest emotions of our souls! But some of us can surely say, " My leanness, my leanness!"

The Human Element in Inspiration

MY DEAR BROTHER,-As the question of inspiration has been so much before the minds of Christians, and indeed, of all men, in countries where Christianity is professed, and is a vital question for every soul, I would desire to notice one point in connection with it, because on it even those who are accounted orthodox have used very equivocal language. It is what is called the human element in it. That there is a human element is evident, for it is men who are inspired, men whose language and -whose minds have been used. I say whose minds have been used, for the apostle tells us of speaking with his understanding, but the expression is used to signify also the defects and errors to which man's mind is liable. Now this last means man's mind left to itself, that is, not inspired; a very different thing from inspiring man's mind. The reason I notice it is, that the human element is of infinite price to us, the very character of the grace shown to us and conferred on us. God's favor is (not only shown to man, but) in man. In the blessed Lord, the center and effectuator of all grace to us, this is evident, though this is much more than inspiration, for He is a person, the Word made flesh, yet it characterizes all God's ways with us. It is what is divine in man. It has a human element, birth, hunger, thirst, sorrow, suffering, his compassion moved by what he saw, growth in wisdom. and stature, dependence in prayer, obedience, temptation (sin apart), and when He had given Himself up to it, death; for which, indeed, he had expressly become a man, and though now in glory, yet the human element is there also. The Son of Man is at the right hand Of God, and when we are in that blessed place He will gird Himself and make us to sit down to meat, and come forth and serve us, and this last, though surely a figure, yet is a figure of that blessed love in which He took upon Him the form of a servant and became a man, and continues to exercise now, as man who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and which he will then exercise as man to minister in perfect and devoted tenderness, At to win and fix man's heart-divine love, where we can fully know its value in the service of that love; for love delights to serve, and He has become a man so to exercise it. It is His glory surely; what shows the infiniteness of divine love where angels desire to look into it; but it is, blessed be God, and therein infinite and blessed, in a human element. God shows in the ages to come the exceeding riches of His grace, in his kindness towards us by Christ Jesus. The very character given to this grace is φιλάνθρωπια. So, when He was born, the unenvious angels celebrate glory to God in the Highest, in (εὐδοκία ἐν ἑθροποις) good pleasure in men. It is for us a blessed, as it is a glorious theme. Now, though this was different from all else (for it is the Incarnate Word), yet it characterizes all God's ways with men. Inspiration, that is, the Spirit of Christ acting in the limited manifestation, of God's mind in whatever degree in 'a man, has this character, and it is its peculiar value. It was given in various ways, as well as at divers times, dealing with man and unfolding the things of man historically in relation to God, and in moral testimony, so that we might have God's mind about them, either according to the light which man possessed, so as to be thereby responsible, or revelations of God's own mind and judgment, so as to teach, which last was only fully revealed in Christ, who spoke what He was in His own perfection, and was what he spoke, God manifest in flesh, the Word made flesh and dwelling amongst us, The revelation of the New Testament is different in character, because it has taken man out of the earth and up to heaven,

and hence its proper revelations (I mean, after Christ's death) are the bringing in of present heavenly relations and character into earthly things. Hence, save prophecies, which are not proper to it, it is the man in heaven in all the details of life on earth—more intimate, more familiar, more present and practical. The Christian is the epistle of Christ; hence has to be formed by the word of revelation into His image, and then guided in the manifestation of it. It is evident how fully here there is a human element, not only in our realization of Christianity, but in the revelation of it; but it is the human element taken possession of by God. Divine power, and what, if the use of the word were not liable to be abused, might fairly be called inspiration, works in every one who is blessed in the use of a gift, and in all spiritual wisdom, that is, God acts and forms the judgment, and the agent is only so far blessed as this is the case. But this Scripture carefully distinguishes from inspiration in the sense we now use it in, viz.—communications having a divine authority over the soul, because given by God himself. An inspired man may say, "I have received mercy of the Lord to be found faithful." "I think also, that I have the spirit of God," and add, "the married I command, not I, but the Lord; to the rest speak I, not the Lord." Thus the apostle carefully distinguishes the sound and godly wisdom which he had, experimentally by the Spirit, the action of the Holy Ghost in his own mind morally, from what he had from the Lord himself, so as to give it as His command. This has been stupidly alleged as showing all was not inspired, since part was distinguished as spiritual experience. But this is a mistake as to the whole nature of inspiration, and leads me to some notice of this. The truth of inspiration is not that all that is stated or recorded as done or spoken was inspired; we have the devil's words, and wicked men's words, and holy but failing men's words, but in such cases the writer was inspired to give us these things as he has given them. O God has, knowing our liability to be misled as to inspiration, inspired Paul to record the difference between the highest spiritual wisdom and apprehension, and inspiration. There cannot be on this point a more important inspired testimony. It decides the question recently raised, and judges, the error into which presumptuous men have fallen. The operation of the Spirit forming and leading men's minds is not inspiration

in the proper sense of the word. Now, the forms and bearings of inspiration are various, though the source and the authority be one, because there is a human element. God's works have to be revealed, and they are so by a simple and blessed statement of them, such as nothing but inspiration could give. Man's failure and sin has to be traced and brought to light in its origin and its development. For this latter, God's ways had to be revealed; but this had a double character, the history of the facts in connection with which these ways were manifested, and the dealings of God in which they were expressed. Thus we have the history of Abraham; but to get his place I must have the judgment of man at Babel after the flood, and the formation of nations and languages, out of which he is called by God's glory. Then promise, calling, separation from the world, come out to view as a root principle. But was Abraham to be only a pillar to hang these principles on? No; he was a living man, who acted by faith as called out, and trusted in God as to the promises. God reveals Himself in both these ways. He is the Almighty (Shaddai) for the present path of faith, but the revealer of the promises, so as to open the wide history of His purposes as to Israel, and His grace for all nations. Man, let me say, would have been perfectly incapable of connecting these things in one history of a man, yet so as they bear in principle of walk and purpose on the whole present history of the world, Jew and Gentile, and how those who look to God are blessed with believing Abraham. But in all this there is a human element, because the thing to be taught is God's relationship with man; how they subsist on His part, how they subsist on man's part.

Promise is God's, but is it not for man connected with man, with human state and hopes, even if these go on to heaven, still more clearly if they are on earth. Faith, though of and in God, yet is in man, may be exercised and shine brightly and perfectly, or may fail, so that man is shown. Now all this is the revelation. It traces an ordinary, or it may be an extraordinary, history, in which all this (and far more than this) is brought out. But who could 'do this so as to instruct us in all these ways of God, whose full import is only brought to light in the New Testament where the true light shines-save God, who knows what he meant to teach -us, and what to teach us by? Could Moses, or as these besotted rationalists would tell us, some fraudulent impostors in Josiah's reign, have known all that would serve as a principle for all ages, and a root and foreshadowing of purpose not even yet all fully brought out? Yet Moses must give the history as a series of facts that then happened, useful to Israel at the time, needful to their understanding their place before God, and a ground of confidence in Him, clothe it in apprehensions and feelings which should do this, and as entering in heart into it and using it this way himself. That is, the human element is found in the revelation, is essential to it, if it is to act in, on, and by the heart of man; but it is God's taking possession of it, and using it for the purposes of his own grace, and these cannot be greater, save the perfection of it all in Christ. Must not faith have 'a human element in it? Now all communications of the word are not faith, though implicitly in them; but in a very large part, the historical part, it is in many things the exercise and expression of faith, or it would have no value. It is impossible to separate it from the revelation. When we read (Ex. 32) "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy, servants," is it not a revelation? It is the turning point of the whole matter, casting God, so to speak, on promise, and not on judgment, by the blessed faith and true-heartedness of His servant; a principle on which all human hope hangs, on which Galatians is founded, yea, on which our hope of heaven itself is founded: yet is there not a human element? Is it not Moses' faith and grace, and blessed self-denying devotedness to God's glory and His people's blessing? Am not I divinely taught by it how grace works in a man withal? Yet if I have it not from God, of what account is it? Nay, the very fact of all this being a history, the part where man seems to enter most specially, requires that it should be inspired of God, that it may have the elements which will divinely instruct me. The very value of it is, that I have divinely given instruction in the scene and sphere of man. And, take

the other side-if I am to learn what man is truly, and what God's ways of dealing with him are, is it to be only in dogmas settled in council, as dry and inoperative as the great Sahara? Or am I to get them where all passes among living men with the living God? God has in His wisdom chosen the latter, but then I must get it truly, the faults, failures, shortcomings, sins, mixed actions, and motives, in short, what man is as he is before God and with God, to learn by. I must have the facts really, but according to the mind of God, or I shall not learn that mind by them at all-the evil as it came, as it was pardoned, was judged, bore fruit of sorrow afterward, and the like. I may be told, You are confounding what we just distinguished, the record and the thing recorded. No. Here the record, though not always, for we have God's words in the thing recorded, is the revelation in a large part of it; the word is perfect, and must be to be of any use; but there-is more than that. The things pass according to and make a part of man's then relationship with God; praise, for example, say at the Red Sea. Had Moses and Israel praised then according to our heavenly notions now, all would have been out of place; they praise according to their then state. All this is revealed as history in the same spirit. It is not a commentary on it, but a history of it. There is the human element; yet that is the very means of my getting the Divine instruction, both as to principles and

as a foreshadowed future (for they happened to them for types, and are written for our instruction on whom the ends of the world are come) and as to God's patient gracious, dealings with man, on from the beginning, when he had fallen. If I find promise precede law, yet law came in to raise the question of righteousness; and then, man being fully convinced of sin, He who was the object of promise became our righteousness in a Divine way. I get a taking up the history in a Divine way for eternal principles of truth; but I get besides, in the history, an instruction as to what man is under God's dealings, acting on my heart and conscience as it never could have done, had the human element not been there. It is the whole value of the history and its revelation. But take away the divine use of the human element and all is lost, and worse; for I have a history to teach me erroneously. Let us remember the simple principle, that God's entering into man and using the human element for his service is just the opposite to His leaving a man to his own thoughts and mental appreciations, which is what is meant by the human element when unbelief talks of it; and the history is not only man's history, but a man's history of it. But it is man's history so as to bring out fully what he is with God, and under God's dealings, so as to teach all men by it and in all ages, and foreshadow things to come; and hence a divinely given history of it all, yet with the historian entering into it all as a living history in which the people and himself were interested, or it would not have been reality then, nor now. I speak of facts, I read it, see Moses in a large part of it acting, feeling, thinking, speaking, praising; nor can I separate, nor do I desire to separate, the account given from the reality of the thoughts and feelings of him who recounts it. Nor if it be Abraham and other history, is there any real difference, though the proof be less apparent, for in both it is the Holy Ghost recounting by man what passed in and with man. Only, when of other persons, the interest of Moses or the sacred historian in them less evident; but I believe Moses' heart and interest went with Abraham's history as much as with his own, as much as when he said, "Ye have been rebellious against the Lord since the day that I knew you."

Hence we have in the history by various persons, the distinct succession of all the ways and dealings of God from one mind, ascertained from a history in which the individual writers had, for the most part could have, no knowledge of the whole scheme itself. Innocence, man without law and lawless, promise coming in as a thing apart, man under law, under priesthood, obedient royalty with law, sovereign unlimited royalty over the world, prophets to recall to law and to foretell the coming one and judgments, and at last the seed of promise, grace in the world-this is history, history as it appears in fact in Scripture, yet principles of dealing with man which test him morally in every way, and bring out the whole state in which he is, in which I am, before God, yet the connection of one part with another no one of the writers could have had in his mind, or does not refer to. All is man; but all is man brought out by God's dealings, and the record given of it by man, as interested in it as the history of his own people; or what led to it from the creation onward, but as the people beloved of God in whom God displayed His ways, and as a whole of which no one man was author-a Divine exhibition of what man was, and God's ways with him.

This leads me to another remark, that to understand such a revelation the purpose of God must be known. The Holy Ghost must act in us to enable us to understand these things. Here He works in connection with the moral state of man, and we have degrees of spiritual apprehension. Where Scripture was given or used by scriptural writers, there I get the divine account I have to understand. Nor should I trouble myself with it as divine instruction if it be not so; perfectly given to be an object adequate to afford God's mind and ways, prophetic declarations and Christian

absolute truth furnishing a key to it all. " The Holy Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." Divine light is needed, as every Christian knows, in us, in order to understand them (see Luke 24:45, and 1 Cor. 2:14) (passages on which I might insist, were I speaking generally on inspiration; my object is now the human element). This purpose is constantly overlooked-we are liable to mistake in it; for this is a question of spiritual understanding, and depends directly on our moral state. Such as are meek, them shall he guide in judgment. God hides these things from wise and prudent, and reveals them to babes, Thus in a celebrated infidel attack on Scripture, the question raised was as to the historical character of the Pentateuch. Now Genesis is historical-that is, it so far takes the facts of history as are sufficient to establish all the great principles of God's government of the world, and His purposes concerning it,. taking Abraham's seed as a center. - So the beginning of Exodus is historical, but to give us the great principle of a divine redemption with its effects (unknown till then) of God's dwelling' with men and of holiness to God.. After that the great body of it is not historical at all. We gather elsewhere that the ordinances of God were neglected. No child was circumcised. They took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of their god Remphan. No doubt some pious ones may have kept them, but neither is this recorded. It was not the object. After their reaching Sinai, what is given is the pattern of things shown on the Mount; just as true and important if not a sacrifice had ever been offered, Even if we take the history, only such facts are taken as happened to them for types, and are written for instruction. That is, the object was not to give a detailed history of Israel, but to give significant facts for our instruction. I say facts, but in no adequate account of them to bind them historically together, but perfect for the purpose they were meant for: to teach us God's ways with His people; their ways with Him, their difficulties and dangers; His patience and His goodness. I do not doubt, I need not say, that Israel passed through the Red Sea; that God gave them the manna, that the Ark of the Covenant was made. But what is the importance of these facts to me. The consequence is that we have not facts out of which a whole connected history can be made; though all needed for the then connection of the people with God, and their responsibility in after ages, is clearly and fully given. But we have a perfect store of divine instruction in every respect to which the history can be scripturally applied. Deuteronomy is a quite distinct revelation, declared to be so; a covenant made in the plains of Moab besides the covenant made in Horeb (Deut. 28:63) It is not a history save some small portions of it laying aground for others-but exhortations and directions for the future, for the time of judges and priests, when Israel had already departed from God, going on to the case of asking for a-King. This distinct Covenant was founded, no doubt, on the relationship with God formed under the Sinaitic covenant, but formally supposes; the people to have- been unfaithful, and provides, in mercy, practical directions for this state, and predicts the issue in judgment and sovereign grace.

I dwell: less on prophecy proper than on history, because the human element is less apparent when it is " thus saith the Lord 1" or " the word of the Lord came"; it is a formal utterance. Yet even here it cannot be doubted that He who spake by the prophets formed the vessel also, only He possessed it. Holy men of old spake as they were moved (φερομενοι) by the Holy Ghost. When Isaiah says: " Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence," who doubts that the heart of Isaiah was engaged, and that heart in its feelings was the elevated earnest one which sought God's glory and identified it with the people which God had formed for the service to which He called him. But God working. in the prophet wrought the testimony of earnest desire, as proper to move as warnings or prophetic

announcements were to awaken the conscience or sustain faith. So when Jeremiah, in the midst of overwhelming sorrows, and hopeless wickedness, cries, " Woe is me that my mother has borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth:" or uses several other such expressions, who doubts there is a human element, a broken and sorrowful heart. When he expresses the difficulty between his righteous judgment of evil and love to the people because they were God's people, and has the answer of God as to the exactly right feeling and path, a true heart finds more perfect divine instruction in it for his own heart, wrought in by analogous feelings, than if it was a mere dry declaration of truth; and much more God's divine interest in the feelings wrought in his heart, and his own association with God's interests and glory in His people in the earth. But that is by the human element: but by God's drawing it fully out in its place, and expressing it in a divine way, with His own reply. Thus far for the prophets, we have distinctly the divine use of the human element. I turn to the New Testament.

Here we have it partly less, partly a great deal more, and this in a way exceedingly beautiful. In the Gospels we have the Word made flesh, and as has been often noticed, the divers characters of Christ, Messiah; Immanuel, the servant, prophet, the Son of Man, Second Adam in grace, after a lovely scene of the remnant in Israel; and lastly, not Jesus in Galilee with the poor of the flock, or His heart reaching out in grace to Gentiles, but the love of God in Judea in the midst of a rejected and reprobate race bringing in a new and divine thing into the earth, personally, or by a given Comforter. Here the subject is, God manifest in flesh; and, of course, the human element is, so to speak, everything where His divinity is known. But the subject is absorbing-doubts, ignorance, enmity, in those surrounding Him we have, but the object absorbs everything; and, unless at the utmost one or two expressions in John, I am not aware of a trace of the human element in the recital, The subject was everything, no epithet, no " blessed Jesus," " beloved Jesus. The subject was too high, too holy, for the Holy Ghost in recording it by man's pen, to bring in man's feelings. He was the model and perfection of what was divine in man in the circumstances where we are; and needed no other human expressions to know how God met man in them. He was it. There is to me great perfection and loveliness in this. It sets a halo round the person of Jesus which no expression could have reached. Such would have spoiled it, been an intrusion on the heart; we want only that which moves it, not the movings of others about it. Besides, as I have said, it could not be; because the whole perfection of God meeting man was in His person.

Now in the Acts we find the human element again, and it is in its place, but calls for no particular notice; but in the Epistles it overflows. It is the expression of that particular character of privilege and grace in which the love and spirit of God works in us towards others; the unfolding and description of God's work in us, brought out by the gift operating in the body. Christ had received gifts in man (■■■■■) and for him. It was introducing man into heavenly places where Christ had gone, and conformity to this wrought in him by the Holy Ghost, and unfolded by them in whom it had been first wrought that they might communicate, as the Lord himself expresses it. " He that is athirst let him come unto me and drink," this is the man's own soul. But then " out of his belly," his inmost affections, " shall flow rivers of living water. ' Now this He spake of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter to be given after His ascension; yet in one who had drunk of Christ and out of whose inmost affection the divine testimony flowed forth. Yet there were cases where the human element was wholly inoperative. A man spoke with a tongue and spoke mysteries (which others could enjoy if they knew the tongue), and did not know what he said himself, though he knew the Spirit was

working in him, connecting his soul with divine things in God; but his understanding was unfruitful, and if he spoke with his understanding, it was also a revelation to himself; and then, if an inspired instrument of communication to others, he spoke in words which the Holy Ghost taught, communicating things given by the Spirit, by words given by the Spirit too (πνευματικά πνευματικαίς.) What characterizes then the Epistles especially is the human element. The privilege of loving with divine love, enduring all things for the elects' sake that they might obtain the salvation 'which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory; and, as Christ's life was to pervade and be expressed in all the circumstances of human life, that love and life in the inspired ones entered with the perfect wisdom of the Holy Ghost into them all, but expressed Christ's mind as to it as the Holy Ghost led them. to express it, that it might be divine wisdom, and directly from God, though in, and by, a man. It was in this sense different. from 'Old Testament inspiration in that the man, the Lord, the head of all was gone on high and had received gifts for men, members of His body. Of old, men might say, Who bath known the mind of the Lord?- but, inspired by Him, give such an utterance of a part of His counsels as He was pleased to communicate, or write a history, as perfectly led of Him, the bearing of which, or its part in completing the whole, they were ignorant of, only when, we see what is in the whole, thereby proving it divine; and prophets might search out their own prophecies to understand them; but the Apostle may say: " But we have the mind of Christ." No doubt they could only give what was given, but they gave it as what they had, as His mind who was the wisdom of God. Inferior utterances, without fruit to the speaker's understanding, there might be, proving all was of God; but the proper inspiration of the New Testament to the Apostles in their service was the perfect communication of the mind of Christ to them, and the perfect communication of it by them in the words given by the Holy Ghost who had revealed it. It was received intelligently by the same Spirit. But this mind of Christ took up man into all the glory and all the counsels of which He is the center before the Father; but it descended, because He had become our life, into the conduct of a slave to his master, and a master to his slave, and to the babes who were not counted unworthy of the grace and guidance of Him whose arms had once embraced them. Nothing is too small for a person to be a Christian in,-nothing, consequently, for the Spirit of Christ to guide us in. Nothing, blessed be God, too high for them, who are united to Christ, and one day to be like. Him,-though lowliness alone can embrace them, " The Spirit searcheth all things, the deep things of God."

I am aware how imperfect a sketch I have given, of even the part of this subject which was before my mind. My object was not to prove inspiration. I sought only to speak of what is called the human element in inspiration; that we might fully give its precious place to that, and the simple not be deceived by even learned or orthodox unbelief, as if God's using man, his lips, or his understanding, his mind in every way, meant the same as leaving him to himself, and me to his folly, so that what God did give should be uncertain as inseparably mixed up with what is man's Every Scripture (and the New Testament comes under that title) is given by inspiration of God. Every prophecy of Scripture, for Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The New too, for what the Holy Ghost revealed, was communicated in words which the Holy Ghost. taught. It is to Scripture we are referred by the Apostle in the dangers of the last days.

As regards the human element in inspiration, of which I have written, especially in the New Testament, we have one or two passages which express it clearly. The Old Testament gave a testimony to Christ besides the historical bases of the whole matter in the history of man and

God's people. He was the subject and object of their testimony; but Christ's, and, through grace, our proper testimony is different. The testimony was the expression of the thing in Himself; so ours, though imperfect, the life of Jesus manifested in our mortal bodies, the epistle of Christ written by the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of the heart. Now the New Testament inspiration partook of this (though there was also in tongues and prophecy, dictated utterances); that is, the full blessing of the thing was conveyed to the heart and understanding. How was St. Paul made an Apostle and even minister of the Church?-by the revelation of Christ in glory to him for his own conversion through grace. So he speaks. " When it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." So in 2 Cor. 4 " God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give (out) the light of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus Christ." So indeed in 1 Cor. 2:12-14. They had received the Spirit to know. Only, when it was to be for divine communication also, they, spoke it in words taught of the Holy Ghost. And this is the instruction of the Lord Himself on the subject. " If any man thirst let him come unto Me and drink; and, as the Scripture hath said, out of His belly shall flow rivers of living waters. But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him should receive." The streams which flowed forth for others were the fruit of what had been drunk for self. This is

true of all so ministering; only, as we have seen, for, what is properly called inspiration the WORDS were given by the Holy Ghost also.

The very nature of Christianity is God manifest in the flesh, entering personally into all our sorrows, temptations and trials; manifesting God's perfect goodness in them; and then, through redemption, raising man to the elevation of which Christ's person and work were worthy in glorifying God, the divine glory, likeness to Christ as He is, gone in, in virtue of it, to heaven. And such is the character of inspiration, or work of the Holy Ghost as to the revelation of, it; and indeed necessarily must be. That is, it enters into the whole place and circumstances of man, reveals the glory into which he is to be brought, God glorified perfectly in Christ being the holy and eternal ground, and the Lord's sympathy with him in all his circumstances. Hence nothing is too great for man-still man, for he is brought into the glory of God, like Christ the Son-and in righteousness and partaker of the divine nature; nothing too little for God, because He is entered into the sympathy of love with all that man is, and introduces divine life itself into every detail,-words,-what? the tone of a man's voice, counts the hairs of his head. It will enter into the case of a runaway slave and his master, of the health of the children of an elect lady. It will take up everything in

which divine life can exercise itself and give a tone to our ways, children and parents, masters and slaves.

And there is nothing in which divine life does not skew itself. It is the blessed truth that, first in person, then in inspired doctrine and the life of Christ in us, God is entered into everything in which the heart of man is engaged. I find God and God in grace, where the unhappy rationalist only finds a cloak.

Scenes down here lose their power on those who, led by the Spirit, have their hearts set, simply and fully, upon the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven. If you can bear unmoved to see me pained by another, you do not care much about pleasing me yourself.

Closing Chapters of John's Gospel

I SEND you a brief recapitulation of the purport of the latter chapters of John's Gospel, specially with a view to the entire transfer of life and blessing to the heavenly state and new creation. We are associated with the heavenly man in God's presence, not of this earth at all. Lost and rejected of God in it, as those departed from God, and who, when His Son: in grace came into the world, as so departed from. God, rejected Him, He has given us a portion with Himself in heaven, according to the power of that eternal life which was given us in Him before the foundation of the world. Born, as we know we were, in a world of guilty sinners departed' from God, the blessed Lord has not only met our responsibility by bearing our sins on the cross, but has glorified His Father perfectly, and so obtained a place, as man, in a new and glorious place in the glory of God; but a Place which He had with Him before the world. To this we are called in virtue of the redemption which: He has accomplished, and in the power of the life which is in Him, that eternal life which was with the Father and has been manifested unto us, is now become our life. Thus, we are not of the world, as He is not of the world., The transition, after He had been fully manifested on. earth, and His rejection complete, from His earthly place to a wholly heavenly one, is what I would now trace in John's Gospel. Two collateral subjects complete this, the gift of the Holy Ghost while He is on high and we on earth; and a glimpse at the future dispensation, when the effect of His exaltation is manifested on earth.

In the eighth chapter, His word had been rejected. There He was A.m. In the ninth; His works, giving sight to the blind; but then, He being owned as the ' Sent One, His sheep are brought out of the fold by following Him, and the Gentiles brought into one flock with them. Here it is the revelation of the: Father and the Son, always the names of grace in 'John. He is now, thus rejected of men, owned' of God on earth; as Son of God by resurrection in chapter 11., and as Son of David and Son of Man in the 12th chapter. The two first were earthly titles, though the first connected with His person, according to Psalm where He is rejected as such, only God will make good the title; but the last brings us to the point which I am anxious to develop. The Greeks°- come up and desire to see Jesus. The Lord says " The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified," but adds, " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone; but if it die it brings forth much fruit;" and then He explains to His disciples, that they must follow in this path. But then they would be where He would be; and the Father would honor them. This, then, was the distinct transfer of Himself and His disciples, through death, to a heavenly dwelling, where the Father would honor those who had served the rejected Jesus. To this is then added the distinct definite rejection of the Jews. " Who bath believed our report? ' Their eyes were blinded. He had come to save; but His rejected words would judge in the last day; received, they had the words of the Father and of eternal life. In chap. 13. the transition to the heavenly state is formally brought forward. Jesus. was departing out of this world to the Father. He had come from God, was not of this world, and went to God, and all things were delivered into His hand of the Father. The. whole heavenly state connected with His person and perfectness. But they were in the world, treading its defilements, though washed (save Judas), by the Word. He so deals, keeping, notwithstanding all.

His glory, His place of servant, as to fit them for being with Him, instead of what could no longer be, nor ever be, as full blessing, His being with them. This is the glorious truth here brought out; a part with Him, where a Real Greeks, not Hellenists, Grecian Jews.

He was taking this blessed and heavenly place, being exalted as man, where He was with the Father before the world was: At present, indeed, they could not follow Him. Treachery, or weakness, was man's part in presence of His passage through death into the heavenly country. But a perfect foundation was laid for our being there, not simply in the removal of the guilt lying upon us in respect of the condition out of which we are called, as sinners born in and of this, world; but in perfectly glorifying God in that in which He did this, so as to enter, as man, into the. Glory with God, and that by this work which He did for us, not waiting for the kingdom, but straightway glorified. In chap. 14., He fully explains His going there to prepare a place for them, and how they would have the knowledge of their portion in it while down here. This brings in the sending of the Comforter. They were to believe in Him (Jesus), not see Him; so it was they knew God. He went to prepare a place for them in His Father's house. Now the Father had been fully revealed in His person; hence they knew where He was going, for He was going to the Father. That gave its true character to the heavenly house-their home. They knew the way, for in coming to Him they had come to the Father. He was the way. The life too in which they could enjoy it. They came to the Father by Him. That was where He was going and the way. This hung on his person, because He was in the Father and the Father in Him,-was to be revealed in Him. Love to one another and obedience to Him, let us add, were to characterize them instead of 'His presence. His person had revealed where He was going and the way. But, if He went away, the Father would send the Comforter in His name; and thus they would have the present consciousness of their heavenly portion in Him. They would know that He was in the Father,-His divine person in union with the Father; but, besides that, they were in Him and He in them. Thus they had already, when the Comforter came, a part in the heavenly place of the Son, and, knew it. They were by the Spirit in a place analogous to that which He held as man on earth, when He could say, "The Son of Man, who is in heaven." They sit in heavenly places in Him. He shows how they would enjoy it on earth by His coming and revealing Himself to the obedient; and His Father and He coming and making their abode in such a one. He left them this, His own peace. Having thus distinctly laid out before them the Christian's place and home in heaven, through what had been revealed in His person on earth, He breaks up from earthly society and connection, and says to the twelve, "Arise; let us go hence." But there was more than the condemned world, in taking this heavenly place. There was the vine God. had brought out of Egypt. But nothing, was to be owned on the earth. As He had been in the world, and the world knew Him not, and He left it, rejected and condemned, to take a new place as man,-His own before the world was,---so He came to His own and His own received Him not. Israel, after the flesh, special and important as had been its place as regarded human responsibility in the world (for it had the measure of it in the law), yet was not the true vine. Man was simply responsible, and had failed. The second Adam was man in God's purpose of grace. Israel was called as a vine brought out of Egypt; but, after all, though it had a special place, because called,-it was not in flesh the true vine, with Messiah as its principal branch. Christ. Himself was the true Vine, those who followed Him the branches. If Isa. 49 be referred to, an analogous substitution will be found. Israel is the servant in whom Jehovah is to be glorified,-whom He had formed from the womb to be His servant. If so Christ had labored in vain, then He becomes the servant, and preserving the remnant of Jacob is God's salvation to the ends of the

earth. Christ Himself, then, is the true Vine, the disciples were the branches,- and at this moment (for Judas was gone out),. all clean. Professing Christians have an analogous place to this. Literally, it refers to what there was in Israel. It will be remarked, that there are two distinct teachings here, the general-statement in verses 1, 2; then 3-5 apply to the disciples; Judas being gone, verse 6 is a general statement by itself; verse 7 begins again with the disciples.

The first thing was abiding in Christ. In verse 7 is added, " and my words abide in you." In verse 9, it is abiding in His love which is spoken of The world will hate them, for the old vine is wholly left aside here; they have now no cloak for their sin; they have seen and hated both Him and His Father. Thus Israel is disposed of, and Christ is the true Vine. Note that this has nothing to do with union with Christ as the Church. That is a heavenly union. We are perfect in Him. There is no pruning there, no more than cutting off; no fruit bearing looked for. Vines are planted on earth, not in heaven. Christ on earth is the true Vine of God, not Israel. " Now ye are clean" should be, " already ye are clean." When the Comforter was come (this introduces the heavenly part, even as 15. 1-25 was the earthly). He would testify of Christ as gone to the Father.; while the disciples (as aided. and made capable, by Him according to chap. 26), 'would bear testimony to the earthly part of Christ's-history. But the Comforter, though. earth, would bear witness of a Christ rejected here and gone to the Father, and a convicted and judged world; This chap. 16. fully. details. On earth, the disciples were to be rejected and persecuted, for Christ was going away, to Him that sent Him. But it was expedient for them He should go away, for the Comforter would come if He did. The world, as such, the whole world, without respect to particular details of sin, which yet remained true for the day of judgment, would be convicted of sin as not believing in Christ: The presence of the Holy Ghost would demonstrate their sin, because they had not believed in Him; demonstrate righteousness, not in any human ground of man's fulfilling his duty, but in this that the Father took Christ to His right hand and the world, who had rejected Him, saw him no more. Thus the world, as growing up since Adam's fall, was finally rejected, and righteousness known only in heaven. Righteousness; as recognizing what was good, was only in the Father setting Christ' at His right hand, in judgment, in that the world, which had rejected Him, saw Him no more. The judgment of the world was not arrived, but the proof of it was given in the judgment of its prince; for it was demonstrated that he who led it all was the adversary of the Lord. This world had Satan for its prince. Its prince was the Lord's adversary, and led it to reject and put Him to death. The presence and power of the Spirit made manifest this, though judgment was not executed on the world. On the other hand, the same Spirit would guide them into truth and glorify Christ, into whose hands, all that the Father had was now put. The world would rejoice for a little season at getting rid of Him, but the disciples would see him again in the new resurrection-state, and their sorrow be turned into joy. The Father Himself loved them, and they were to ask the Father in His name. They would have tribulation in the world, but He had overcome it. Even they, as of the world, would desert him; but the Father, now seen to be the opposite of the world, was with Him. Chapter 17 then brings out the whole condition and state of the disciples, through this glorifying of Christ, as regards the Father, and as regards the world. The Son was to be glorified, to glorify the Father thence. The knowledge of the Father and Jesus. Christ, as sent of the Father, was eternal life. Most: High was supremacy,' not eternal life: Almighty-- securing power, not life; Jehovah-faithful promises' made. good by Him who is, and was, and is to come, but not eternal life; but the Father sending the Son-was grace giving eternal life. That name only bore it in it. The others dealt with the world in divine title and goodness. This revealed and brought eternal life as before and not of the world,

though sent into it in grace, and now was glorified out of it; Christ giving. eternal life to those the Father had given him. The work His Father had given him to- do was finished, He had glorified the Father on the earth, and now was to; be glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the earth was. His Sonship glory. He' had manifested His Father's name to the men whom the Father had given to Him. They had- kept the Father's word, held to. Christ,- not gone with the world; and Christ had put them in full 'relation with the Father as he was as a man down here. Now He came to the Father leaving them in the world to, be kept by the name in which He knew the Father, and in which He had kept them. They were not of the world as He was not; and He had set Himself apart as the glorified man on high that they might be formed. into His heavenly image by the testimony of the truth revealing it. For this and He Himself were the truth. But this went further, for Christ (according to the title, which He had as having glorified the Father) wills to have them with Him where He is, and see His glory-loved as He Was before the foundation of the world. As a present thing, both then and now, He had declared, and does declare the Father's name, that the love wherewith the Father had loved them might be in us, and He in us that we might enjoy it. Thus the person of the Son, His work to bring us into His own place of glory, the love the Father had to Him before even the world existed; His going out of the world up to the Father-all are brought in, to give us a place with Him before the Father in glory, according to the love He was loved with before the world even existed. As to the world itself, now it did exist; having rejected Him, it would hate them as having His testimony, the Father's word; and as being not of it as Christ was not. Thus, the whole condition of Christians, as associated with Christ gone to the Father, and not of the world as He was not, is set forth. Christ appealing to the righteousness of the Father in that the world had not known Him; He had, and the disciples had known Himself, as sent of the Father. This closed the unfolding of the transfer of Christ; and the recognition of Christ from earth to heaven. The history of His sufferings follows. I have only to notice, as to this, two points: one, that He is in the excellency of His person as Son, not in His weakness as man; and the other, that the Jews stand in relief as evil; judged and put aside in every way. There is no agony in Gethsemane, but 'they go backward and fall to the ground when He freely puts. Himself forward, and that to save His disciples. There is no "My God, my God! why halt Thou forsaken me?" but He delivers up His own Spirit to His Father. His answers are full of dignity

and conscious title to command, though perfectly submissive. In His death He is with the rich. In the twentieth chapter we have the whole present dealings of God up to, and inclusive of, the calling of the remnant of the Jews to own Him on seeing Him in the last day. First, the remnant attached to Himself; delivered from the whole power of Satan; and, by that attachment, caring for nothing in the world but Him. The world was an empty sepulcher, and no more, without Him, but ignorant of the new state of resurrection and relationship with the Father, and God glorified by redemption. The 'return to take corporal possession of the kingdom is set aside, and Mary, knowing Him as risen, was to tell the disciples that He ascended to His Father and their Father, His God and their God. They were placed by redemption in that same relationship with Him as Him-. self was in-His brethren. This gathered them, and Jesus is in their midst speaking peace-for He had made it. Then, according to peace, He sends them to carry remission of sins, giving them competency in life by the power of the Holy Ghost, connecting them with Himself in resurrection. This is the present mission as received. by the Apostles. Thomas believes on. seeing, representing the Jews in the last day, and does not, in that character, receive the mission: but peace made is the starting point here also; for God cannot have to say to any now at all accepted,

but on this ground; and Thomas owns Christ as His Lord and God, as the remnant then will. After this, the great millennial indraft takes place; and Christ again takes a place at table with His disciples, but mysteriously "new with them." The net does not now break; there is no separating good fishes. Christ has already, with Himself on shore, not thus brought in; in the bringing of which, the millennial testimony of revealed glory will have no part. The Lord then restores Peter, and confides to him his Jewish sheep, but shows him he will be rejected and cut off in the end. He will have the glory he once pretended to take by his own will and strength. John's ministry would reach over the falling Church, on to Christ's return. In all this it is looked at as on earth, the 'heavenly thing; believing, without seeing, we had had before. The actual counsels and ways of God as to that, we may seek in Paul, who knew Christ only in heaven. But Paul adds another truth specially trusted to Him, the union of the saints with Christ in one body. For him it is not transitions; it is a new creation, a mystery now first revealed.. The person of the Son and eternal life were revealed when Christ was on earth. And, though it was not the Son's relationship with the Father; with Him in heaven, a glorified man there, and in such a way that others could be with Him in it,-,yet, in the essence of it, the Father's name had been revealed, and if they were not yet in Him before His Father, the Father was revealed to them in Him. Paul looks at the saint as crucified with Christ. It is a new creation, a mystery never revealed at all. Still, we get the same truth, the Church is wholly heavenly, we are not alive in the world, but crucified to the world, and the world -to us. The promise of eternal life was given us in Christ Jesus before the world was. Such is Christianity: Christians now would make it the modification of this world from which Christ came to deliver us. Our part is to give, and to give it practically too, testimony that the Church, and the Christian, is wholly heavenly; that we are not of the world which rejected Christ, of which Satan is the prince, no more than Christ was of it. This is our capital testimony as Christians now. Let' it be manifested in not meddling, in it, in non-conformity to it; and, through grace, a distinct apprehension of our heavenly calling, and of the Church's place. I recapitulate briefly the chapters in-John.

Chapter 13 He gives them a place with Him (He dying to take the glory as Son of man).

Chap. my. He had 'manifested the Father on earth; now by the Comforter they would be in Him in heaven, and He and the Father reveal themselves to- them on earth. He breaks up from association even with the remnant on earth.

Chapter 15;16 He is the true Vine; not Israel, even then on earth; his disciples the branches, now, to bring forth fruit. The Spirit sent by Him from on high would reveal heavenly things and show the condemnation of the world as having rejected Him.

Chap. 17. The disciples are put in His place before the Father and before the world, and in the same place with Him on high.

chaps. 18., 19. He freely gives Himself as Son of God.

Chapter 20 The present course of blessing on the earth.

Chapter 21 A glimpse into the Millennium.

FRAGMENTS.

It is strange how man, in his inconsiderateness and narrow-mindedness, manages to ignore the Babel which Christendom now presents. Yet surely the Roman and Greek churches present no

visible unity. Nor are the Protestant churches. (so called) one with either of the above, or one among themselves. I remember a Hebrew being converted to Christianity, and being bewildered by all these differences when he had to choose a church for himself. How much more so would he have been if he had seen the Heavenly character and Divine presence of the Holy Ghost with the Pentecostal church, and the worldly character and worldly powers ruling in man's churches.

And so must Christendom continue, until the Lord sets it aside: having first 'taken out of it all those who were really in Spirit and by faith associated with Him. Till then, may they be true to Him in practical life here below; and they will find in Him, that the Unity and the Catholicity of the body of spiritual members exists, though the display of it as at first is impossible-yet may these things be recognized and acted upon by faith.

The visibility of a company gathered together in the Lord's name ("where two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst of them") in no wise interferes with the Unity and Catholicity of the body. The Unity and the Catholicity were in the Spirit. If the two or three 'walk, as under the Lord and with the Spirit present,-the Spirit of the Unity and the Catholicity of the body will be in and on them.

But there is also a Unity and a Catholicity in error, - springing from the observances of form and from living as men, and from earthly-mindedness and conformity to this world-from which such a little company will be free-for they will be heavenly-minded.

The Light of the Body

"The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light."-Matt. 6:22.

SCRIPTURE describes the believer as a partaker of the divine nature,--one Spirit with the Lord,-possessing Christ within, the hope of glory-a temple of the Holy Ghost, etc., etc. These expressions define that in which the very life of the saint consists, and exhibit the greatness of responsibility inseparable from its possession.

Again, the same authority declares that as Christ, in the days of His first manifestation, comforted, exhorted, warned, and watched over His disciples, so, after His departure to the Father, His place was to be supplied by the Holy Ghost, " bringing all things, whatsoever He had said, to remembrance, testifying of Him, glorifying Him by receiving of His and showing it unto them, and thus teaching all things, guiding into all truth, and showing things to come." Thus His brethren (who would otherwise have been as orphans) still have a (Paraclete or) Guardian. A right perception of the mode of the Spirit's operation is pre-eminently important, for as " we have the mind of Christ," so the necessities of that mind are met alone by the Spirit testifying of Jesus. That the Holy Ghost alone can meet the necessities of the mind of Christ in us, and that he does this by testifying NOT of Himself, BUT of the Lord Jesus, are truths ever to be remembered; for they are the only clue to permanency of joy, peace, and righteousness-the only solution of much (otherwise inexplicable) in the sorrows and difficulties of the saints. In the person of the Lord Jesus all the great subjects of faith, salvation, and hope are found; the moment the heart or the mind depart.. from Him, the Spirit's power as Paraclete is interfered with, and sorrow and trial consequently ensue.

The sum and substance of Christianity, regarded subjectively in the practice of the Church and its individual members, is, " We love Him because He first loved us "; the affections of the heart, and the thoughts of the mind (drawn upward by the amazing power of the Savior's love, through the Spirit,) now leading captive, in the service of the Lord, all the members of a body of sin and death, for the day of whose redemption we have still to wait. I would press the consideration of that which I cannot now stop to open,-the peculiar importance of practical obedience in what may be called " a world of visible manifestation," and the distinct tendency of the Spirit as well as the suitability of the subject-matters of faith to produce full and perfect obedience. Man's eye, indeed, takes cognizance only of outward service, but man is not the only spectator of the progress of truth: it is open to the mind of the Father and the Spirit-to the minds of angels and archangels -of Satan, principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in heavenly places: to the eyes also of Jesus (Lord of all) all things are naked and open, for He is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Whatever we may think concerning Enoch and Elijah and the saints who rose with Christ, the apprehensions of all the others mentioned are certainly much more clear and searching than those of any earthly spectator. Before them a fall is marked, not by external offense so soon as by departure within from the principles and stream of

life. So, as to himself, should it be with each believer. The tendency of every such departure of the heart or the mind is unquestionably toward separation from God: the only remedy (for in our own selves there is none) is in the constant interference of redeeming love, restoring and maintaining connection with the fountain head of life and strength. The most obvious means of this is the indwelling of the Spirit, whose union with the Father and the Son being one of essence, not of characteristic correspondence alone, cannot be broken, but by innate power ever labors to bring everything (even the high and lofty thoughts which oppose themselves and the wandering affections) into subjection to the cross. Let us be humbled for our frequent folly, while we adore the faithfulness and love which will keep that which we have committed unto Him even until the end.

Again, whilst the unvarying occupation of the Spirit in the Church is with Christ alone, His manifestations as to the mind itself vary according to its necessities. In every service and action two things are needed; 1st, the supply of right motives and proper purposes, which, though many, are in themselves uniform, fixed, and common to all action; and, 2dly, light as to the path of present service, which of course varies as the scene through which we travel shifts. The greatest motives or inducements, perhaps, though there are many others, are found in these words, "Reconciled by the blood," etc.; "The love of Christ constraineth us," etc., etc. The unchanging object or purpose is "the glory of the holy child Jesus." Time would fail to open these fully; let two remarks suffice: 1st, that as the rest of the mind of Christ in us is in love, so its constant tendency is the will of the Father in the glory of the holy child Jesus, whatsoever the part of truth considered or carried into action may be: and, 2dly, as the unchanging occupation of the Spirit is with Jesus (though the parts of truth connected with Him may vary according to the standing, faith, and service, of the individual believer), yet joy, peace, and strength, are greatly dependent upon our being occupied with that especial portion where, as to ourselves, the Spirit is opening and applying the truth to us; the heart in affection, and the mind in thought, travelling as to it with the glory of Christ. And thus every act of our life becomes at once an offering to God, and a means of faith being made perfect through works; for every duty and every relationship is thus brought into immediate connection with the person of Jesus.

Nature, which judges by results in man's day, and their accordance with feeling and self alone, can see nothing but bondage in all this; but faith triumphs in it, seeing, as a certain truth, that the measure of the real excellency and importance of everything depends upon its measure of connection with the will of God in Christ. No actions have any real glory, or will issue in blessedness, save those which are really, and in the thought of the doer also, connected with Christ. Apart from Him we walk in darkness, and have no light, even as to our own individual advantage.

* The Christian has three guides, the Spirit, a sound judgment, and affection; and universally the heart should be in subjection to the mind, and it to the Holy Ghost.

and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts AND INTENTS OF THE HEART. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do; (Heb. 4) But rather than rest here, I will proceed to consider the Lord as our example, embodying in His own conduct the principles whereon we are called to walk. May we all know more and more of the power of it! The strength of Jesus, Lord of all, in all His work, was "the glory of God" carried in a mind (accustomed indeed to rule all things, yet) come

into the place of service and obedience. "Lo! I come to do thy will, O my God." In fervency of desire after that glory, and in the assured, realized certainty of the Father's will as to the way in which it was to be accomplished, in what confidence of repose did he walk, though filled with the consciousness of weakness, (having emptied himself;) and. in the midst of apparent failure all around. Three things were, among others,- given Him to do: 1st, to disprove and retort the lies, libels, and slanders of Satan against His Father; 2ndly, to pour out in a rebellious world, the savor of His Father's unchangeable name of love; 3rdly, to make provision for a bride, chosen of the Father from before the foundation of the world. With what full confidence of purpose, though deep agony of soul, did He untie the Gordian knot which Satan had tied, preparing thongs therefrom to bind himwithal! What streams of light as to His Father's love towards the rebellious, did He pour into this dark, dark world! And, lastly, how devotedly did He act and how perseveringly has. He followed after the bride chosen Him by the Father the pearl of great price! His Father's choice for Him He approved, and set His whole heart and mind upon her. Assured that it was His Father's choice, that. one Bride He sought. He needed not a wife, but that, that very wife. For her and her alone, He would come into a far country, taking her up to carry her back to His Father's house. But how jealous at the same time does He seem lest she should rest in His love, as a thing separate from the Father's will. That Jesus came to reveal the Father, and to make us know that all the glory and privilege of Heaven itself the Father sent Him to open to us, is perhaps one of the most frequent of all assertions in the New Testament.

Now, if this be so, if the Church's repose as to the salvation which is in Christ, is in the will of the Father:-then surely, we are to be led by the Spirit in all things, and to do nothing save unto the Lord who loved us, and gave Himself for us.

* If the hairs of my head are all numbered, and not a sparrow falleth to the ground without my Father, I may ask in every matter, " What, Lord, wilt thou have me to do in this?" And how much perplexity and after anguish might thus be avoided: how many an after sorrow be spared us, in which we find ourselves occupied with ourselves, not with Christ and His glory, even in a modified form. Who knows the heart of man save Jehovah? It will not do, like Israel of old, in the case of the Gibeonites, for us to walk according to appearance, according to what seems to us best. If we have to stand a spectacle before the devils, angels, the saints, and the world as showing out in action that Christ and we are one,-what can guide us save the eye of God? " I will instruct the and teach thee in the way thou shalt go, I will guide thee with mine eyes." As grace to do this can come alone from God, so can He alone perfect it in us. Our hearts are in His hands, who works " in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure." Dependence, and obedience become us at all times.

here. When we act in the flesh, we act with haste. How many have thus forgotten this little clause, and smarted for it afterward. It would have been a door of escape, perhaps: but they neglected it, and have in consequence found themselves bound by a tie of their own to what, time shows will bring sorrow and weakness on them. The Lord alone can deliver such from the trap of their own folly: let them confess their sin, and look to Him if haply He will save them.

In conclusion, the wisdom of God is always discernible by the Spirit in the Church; it becomes young Christians, therefore, (even in the days of the Church apostacy) humbly to confer with Christian friends of sound judgment and prayerful spirit, previous to committing themselves to any new position; for if the matter be of the Lord, surely He will give to His saints near discernment to

perceive its wisdom and approve and bless the matter, for it is written: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them"; and, again, "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

P.S. Watch and pray, lest ye also enter into temptation.

THE SCRIPTURES.

We should more intensely press the Scriptures in on the soul. We should remember that all in us is to be Christ's; the heart, the conscience, and the understanding. The light and joy and beauty of the truth may be received at the doors; but the reality of the truth must be known in the soul, its dwelling-place. God looks for it, that our very selves be occupied with this truth. It addresses itself to us, in the deep full sense of us.-A Servant of the Bible.

I love the Father and the Son in personal presence anywhere better than their circumstances. Rather would I have Egypt's cruel bondage, with Christ for my comfort under it than all the brightest scenes in Canaan without Himself. It is Himself which is my joy, far above the glory. Will not every renewed heart say "Amen, and Amen!"?

Likeness and Image

I DO not know that I should trouble you with any remarks on the words "likeness" and "image," though evidently of importance, had I not found, in searching the Scriptures as to them, the opening out of a good deal of truth precious to my own soul. But I shall be very, brief, only suggesting matter for your readers' research into Scripture.

I pass by many words translated image and likeness, "temuna," which is more the bright revelation of God, Himself invisible or the attempt to reproduce it; "tavnith," "pesel," "semel," or others which speak of images, statues, etc., to speak of the words employed of man, "d'mooth," likeness; and "tzelem," image. First, I reject entirely the thought of righteousness and holiness of truth that is positively declared to be the new creation, and is not the old.

Christ and Adam are not the same.. Righteousness and holiness suppose the knowledge of good and evil, which it is absolutely certain by Scripture,. Adam before the fall had not. This point is not without importance as to what Our redemption involves. Is it a restoration to the state of the first Adam, or an introduction into the state of the second? Unquestionably the latter. "As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy; as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly: and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also of the heavenly"; conformed to the image of God's Son that He may be the firstborn among many brethren; blessed privilege. There is no return to the image of the first Adam, no loss of the knowledge of good and evil; but, conformity to, as partakers of the divine nature, which is above evil in holiness; the flesh down here remaining the same. You must alike exalt Adam above Scripture, and depreciate Christ, to make our conformity to the latter a return to the former. And this is pretty much what the professing Church has done.

This, then, God's likeness and image in Adam was not. But what was it? I reject Anthropomorphism; that is, its being in the form of his body. It is lowering God Himself, and even Adam's position, and is confusion only, though an early error; though it be true that as incarnate and anticipating manifestations, God took this form. That is a blessed mystery, but refutes the idea as to Adam. For it is incarnation,-and that the creation of Adam was not; though, doubtless, in view of it. What was then this likeness and image, and what the difference of the two. We are renewed in (into) knowledge after the image of Him that created us. This itself shows it was not Adam's. It is the ■ νεος, the wholly new man which is this. And it is a καινος ■νθρωπος a new kind of man, too.

Likeness is a simple word for all of us. It is being like. Image is somewhat different. An image represents, be it like or unlike. The image of Jupiter presents him to men. One like another has the same traits and features. Now Adam was like God, and he was his image. He was absolutely without evil. No sin, no evil, was, or could be, found in him. This was a capital point in the likeness, though it was not Holiness. In one sense more important, more intrinsic. Holiness is relative; it supposes evil, though being above and hating it. Absence of evil is in the nature itself. God is light; pure, besides revealing all else; but holy, not holiness. He cannot be what is relative; nor does His

being suppose evil, as holiness does. It is good, absolute purity; though that is an imperfect and relative word; but I shall be understood. Adam was very good, no evil or sin was there: But there was more: He was made the center of all affections and reverence in the sphere in which he was placed. No angel was made a center of any sphere. Man was made one, and amiable and good; loving in kindness surely (had he so remained) all around him: the center of that sphere of created good. And I mean now of a character which could be so; for his being so in fact was more his being the image of God. How gloriously this will be fulfilled in Christ in the whole creation, I need not say. He is the true image of the invisible God. - Adam was His image. But Adam was fit to be so, by his likeness to God--not to deal with evil, for that he had not to say to; nor would have had, had he not fallen; but pure, no evil of any kind in him, and good; a blessed happy center of happiness, looking down on all; fit to be looked up to by all. If Eve was created too, she was to be before him (kenegdo). But this runs into the image, and they are meant to run into one another. Adam stood there from God and to represent Him on the earth. He stood as such to all around and below him. Had he not been from, and for, and like, God, he would not have been fit to be his image on the earth. But he was, and so Christ will be in the highest and an infinite way in the whole creation. I think we shall find these meanings of likeness and image everywhere. The first point in God's mind was setting man in His image (Gen. 1:26). And this consequently is insisted on in ver. 27. He set him, to be like Him, to represent Him to their minds, before others; but it was also in making. him like Him. It was not like a stone-image, merely to recall, but not like; but to be before others as his image, being really like Him. Hence dominion also was given to him over the creation he was in. Hence, in Gen. 9, the grievousness of the fault of putting him to death was not that he was like God, for indeed he now was not at all like him, but that God had set him in this place. If I deface the king's image, the question is not if it be like him, but my defacing his image. In James 3:9, on the contrary, we bless God and curse what was made like him-what sense is there in that? It is not the evil come in, surely, we curse; but we curse what was made in God's likeness. On the other hand, we read 1 Cor. 11:7: " For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God ": holds thus his place and dignity where he is. "The woman is the glory of the man." Then Adam begets a son in his own likeness. Alas! yes; like him; the signs of what he was, upon him; not like the beasts that perish, surely, but fallen and sinful, and after his image, holding the public place in the world he did; its head no doubt, but fallen head. The image tends to make us suppose that of which it is the image to be like it.-See Acts 17:29; Psalms 1: 21. The likeness has there the simple force of the word; the image is the representing, to his glorifying before others, Him whose image we are. Now, if we look into Ephesians and Colossians, we shall find God holding a place in the one which Christ does in the other; and the former occupied with our likeness to God, the latter with His image, which Christ is perfectly.

Remark here, that Christ is never said to be like God, or the likeness of God, because He is God; but He is said to be the image of God, for He does represent and glorify Him, and He will be displayed in Him in the Millennial glory.

Thus, in the Ephesians, we are to be holy and without blame before Him in love. This is His likeness, and it is before Him, not for display. We are to be imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us, a sacrifice and an offering to God. So God is all; and we are in Christ, a man raised from the dead by God. And if He be in us, it is to be filled

unto all the fullness of God. We are to forgive as God in Christ has forgiven us. Hence when speaking of the new man, our having put off the old man, and put on the new, there is a difference in Ephesians and Colossians.

In Ephesians, "the truth in Jesus" is.... "and to have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of truth." The spirit of our mind is to be a wholly new one, one we had not before (νέος), and the καινός ■νθρωπος put on new in kind and nature. It is

created after God, like Him in righteousness and true holiness, what He is as knowing good and evil. Such is the new man as characterized in Ephesians. In Colossians, we have put on the new man, a new one (νέος) we had not before, which is renewed, new in character (καινός), after the image of Him that created us. Here Christ is in all; and the image, not the likeness, is brought out. No doubt it is like; still, what is made prominent is, the image, what is to represent and glorify God; and, as we have seen, Christ is all and in all. So it is forgiving one another, as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Hence, in the first chapter, we have Christ the image of the invisible God; and His place in creation, the firstborn of every creature. Yet, see how carefully His divine nature and title is guarded. Not only is He the creator; but all, the fullness was pleased to dwell in Him; and in Him, in fact, dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In the first chapter of Ephesians, you have "holy and without blame before Him in love," which is likeness to God in His presence. I do not go further here than to suggest these thoughts. That the second man, the Lord from heaven, is the true image of God, is clearly taught; but, I think, with other precious truth, from which I have no wish to divert the attention of the reader of these precious Epistles, this difference will be found to pervade them. Our conformity to Christ in this respect, and our progressive conformity to Him, is taught in many passages, as Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:48,49; 1 John 3:1-3; 2 Cor. 3:18. But it gives a wonderful testimony to what the Christian is, and ought to be; his place in Christ.

Occupation with Christ Jesus in glory has, through faith, an almighty power. Himself my portion and my alb-fallen human nature is judged; while communion changes into the same image from glory to glory. In learning Him I become more like Him in charade' and spirit,-in will, interests, hopes and life.

Some Causes of Our Low Condition of Soul and Practice

I DESIRE to call attention to some of the causes of the low condition of soul and practice, which so many deplore, and earnestly desire to emerge from. I believe the first great cause of it, and of our consequent inefficient testimony is, that man, and not God, is the object continually before our minds. God's greatest thought was to make Himself known; and, according as this was effected, the counsels of His heart were declared. Now the strength of every soul must be in proportion to its apprehension of God's greatest thought, because it is in comprehending this that it becomes a receiver of grace there from. " This is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.' The eternal life, God's gift to me, as believing in His Son' leads me directly to know Himself. " No man hath seen God at any time, but the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Man's great crime was receiving as truth Satan's representation of God, and acting on it. Thus he, fell; and to this hour, although by industry and research he acquires a certain knowledge of everything in creation, yet he cannot find out God; his greatest advancement, only convincing him the more of his ignorance; like the Athenians in Paul's time, he must, if honest, confess his ignorance on the greatest point which could occupy any intelligent creature, even knowledge of his Creator. In comparison to this, what is any other knowledge? And what is the good of the knowledge of everything relating to man, if I am ignorant of God.

Let me hold simply and distinctly in mind, that God's greatest thought, is to make himself known, and that, therefore, my highest attainment is that of a "father," as We read (1 John 2) to " know Him, that is from the beginning," even the Son who has declared the Father; and as I do so, I shall not fail to see how constantly and largely we occupy our souls with something selfish, something wherein our interest is expressly before us, and the thought and purpose of God,. and His interest in revealing Himself, is rarely entertained.

In the mode and terms in which the gospel is preached (and we shall find the mode of its reception generally answers to the character of preaching), this defect is very manifest. I need hardly insist that our strength, in doing anything, must be in proportion as we are in the line of God's mind and purpose. His Spirit could aid us only there. This is so simple and palpable, that we require only to ascertain what His mind and purpose is, in order to determine our course, and to expose our defects.. In preaching the Gospel, I ought to be from God towards man. My subject is, if I know God, that God is love.. " In this, was manifested the love of God, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." God has expressed His love. He could not express it, except in righteousness: but in righteousness, His expression of it to us is eternal life, whereby and wherein we know Him, and that He is love. " Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I have to present the love of God, and the manner in which it has acted. I- have to unfold how He expressed it through Jesus Christ our Lord, who came down here to do His will, establishing his righteousness, so that God is just, and the justifier of every one who believeth in Jesus. "The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He bath declared Him." He came forth from God

to bear the judgment under which we lay. God's love could not reach us, while sin remained unjudged: He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him was no sin. The love of God could not express itself, but through righteousness; hence, Jesus offered Himself, and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and then the love was known in the gift of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. The on of God came to remove the barrier to the expression of God's love. The barrier (sin) being removed by His bearing in His own body the judgment of death, the love of God flows out without hindrance to every one believing in the Son. He that bath the Son hath life. The gospel I have to proclaim is the history of God's love, when His nature is maintained and unfolded in all its greatness and integrity. True it is to man I am proclaiming it, and it is for man's benefit; and according as I have the love of God in my heart, so shall I do so earnestly and efficiently; but then the primary thought should always be that it is God's love to man, and not a mere service rendered to man. Man, no doubt, is before me, but that which engages my soul is God's love, and therefore, while I zealously set forth to man, the wonders of God's salvation, yet I do not lose sight of Him, whose heart I make known. I am strong in making it known, as I am consciously acting from it; but if I am engaging my soul primarily with the benefit man will derive from it, I am making man and not God my object. The Gospel-the point to insist on and proclaim-is what God is, as revealed towards man, a sinner, and at a distance from Him. The love of souls in my heart is divine love, and I must (in order to know its fresh activity in myself) be kept in constant and distinct reference to the source of it, in order to understand the scope and intent of the heart of God, which I am allowed, through grace, to present to my fellow-man. The Apostle Paul has this so fully before his soul, that he thanks God, who always leads him in triumph in the Christ, and makes manifest the odor of His knowledge in every place; "for we are a sweet odor of Christ to God in them that are saved, and in them that perish." He is thankful that they are allowed to make manifest the odor of His knowledge in every place. The great thought before His soul is God. Did he then the less care for souls-he who also writes "I am made all things to all, that I might by all means save some?" Surely not. Why should it be thought, that if I make God my chief object in presenting His love, (for His love directs itself to man), that I cannot, or do not, more effectually and vividly present the glad tidings, than one who, keeping

man's need in view, is simply engrossed with (as it is admitted) the only remedy for it. Is occupation with the one who is ruined and needs the remedy, likely to be more effective, than occupation with the heart of God, and what is due to it, and therefore, with regard to it propounding the revelation of it, through Jesus Christ our Lord? What more efficacious than setting forth the heart of God in its fullness, making manifest the savor of His knowledge? Paul's commission, from Jesus in the glory, was that he should be a minister of those things which he had seen; the terms of the commission indicated the character of the Gospel entrusted to him. What had he seen? Jesus in the glory-a Savior in the glory. God could now open out His glory without let or hindrance, to every one receiving His Son, and believing on Him. He is revealed to Saul, and forthwith he preached in the synagogue that Christ is the Son of God. How often is the work of Christ exclusively dwelt on, and how. God has been revealed not touched upon at all! I may be told that this is not intended-that may be so. Yet is it not evident, that if I were engaged with Christ, as the one who has revealed the Father in His love, I could not avoid prominently setting it forth. The simple cause of such inadvertence, supposing it to be such, is that man is more before the mind than God. What is most on my mind, must of necessity, color every expression which flows from it. If God and the disclosure of Himself in Christ were filling my soul, let me meet saint or sinner, I

must declare it, and through the wisdom of His grace to each, and as the state of each required; not without real, deep, divine love for each, but at the same time, with the comfort and strength of the Spirit of God, witnessing that I was speaking for God, though doubtless, also, for man's benefit. Man's benefit would be one result of my testimony, but the great object before my soul, would be to reveal His love, which in me made me earnest and ready to suffer all things that I might save some; but, even, if I did not, if my heart were true to its proper mission, I could thank God that I had made manifest the savor of His knowledge.

Let us note how our blessed Lord, the faithful and true witness, testified of God down here. His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. In everything He declared the Father, walking as a man close beside and in company with men, and he could say at the end, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He always did those things that pleased Him. Are we at all able to grasp the purpose and work of Jesus as the declarer of the Father? He had all the power of God in His hand, and for this end He used it, and not for Himself, though in many ways needing it. He in feeble flesh, in all His ways and works, set forth to men, and He Himself a man, the wondrous intents and counsels of the heart Of God in itself which man through Him is invited to taste of and enjoy. Could our eye follow Him in His course, and not know in our hearts at every step that we were accumulating evidence of how great and wondrous was His work? God manifest in the flesh-a man among men, declaring all the love of God, and the lines of it, in all its integrity and strength. "As the Father knoweth me, so know I the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep." He knew His Father's heart. He knew how to represent it; His whole life and work among men was to declare it, and hence He could say in the end, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou then, Show us the Father." When we survey our Lord's ministry in this light, we are imbibing ideas of what God is in His heart towards us. It is His side which occupies us. What He is is made known to me. I see the relation in which he would stand to me, and, as I believe in Jesus, I am entering into the blessing of this relation. I find I am gifted with eternal life, and am individually partaker of the love which has been declared. It is God I am learning, and my idea of Him always indicates the character of my relation to Him. I see how Jesus has declared Him, and my blessing is in connection with this declaration. As is the declaration so is my blessing; the latter depends on the former, limit the one and you limit the other. It rests on what God is, and every knowledge of Him is blessing to me, and every blessing to me is a fruit of this knowledge, so that as I am blessed, so am I consciously connected with God through Christ, and deriving my blessing from my knowledge of Him. If I seek for blessing my heart connects it with knowledge of Him; which knowledge is always blessing to me, but, as I know this, it is the knowledge of Him that is uppermost with me, and thus am I sanctified to Him. True, as I know Him, I know the nature of His love to myself, that I am Christ's object, and that He hath called me by name. I could not make Him my object unless I knew myself His object, for the greater commands the lesser, and the lesser gives return according to the quality which it apprehends from the greater. We love Him because He first loved us; and the quality of our love to Him will always be in proportion to the quality and measure with which we apprehend His to us.

When in preaching and otherwise, man, his need and his blessing, is the object, that which would confer true power is overlooked, and there must be corresponding feebleness in those who are blessed through it. How often do we deplore the feeble link which many quickened souls have to

Christ Why is this? I repeat because their need has been the point pressed and provided for in the gospel as preached to them, and through which, in divine mercy, they have been born again; the utility of the gospel and not the divinity of it has been presented to them; the sweeping of the house to regain the lost silver, or the gain of the prodigal rather than God's claim or relation thereto, and, as a consequence, His satisfaction as the first and greatest consideration. Thus souls, though truly quickened, know little more than relief from judgment, and thus relieved they can pursue their aims in the world without the fear of judgment, which would otherwise have harassed them. It may be asked: Why does God allow conversions through a gospel of which the fruits are such weakly plants? I answer, His mercy, which I do not attempt to account for. I am only attempting to account for the cause of the weakness of the plants, in the hope that the Lord may lead us into more simple adherence to His own mind, and thus be used of Him to raise His own to the level which His heart desires to see them in. Must not the presenting merely the need, and the provision for the need, necessarily occupy a man with himself, and cause his own ruin and the remedy to comprise the whole of his thoughts? God in His mercy saves through this preaching, for grace reigns; but the plants are so weakly that there is no testimony from them. They are little, if at all, for Christ on the earth, and this, I feel, the servants of Christ ought to regard as indicating defect in their own ministry. Would they feel happy in any degree to say that such were the seal of their ministry; and, if the recipients of the gospel which we preach are so feeble and un-Christ like, do we not well to inquire how we have failed in presenting it?

What a different (and how much greater) thing it is for me to know God and His heart towards me, and as I know it, to know the value and gain of it to myself, than merely to dwell on my deliverance from judgment through the work of Christ. Some will say, " Must I not get deliverance from judgment first"? Certainly, but I contend that the true way is to present Christ to you as your life, and the ground of your life, and not merely to relieve you from the fear of judgment by presenting the value of His work for your benefit. In the one case you will count all your blessing from your intimacy with Christ, your knowledge of Him will be everything to you from beginning to end; like the Apostle, the one continued desire will be to know Him. In the other, you will have no thought beyond your own rest, you will measure everything by the measure of quietude and peacefulness which you derive from it, you have not had your cup full. Christ alone can fill the cup; " He that believeth shall never thirst, the water that I shall give him will be in him a well of water springing up to everlasting life." Philip preached Christ; Paul that Christ is the Son of God the revelation of Jesus Christ, not the mere benefit of man, was the thing prominent with them.

Again, if the preaching be defective, it is not surprising that the same vein of imperfection should characterize the teaching; but there the effects are more injurious still, because instead of correcting the defects in the preaching, it allows and supports them, and consequently contributes permanently to that weakly condition which we are deploring.

To know Him that is from the beginning, is the attainment of a " father." Higher no one can go, and less none of us should aim at. It is the only unerring standard, whether in matters most elementary or most advanced; the one great and simple reference for either is my knowledge of Him. Thus we find such passages as these: Some have not the knowledge of God,' - " hath neither seen nor known Him," - " hereby we know that we know Him." The Apostle tells us that the knowledge of the Son of God is the point we are coming to, for however inconceivable the thought is, we shall know even as we are known, and hence Paul's effort and conflict was to present every one perfect in

Christ Jesus; the desire of his heart for the saints and faithful is that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto them wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. The tendency of our nature is ever to seek for ourselves and our own happiness, heedless of what God has been gleaming forth from the beginning of man's existence on the earth; even the knowledge of Himself. Every revelation of His grace to man conveyed a fuller knowledge of Himself; and according as man rested in Him thus revealed was His blessing assured. Whereas, whenever man independently sought his own, he lost all, as, for instance, Lot going down into Sodom while Abram learned deeper and fuller knowledge of the heart he trusted in-in its care and provision for him.

The teaching ought to follow up what the preaching had introduced. The preaching ought to present Christ as now in glory, the full expression of what God's love had accomplished. What God is now to everyone believing in Jesus. How God meets everyone coming to Him-with a Savior to the glory. So teaching should be but a fuller exposition of Christ in glory. The great end of all teaching should be to unfold Christ to the soul, and so to present Him, in the power of the word, as to make Him its standard for everything, and to set-forth that our place now is to dwell in Him and He in us, and to grow daily into conformity with Him. Can we estimate what an effect it would have on us if He were thus our standard to which everything was referred, and by which everything was decided. What separation, what purging of ourselves it would entail on us, though the heart, consciously doing it to Him, would have its own reward in the sense of increased nearness to Him. Now, on the contrary, the conscience (and the more enlightened the worse, for then there is more ground for confidence in our own judgment), or the effect produced on the individual soul, is the standard. I mean, this or that association, is allowed or disallowed, as it affects myself,-if it does not pain me it may pass; it does I disallow it. I make myself and my own feelings my standard, and not Christ, consequently I cannot but be weak and incompetent.

It is not faith or devotedness, or any virtue from the practice of which certain advantages will flow to me, that real teaching should aim at. It is nothing short of Christ,-that Christ may be formed in me; that Christ may dwell in my heart by faith. When, Christ is presented to my soul as the one object, I get to know Him, and while learning thereby that I am His object, my testimony, as I walk here, must ever be true and effective. Read all the Epistles, and you will see that, whatever be the difficulty or the error, all is solved, all removed by living Christ. Every defect arises from not dwelling in Him; without Him we can do nothing. If it be justification by the works of the law, as in Romans "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." If it be the world and its wisdom as in Corinthians-" I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified" and " He of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." If it be a question of ordinances, etc., as in Galatians, "We have put on Christ," and " they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts." If it be worldly religious exaction, as in Colossians, " we are risen with Christ" who is our life. Christ determines everything Now the teaching, in general, does not engage the heart with Christ as the great sum and scope of everything in the mind of God. It is not pre-eminently in the mind of the teacher, and, if it be not-the teacher being necessarily in advance of his hearers-neither can it be pre-eminent with them. This being so, how can there be strength in the soul or power in the walk, when God's object, the course and work of the Spirit, is either unheeded or indifferently dwelt on? If I would please anyone, I must ascertain what is the first

thought and purpose of his mind. I cannot please God but as I believe in His nature. His Son has revealed Him, and, as I am in the Son, so do I reach up to the knowledge of God; and hence the Apostle writes, " Until we all come in the unity of the faith unto the knowledge of the Son of God." God cannot sustain me and own me by His Spirit, if I am on any line but His own, however commendable it may appear. Good works, the whole range of charities, may be engaged in, and yet the condition be low, and the practice unspiritual, simply because the line on which God would display His power, and mark us with His grace, has not been adopted by us.

It is often stated that if we waited more on the Spirit in our meetings, there would be more power. Our not doing so is rather, I believe, a consequence than a cause, for I am assured that if Christ were more our object, the power and presence of the Holy Spirit would be better known. It is as in Christ now in glory, that the Spirit flows as rivers into and from -us, and the Spirit cannot support us, when Christ from whom He acts, is not our object. The more simply we look at it, the more easily we see the point of departure. God having made Himself known in His Son, if our hearts are occupied with the Son, all the purpose of His heart will be disclosed to us. I preach Christ to manifest the knowledge of God. I teach Christ, in order to furnish the souls of saints with the revelation of God, even to be filled, through the love of Christ, in His fullness.

Another cause of our low condition, and also the result of the heart being occupied with its own gain, is, I believe, that we seek our own things, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. There is a looking to God for mercies, and faith is used and valued according to the favors vouchsafed of God in answer to it. When this is the case, the whole bent and turn of the mind is selfish. What would suit and meet us here on earth is sought for and valued; and while there is a looking to God, it is ever with this end. In difficulties and pressure, according as there is conscience, God is sought; but the end desired is simply deliverance. There is comparatively little or no thought, and less effort, to walk superior to the difficulties in the strength of Christ. On the contrary, if I live Christ, I am, like the apostle, able to say: " I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The one looks to God and counts on Him in order to be delivered; the other believes in Christ, derives nourishment from Him, and is strengthened in His strength. Is it not evident that there is a great moral difference between these two? In the Old Testament, God was continually spewing favor, in vouchsafing deliverance to suffering man; but now, in Christ, we are made more than conquerors through Him that loved us. " I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The more I return to Old Testament standing, the more I regard myself in nature, the more do I seek present favor and interposition from God on my behalf; but the more I am in Christ, the more am I, in His life and strength, superior to and master of the difficulties of this life. I think it will be found that little practical strength or advancement accrues from some of the most signal instances of God's intervention on our behalf. We may turn to Him better; but is there more strength to master the ordinary trials of life? Is there not rather an ever-anxious recurrence to Him for deliverance, while the soul believing in Christ would be conscious of daily increasing invigoration directly from Himself and of Himself, and would be seeking rather to walk above the difficulty than to find an escape from it. True, God in His continual mercy grants to us an escape from the difficulty, but the strength of Christ always makes us master of it. I am satisfied that the condition of soul must be weakly, which is occupied with its gains, in circumstances, from God"- and, More than this, our mercies themselves prove a snare when they engross the heart. Devotedness is the surrender of self, and of the mercies which minister to it for the Lord's sake. If I am engrossed with

the mercies I cannot be devoted; for, if the mercies are my object, the Lord is not my object. If I am occupied with myself, all natural mercies are attractive to me, and hailed as from God; and, without perceiving it, I am carried into the current of the world, and my weakness as a Christian is patent to all. Is not temporal prosperity one of the most fruitful causes of declension and feebleness? It was God's test to Gideon's army: "Bring them down to the water, and I will try them for thee, there." Those who were thinking most of themselves and their own gain from the mercy were engrossed with, it;-they went down on their knees to drink of the water. The 300 alone could resist its attraction, for their heart was with Gideon. The water,--anything which addresses self and engrosses it-diverts the heart from Christ, and feebleness must ensue, for without Him we can do nothing. The importance which attaches to one as the center of some useful work to man, from the gospel downwards, has, when it engrosses, the same injurious effect; and we never see anyone thus engrossed make any progress in the ways and counsels and strength of Christ. Worldly prosperity, that which is highly esteemed among men, could not engross the heart of a saint who had appropriated the death of Christ, for if we eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His 'blood, He abideth in us and we in Him. We are in Christ; and, believing in Him, the Spirit flows from us, having enriched our souls with the fullness of Christ. He is our known object, and all our ways and thoughts declare it; for we always seek pre-eminently what suits our chief object. If myself is my object, I seek the natural mercies and what lends importance to myself; but if Christ be my object, it is the things which suit Him and interest Him which are my earnest study and care. The things sought after disclose the object of the heart; therefore, if they be natural things, I must be in nature, and weak accordingly.

There is one cause more of our weakness that I would dwell on--that is, that we so little occupy our minds with His mind; we so little seek sympathy with Him in His thoughts and purposes. This is easily accounted for, if we are occupied with mercies which suit and minister to ourselves. How can the heart take an interest in the study of His mind and purpose, if it be full of its own individual advantage? Unless Christ, were my object, I could not be the friend of Christ; and unless I am His friend, it cannot interest me to know His mind, though my own personal gain, even what He may have given me, may occupy my mind. If I abide in Him and He in me (see John 15), I have His joy in me, and as His friend He communicates to me His mind. If I am not devoted to Him, His mind is not interesting to me, and He does not communicate it to any one not interested in it. There is no more marked symptom of feebleness than the little sympathy or acquaintance we have with His mind, and the little feeling there is at our want of it; while, on the other hand, there is no greater evidence of strength and faithfulness than to be a man of understanding, enriched with the mind of our Lord and Master,, and able skillfully to instruct His people in a day of confusion and ignorance. In the Epistle to the Seven Churches in the Revelation, the angel is always addressed as setting forth in symbol the true place of the Church as bearing Christ's message. The faithful answered to this character, and heard and understood the Lord's message as always suited and pertinent to the difficulty of the moment. In all ages the true servant of God was entrusted with His mind' as to any crisis or distinct purpose, In the words " Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?" the principle on which God always acts is disclosed to us. God has ever made known His mind to His devoted servants, and to them only; for others would not value it.

As with Gideon's army, it is not enough for me to attempt or to begin to follow. I must have my heart with Gideon. I must be devoted. Self must have no place with me; and then, as with the 300,

I shall be instructed in the mind and purpose of my Lord. To the 300 only does Gideon tell his mind and plans" As I do, so shall ye do."

How remarkable is it, and singularly characteristic of our low condition, that one seldom sees a soul occupied with the present current or course of our Lord's mind. Something in reference to itself marks every inquiry or engagement. Little wonder, then, that our condition should be so low and our testimony so powerless.

In conclusion, I beg again to press that the greatest cause of our weakness arises chiefly from our imperfect apprehension of the Gospel of Christ. I have been told that a greater number are converted under an imperfect gospel than under a more perfect one. What answer can I give to this, but that the fuller gospel makes a claim on the heart of man, which deters him from confessing,- while the other makes no claim, and there is no cross to him in confessing his faith in it.

The Lord lay it on our hearts to see where we are straitened in ourselves, for surely we are not straitened in Him, and He would rejoice in our knowledge of the mystery of God, wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

FRAGMENTS,

Prayer is the key which opens the repository of spiritual food, the wardrobe and the armory of Heaven. It is the bolt which, excludes the thief and the robber, the stormy wind and the tempest. It is the outlet of trouble and the inlet of consolation.

I suppose, if we could but see it, there is no cloud nor trial hampering us in our path but has near it some signal expression of mercy..

There are two ways of learning the Lord-one in glory, the other in trial-the first being the highest; but, as knowing Him is the great thing to be attained, it is better to know Him well in trial than only a little in glory. The disciples with the Lord in the ship exemplifies the one-the Transfiguration is an instance of the other.

We are not given sorrow for sorrow's sake, but sorrow for the sake of association with Christ. Is not that blessed Is it not honor?

Man Cannot Escape From God

RESURRECTION comes, not from the first Adam, but with the last Adam. The first Adam had a creature's portion, his-while he was innocent, in Eden. The last Adam is-it would have been impossible for us to have known " who" pr " what," - if God had not, by His Spirit, written for us His own thoughts about the Son of His Love as God manifest in flesh.

In that word we read, that when all the subdivisions of time, as connected with God's dealings with man upon this earth, are over,-then, past all dispensations, there is to take place the resurrection of the wicked,-a last resurrection unto judgment. For the first resurrection of the blessed will have taken place a thousand years before the last resurrection.

The eternal immortality, which will fill and surround those who have part in the first resurrection, has its source in God's love and in God's delight in the Son of His love; by whom and for whom He will bring into blessedness, past all our power to conceive, the people who have believed in Him and obeyed Him; - this through the Spirit. The Son will raise from among the dead His own people and take them to share His glories.

But this same Son will, afterward, raise the wicked too. Is their resurrection according to the power of the first Adam; or is it, a restoring of them to earth, or to the circumstances of time? No: the Son of Man will raise them;-they will stand in God's proper eternity, and their circumstances will, thenceforth, be (not according to man's earth, but) according to God's judgment upon Satan-the adversary of God and His Son-the power whom the wicked now serve.

The " forever " of the blessing of the one, and the " forever " of the curse of the other, is as to duration according to the " forever " of God's eternity; and the state of the one and of the other according to the

moral condition and experience which they have previously been in. The one, lovers of Him that had loved them and having experienced association with the Lord during the thousand years, shall be, according to God's own " forever," blessed. The other, the fearful and unbelieving, will find themselves to be, according to God's own " forever," under the curse and with Satan. The power that raises them is irresistible;-the mind that wields that power knows no change. They are raised, all dispensations past, in God's proper eternity;-there, where the true character of everything is detected and will be judged. As to annihilation, or a change of condition, or position for those who have been cast into the lake of fire-there is no such thing in Scripture. It is the folly of the human mind, set on by Satan if it be subject to him, which alone ever ventures to create for itself such a fiction: a fiction which will be found

entirely fallacious-a fiction which is easily judged to be a fiction even now, because it makes man's convenience and liberty to be independent of God its center and end, and not (as does the written word) the glory of God in His holiness, redeeming to Himself by the Son of His love poor sinners through grace from the wrath to come.

See John 5:19-29, and Rev. 20

This is another point whence to look at the questions referred to and answered in the Article No. 24., page 357.

God will take care what you go through. Do you take care how you go through it?

How different is the Lord's sympathy in sorrow from man's-aye, the very best of man's-meted out as His must ever be, to the exact extent and depth of the sorrow itself; and also to the fluctuating SENSE of it, in all its ups and downs, affected as that is by every wind that blows.

I may think you have a little load compared to mine, or vice versa. But it matters little as to the weight; the great point is the spirit in which it is borne, and the strength ascertained in bearing it.

God is seeking to build us up into the likeness of Christ, and nothing marked Him more than patience and longsuffering.

Remarks on Modern Rationalist Views

I SEND you a few remarks on modern rationalist views and their bearing on Christianity (just as I penned them down for myself), that Christians may not lightly suffer the taint of such views to approach them; whatever may be their patience with those who may be deceived.

"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would' have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words" (John 5:45-47).

Here we have more than one point. First Moses writings are attributed to him; next - it is declared that he wrote. of Christ; of. Jesus; thirdly -his writings are. spoken of, and because they are writings as of authority superior, as far as form goes, to Christ's words. If, there fore, we do not receive his writings,- Christ's words have no authority;- Christ made a mistake as to 'his writing of. Him; - His whole interpretation of Scripture is unfounded;- His estimate of Himself is false as the object

this -testimony. Who can guarantee its being well-founded on any other ground? He supposed God's mind was in the written word; the modern doctrine makes this a mistake: - He was not the object of Moses' writings, - nor did Moses write them!

Who can tell, then, that there was a Christ to come, or if Jesus was not the subject of this testimony, He was, if there was any such testimony; deceived as to Himself. The whole authority of Christ and His words is gone as to God's mind and as to Himself. Christianity and Christ Himself are without foundation. For if Christ's own testimony is unfounded and Moses's too as to Him, -or rather if there is none such, as Christ supposed there Was, what foundation have I for anything in Christianity as a revelation of the mind of God and of His Son as the truth?

Again He says, on the most solemn occasion as to the repentance. or ruin of the Jews: " They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them." All this was misleading- they were not authentic. But further, if they are not heard, Christ declared His resurrection has no force to persuade. If they hear not Moses, and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rose from the dead. But all this was a blunder. There was no Teal power in Moses and the Prophets.. Christ made a mistake. Whatever His resurrection might do, Moses' Writings were a forgery and had no authority whatever; so that there was no adequate. ground to be persuaded by the resurrection itself. This was all Christ's solemn attestation was worth. Yet here the-Lord was taking them out of the whole system of Jewish legalism. The event proved the truth of His words. They did not believe, though one rose -from the dead; but, then, it was a mistake of the Lord from 'that to blame them for not receiving the testimony of Moses and the Prophets, for they were of no value at all.. It was not Moses at all.

So, when He said: "Search (or ye search) the Scriptures,.... they are they which testify of me," - the business, He declares, of the Scripture was to testify of Him, Jesus, as the Christ. On whose part? Was it God's testimony, or the wild notions, previsions, or interpretations of fanatics that Christ

appealed to? What was the person testified to, or who appealed to their worth if they were? But, if of God "The Scriptures" are so. We - all know what that meant in a Jew's mouth.

Again in Luke 24, and beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. What was He doing? And here-no stupid blasphemous pretext about His having the prejudices of the Jews is of any avail. He was risen. I suppose He was freed from prejudices by that time. But what shall we say: It was not Moses; and the testimony of Scripture was no really inspired, prophetic testimony; consequently, not about Himself. The risen Lord misled, as much as when walking, before. His death, on the earth. And Christians are to believe this! But He goes a step further. He uses divine power over their minds as to it. " Then opened He their understandings, that they might.- understand the Scriptures; and said unto them: Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer"; opened divinely their understanding to understand forgeries,; or even, if you please, the rhapsodies of patriotic bards and pious compositions from old legends.. Is not that singular? We. have no truth as to Christ and what He did, if this be so; for what is ascribed to Him as. risen and divinely operating on men's minds was never pressed in in respect' of an imposture.. The utmost foundation was an obscure legend patched up, into a false story, and He not only mistook, when 'risen, all about it, but. opened divinely -their understandings to understand it!

Further, the Lord Himself quotes, as His reply to Satan, the Scriptures with the emphatic declaration: It is written." And when even Satan sets about, consequently, to use Scripture, He does not leave this ground, but says. " it is written," again. Impossible to give a more striking testimony to where truth and power were. to be -found to baffle the enemy. He was led of the. Spirit to this solemn conflict, that He might bind the strong man and deliver men, spoiling his goods. But His victory was founded on a forged imposture, something that Jeremiah's fanaticism and Huldah and the chief priest's deceit got up to try and work a reformation: but in vain. So they tell us. I suppose the Devil must have been a prejudiced Jew, too, to let himself be. silenced in this way! He was more blind and easily.. cheated than we are led to suppose.

Poor John the Baptist too! He was misleading the people, for he quotes the Scriptures as-testifying of him, self. But that was all a mistake. How many am I to cite of them? In Matthew half the things. which he recites are fulfillments of prophecies. Some expressly so in purpose. But this was all a delusion.

When Jonas and Solomon are cited by the Lord, God knows What. the..cases are worth. When the Lord contrasted one of the ten commandments as the commandment of God with man's tradition - He made a. gross mistake in condemning the Scribes thus. It was no more such than the tradition. It may have been a more respectable tradition; but the ground which the Lord laid it on was all a blunder. The very point He insists upon and which He declares was of such weight as to make all their worship vain was a grave mistake. It was not to be believed, that they were really spoken or given of God at all. The appeal to Esaias was a mistake, and His own judgment equally so.

The appeals of the Lord to the Scripture are, I need not say, incessant, " Did ye never read in the Scriptures the Stone which the builders. rejected," etc.

This was a prophecy just going to be fulfilled through their conduct towards Him? Was His appeal just?

When David in Spirit calls the Son of David his Lord, was it inspired or not? When the Scribes and Pharisees, evil as they were, sat in Moses's seat, they were to be listened to. Why? If Moses had had authority as a Divine testimony. Their fathers had killed the Prophets - but they were no Prophets at all, if we are to listen to our new masters. When the Lord appeals to Daniel as speaking of the abomination of desolation, and presses on them to give intelligent attention, all this was a mistake, or a willful deception. Of all Prophets, Daniel, they tell us, was the most false and unreal. I do not go any further. I have cited sufficient of this class of texts to show that the authority of the Old Testament (Moses in particular, but Psalms and Prophets too), is so interwoven with the whole text and substance of the New Testament that if it goes the New goes with it; and the authority of Christ, His being really the Christ, too (for then His testimony and judgment are not worthy of credit), and Christianity itself. And this applies to Him, quite as much when risen and operating by divine power and supposing that He opened man's understanding divinely to understand forgeries and imposture. This may do for rationalists, but not for men in their senses.

And I pray the reader to remark, that we have not the expression " the word of God," as to which men might. cavil, but " the Scriptures."

Moses and Elias appeared in glory. Can we believe that this was no sanction to the places they held in Old Testament Scriptures?

The Lord declares that Moses gave the commandment as to divorce, but because of the hardness of their hearts. All a mistake! Nor had he any need to blame or excuse him. David himself, He tells us, said, by the Holy Ghost, that Christ was to sit on God's right hand. Was this inspired? or what is Christ's authority here? They might have read in the books of Moses of God's appearance in the bush, a proof of the resurrection-all. a fable. The son of man was to go, as it was written. He could have prayed, and had twelve legions of angels; but how, then, should the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be. It governs the Lord's own mind in the most solemn. moment on which all hang, if Christianity is true, as in His early conflicts with hang, -When Jerusalem was encompassed with armies, they were the days of vengeance,. that all things that were written might be fulfilled. But these were only idle threats of zealous Jehovists: so they would have us believe. Zacharias, filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied and declared that the raising up Christ was, as had been spoken by the mouth of God's holy Prophets, since the world began. Here we get threefold delusion. In Luke - who says Zachariah spoke by the Holy Ghost; in Zachariah - who declared the coming of Christ was fulfilling the Prophets; in the supposition that they were God's holy Prophets. This was so far from being the Holy Ghost, that it was Jewish prejudice; and the Prophets themselves were fanatics or guilty of pious frauds! This is a comfortable basis for a religion and laying down your life for the truth of it. Elias and Eliseus, Christ quotes according to this history; but His quotations of them are constant, and as applied to Himself and owning the Prophets, and the law as distinct as in a passage already referred to - in another view: " These are the words which I spoke 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." Here the well-known division of the Hebrew Scriptures is given. The Lord (and remark He is risen here) puts His seal upon them, and treats them. as to be fulfilled as having spoken of Himself. The risen

Lord treats them as inspired, and as prophecies of Himself. And then, as we saw before, He opened their understandings to understand them.

The Scripture, the Lord declares to us 'cannot be broken. Here men would have Him speak according to Jewish notions. Did He come then to sanction them, and to deceive men? In John they (the Jews) are always treated as reprobate; and this is the chapter where He is taking His sheep out of their fold. So the Evangelist treats Esaias as inspired in the judgment pronounced on Israel, and declares the Glory seen in Esaias 6. to be Christ's Glory, and chap. 53. to apply to Christ. In the most solemn of all hours that Jesus passed on earth, Jesus, intelligently aware that all things written of Him as to His path here were accomplished, says, " that the Scripture might be fulfilled, I thirst," and then, the last word being fulfilled, gives up His own Spirit. But all this, for our new teachers, is a mistake and a delusion And what comes of Christianity and of Christ? That John should quote other Scriptures then as fulfilled, is of small moment comparatively, save that it takes away all foundation as to any divine authority in any Christian documents.

That the Bereans searched the Scriptures, to see if Paul was right, commended in the account we have of it, was all a mistake!- It was no way of judging of it at all. They ought to have judged of Paul by their own minds, and the Scriptures themselves by the same measure. When Peter refers to Psa. 16 as a proof of Christ's resurrection, all such prophetic statement of facts, or reliance on Scripture, is unfounded. That Pentecost was a fulfillment of. Joel,- this is all a mistake. Pentecost was a comparatively modern invention; faith in prophecies-a delusion of the Jews. I refer to these cases, to show that the Lord and the Apostles systematically, constantly, and as of divine obligation, refer to the Scriptures as of authority,, as inspired prophecy, and make Christianity a fulfillment of them. Its truth is inseparably involved in it;- its character is a fulfillment of them, though there be more in it. Christ Himself is declared to be a minister of the circumcision for the Truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the Fathers. But, all this is a mistake. That is, the pro' mulgation of Christianity as alone it was promulgated was all error. Christ, Peter assured them, was. The Prophet that Moses had spoken of. This was all a Mistake-Moses never wrote it-it was a legend; an he never spoke of Christ at all. Peter was misleading the Jews, when he called them the Children of the Prophets and of the Covenant which God made with Abraham.- All was delusion. It was no true history at all; not authentic; and Prophets were patriotic, but deceived themselves, persuaded themselves, like any modern fanatic, that they were inspired.

But this is the only promulgation of Christianity which we have; and what comes of it and of Christ Himself too, when it is the only testimony. So the second Psalm is quoted. To Him give all the Prophets witness. All a mistake! Stephen's speech is a tissue of legendary and unauthentic inventions; resisting the Holy Ghost,- the Jews never were guilty of at all. They had judged justly in not believing Moses and the Prophets. The mistake was in Christ and His Apostles. Peter and the dying Stephen were only deluding themselves and others. When Philip opened his mouth and taught the docile Eunuch out of Isaiah and other Scriptures, as prophecies about Jesus;- this was a mistake. He was baptized as a fiction. That the Spirit caught away Philip Who then is to believe? When Gentiles were admitted, Peter declares: to Him gave all the Prophets witness. All a; mistake! 'Paul, in Antioch, recites briefly the history of Israel given by Moses, Judges, etc., and declares God's promise there referred to Jesus the Son of David, declares that the Jews' conduct in putting the Lord to death was by the Jews not knowing the voice of the Prophets, Which yet they fulfilled, that they fulfilled all that was written of Him, and that now God had fulfilled to the Jews the promise

made to the Fathers, and quotes the Psalms as fulfilled in Christ's resurrection, and declares that this was accomplishing the sure mercies of David, of which the -Prophet had spoken. That is, he founds Christianity on the truth and inspiration of the Scriptures. It was God's fulfillment of what God had said. So in Thessalonica he reasons out of the Scriptures to prove its truth. So Apollos mightily convinced the Jews, and that 'publicly, showing, by the Scriptures, that Jesus was the Christ. In all his testimony, Paul declares, before Agrippa, that he was saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say. His appeal to Agrippa was Believest thou the Prophets? -All this was delusion or deceit. When he came to Rome, he persuaded them concerning Jesus out of the Law of Moses, and out of the Prophets, from morning to evening, and he declares that the Holy Ghost spoke by Esaias. I have thus brought forward these repeated instances, as showing that the whole structure of Christianity is based on the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, and on the Truth that God's mind was intentionally expressed in them; and that Christ presented Himself, and the Apostles presented Him, as the fulfillment, on God's part, of what God had said: that there might be a positive previous testimony. If this be not so, then the whole system falls. There was no such. intention, no such prophecies, and no such fulfillment. Christ and His Apostles mistook the whole matter-and what are they? We shall find the Epistles proceed upon the same foundation. It would be endless to quote from the Epistles to the Romans, the Hebrews and others-all the Scriptures quoted as conclusive authority, as being God's statements; and hence leaving no room for argument. But some passages as to the place given to Scripture in the New Testament, and to those in the New Testament itself, is of importance to quote definitely.

In Rom, 16. 26., the New Testament Scriptures are thus referred to: "But now is made manifest and by prophetic Scriptures, (this is the literal and only literal translation), according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known. to all nations for the obedience of faith." I say the New Testament-for the mystery is de-dared to have been kept secret since the world began, but, to be made manifest now. There were things revealed before, as we have seen; but the doctrine of the Church, the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, the Gentiles being fellow-heirs and of one body was' hid in God (see Eph. 3), and required a positive revelation, and a new one.

The revelation of Christ, Son of David, and other truths, God had promised afore by the Prophets in the Holy Scriptures. God Himself is the author of them, and Christ the purposed fulfillment of Scripture; but, there was needed a new revelation for certain truths, and we have it in prophetic Scriptures.

"As it is written " is sufficient with Paul to bring in the whole world guilty. The great privilege of Israel was, that the oracles of God were committed to them; they were -" oracles of -God " for the Apostle. In Ex. 33 "God spoke to Moses"; he tells us, and "the Scripture saith to Pharaoh," so "the Scripture saith," 'suffices to set aside the whole Jewish system (Rom. 10). Let the reader only take a concordance and see the use of " it is written:" say, in the 'single 15. chapter of Romans; so in Gal. 3, " the Scripture. foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen." Thus. giving the authority of God's own. mind to Scripture: and that to Moses' statements of God's revelations to Abraham. And 'note, as the foundation and character of Christianity itself; Scripture concludes men under sin.-What authority has it here? The law was our schoolmaster; nay, Christ submits to its prescribed curse. -And it is not authentic!

Here is the Apostle's account of his revelations.-He. knew the things by the Spirit:-he spoke them by words. which the Holy Ghost taught, and they were received by the grace of the Spirit. Now I recognize freely here, that this applies to preaching. I quote it to show the direct assertion of revelation by the Spirit to him, and that his communications were in the words taught by the Spirit. But he can add: " If any man think himself to be a Prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

The well-known passage in 2 Tim. 3 gives us the clearest instruction -on this point. It has peculiar emphasis, because the Church had already separated from godliness and order, and perilous times were to come, and evil men and seducers wax worse and worse. The Saints needed a sure ground to go upon, a resting-place for their hearts somewhere. Besides personal confidence in Paul, which we have only in his writings-the Apostle continues "and that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus; all (every) Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness-that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Now here, when the resource of a soul in a dangerous and distracting time had to be furnished-what was it? The holy Scriptures-the holy writings.. Forgeries are not holy, they are very unholy, whatever pious frauds may be in them; and certainly they are not a resource in dangerous times. It is a knowledge of it as a child takes it, a known resource of authority over the mind; next it is not partial. All (or more exactly, every) Scripture is given by inspiration of God,- is θεοπνευστος.

It is said, it is the Old Testament here. Be it so. The part attacked as legends and frauds is inspired. But it is not so..It is an assertion of what the true character of all Scripture is; whatever has a claim to that title,- the prophetic Scriptures spoken of, Rom. they are given by inspiration of God, and sufficient to make the man of God perfect. Now, remark here, that if I. receive Christianity, I receive it as a. revelation by divinely-inspired teachers. But these teachers, whatever credit they assume to themselves, both Christ and the Apostles refer me to the Holy Scriptures as Divine authority-and cite them as absolutely conclusive-an authority, by which they would be judged, and sufficient proof of their Words' and refer to them as we' have them, and, in particular, to Moses, as the giver of the law.

The Whole authority of Christianity as a revelation fails, if the inspiration and authority of Scripture fails. There is nothing else certain in it. It professes to give it as a security always, and especially where men failed in practically acting up to it.

Other passages confirm. this. In the Hebrews we read:-" God, who at sundry times and divers manners spake in times past by the prophets, bath in these last days spoken to us by His Son."

The Epistle to the Hebrews is wholly founded on the authenticity of the law as given of God, and that, as a Divine revelation, pre-spective of Christianity, a shadow only it is true, but purposely designed to be only such, and the tabernacle and its furniture to be given of God. as a pattern of things in the heavens; and, if there was then a veil and it was rent now, the Holy Ghost was signifying, it tells us, something by it. I repeat, the whole structure of the New Testament and the religion it reveals, is interwoven into the inspiration of the Old, as of itself. Take it away, and it is a false system: both of them are. A man may tell me he believes in Christ in spite of it all. I can conceive a case where. there may be living faith. abiding, and a bewildered mind in one who had

learned it from Divine sources; but he does not believe in. revealed Christianity, nor in its authority as a revelation.. Note here, that the Epistle to the Hebrews never refers to the temple which might be said to be then before them, but to the tabernacle, and the Mosaic account of it, and quotes, I may say, the whole history of the book of Genesis in chap. 11.; and all the Pentateuch and Joshua, as the Lord used Deuteronomy against Satan. And remark all the New Testament writers thus quote Scripture. All the prophets-Job, the Kings, the Pentateuch, Joshua, are quoted by James as acknowledged; nor for him can the Scriptures speak in vain.

Peter is equally clear. The Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, and testified beforehand. Because " it is written," is a sufficient authority-the natural appeal.

Christianity is then for them to act on, because also it is contained in the Scripture, " Behold I lay in Zion," etc. Again, the prophecies of Isaiah are interwoven with his own statements. What Isaiah was prophesying, he was preaching: both stand or fall together (1 Peter 1:23;2. 8). So as to Exodus and Hosea (chap. 2. 9, 10, 23); Genesis, the Psalms (in 3.), and Isaiah. It is a complete working up of the Old Testament Scriptures. In his second epistle, we have the glory of Christ as seen on the mount of transfiguration; a confirmation of the Old Testament prophecies, which were a candle, till the full light of the dawn of Christ's coming on earth should arise in their hearts. But Scripture was no isolated individual announcement; every prophecy of Scripture was divine. Holy men,-not patriotic bards, or concoctors of pious frauds to act on the mind of a young king-bad spoken. Prophecy did not come in old time by the will of man exactly what is alleged as to it; but "Holy men of God" spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." He also calls the writings of Paul Scriptures; putting them on a level with the rest. John is very bold and says, that listening to the Apostles is a test whether a man is of God or not." "Hereby know we the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error." He that knoweth God hears them, he tells us. How am I to listen to him now? He and Jude both refer to the Pentateuch as of unquestioned and unquestionable authority. We know what the Revelation threatens to them who mutilate or add to it. Such are the witnesses which the Lord and His Apostles give to the authority, authenticity, and inspiration of scripture.

What is the Christian to do? Am I to believe, or -throw up the authority of Christ and His Apostles? What is the authority of Christianity itself if I do? Am I the disciple of imposters or deceived men, or of the blessed Son of God; and receiving Divine truth from His inspired servants?

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. (Acts 20:32.)

The Obedience of Faith

THE history of man upon earth, as given to us by God, in the Bible, is the history of man's entire failure. I might say more; for the Book tells us that, looked at merely as a creature set in responsibility, man has done nothing but fail. " There is none righteous; no, not one.

The admission of this by a soul is one of the first results of its reception of the revelation to it by God of that great salvation which, in His mercy and compassion towards us, He has provided in Christ Jesus. The grace, mercy, and peace of God, which are by Christ Jesus, are felt and confessed by the believer to suit himself entirely; and he rejoices to find, that that which suits God, in all the height, of His Holiness, suits himself, a lost, undone sinner-even free grace and mercy; forgiveness of sins and acceptance; all freely provided by God in Christ-all made ours through faith, and by the alone power of God the Holy Ghost. This draws the heart, too, as with the cords of love, into the path of implicit subjection and surrender of self. But I do not think that present obedience in us will be intelligent, or the power of the soul that which it should be, unless the recognition of the failure goes beyond that which was true of us, individually, when grace found us. We ought to know the points from which God set out, and the points to which He is conducting things, as to man; first, as a creature; second, as connected with Providence and government; and, thirdly, as to the entirely new position in which the household of faith was placed, at Pentecost, as the Church. If, indeed, we are to be intelligent, and to be able to count upon God for the power and help of which we stand in need in our present path of obedience, we must know His grace as superabounding over all man's failure in these three positions.

The garden of Eden on the one hand, behind us-and the. great white throne, on the other hand, before us-are the termini of man's course as a creature. If a man will know himself as a creature, let him study these bournes, and where is he?

The rainbow, and the covenant with Noah, after he came out of the Ark, in favor of rebel man, was the starting-point of God's dealings with man, in Providence, under the present heavens and on the present earth. The millennial earth, under Christ, with its awful winding-up, will be at the close.

Providence and government both find their full expression therein.

As set in grace, and a part of the Church which is for heaven, I look back to the day of Pentecost as the commencement of the revelation of that grace wherein I stand; and I look forward to the city on high--the Bride, the Lamb's Wife-as that which is at the close. But how awfully do the many Antichrists of John, and Babylon as a city, and the whore, find their places centrally, between these boundaries or termini. It is not merely that these termini (as I have called them) mark the limits of the topic under consideration, and so give the full scope of each position; there are other things also connected with them; they give, first of all, the scope of the actions of the living God; and, further, it will be found that, whereas everything which God has entrusted to man, man has failed in, these trusts to man will in the end be made good, in and by Christ Jesus, to the glory of God by us; and where sin has abounded, there grace will superabound, through the Son.

An innocent creation will be superseded by a new creation, wherein dwelleth righteousness, the patient goodness of God in providence and government, be superseded by the reign of Christ, and the trust of the

truth formative (through the Spirit present) of a house of God on earth, and the assembly of the living God (in which man has failed so signally since Pentecost) be superseded by the New Jerusalem: by the Bride-the Lamb's Wife. How many the deposits which God has, at sundry times, entrusted to man. But man has in every case, without any one single exception, failed. Yet, if these deposits pointed on to things in and for Christ, in Him they will not fail, but all, all shall stand. Adam and Eve turned out of Eden, when they had lost their innocency, and the paradise of God given to the overcomer in Him-God caring for Noah through the deluge, and giving the rainbow, and becoming King of Israel-and the Son of Man, Jehovah, caring for Israel and ruling over the earth-Pentecost and the Church at Ephesus behind, and the Golden City, which is the Bride, before us; these couplets must be known and acknowledged, if the creature, who is on his way from failure and ruin to redemption and glory, under the care of a sure and living Guardian, is to know aright whereabouts He is, and what resources are his, and for what ends he is to live, here below. And it is just this blending of the knowledge of entire failure in man with certain and complete victory by God in Christ, which alone gives to us the obedience of faith. Man, as a fallen, sinful creature, has no desire to render to God the tribute of His being; when converted, he finds he cannot live as an unfallen creature in Paradise should have lived; yet he seeks to render present obedience, and by faith he finds the how; with Israel in its worst state, scattered and peeled over the whole earth (Lev. 26:40-46; Deut. 30), it will be the same faith, when they have it, which will lead them to, and show them the how of, an obedience which their circumstances will seem to make impossible; just so for us, however deep the failure may have been of man in his betrayal of the truth and his practical denial of the Spirit, and of the unity, holiness, heavenly character, etc., of that house and body, which the Holy Ghost came

down to form and dwell in at Pentecost, Faith will give the desire to obey; and faith spews a path too-, a path that the vulture's eye could not have traced. God is faithful to Himself, and has made provision for His people's walk under all circumstances; and in each circumstance it will be found that a soul which has failed and owned it, can yet walk upon the principles primitively given, if there be but obedience and faith-the obedience of faith.

In the spheres of creation, Providence, and government, God looks upon me-and I, as a Christian, look upon myself as one under failure; failure in my own self. In the sphere of redemption, He looks at me, and I look at myself-as a new creature in Christ Jesus, and there all is a success. It is entirely. divine: from God, in Christ Jesus, and through the Spirit; all to the glory of God. There is no failure there.. It is, too, in and for heaven, not earth; eternal, and not temporal. How to walk down, here, according to it, now, is the question, if we would have our lives blameless, and not forget our own mercies. For the salvation which is in Christ Jesus is not only past deliverance from under the curse which sin brought in, it is now a present life to God, through the whole of our course here below (in spite of Satan, the world, and the flesh), even as it has also a full manifestation, here-, after, in glory. Ruin around him, behind, and within, man cannot prevent the Hiring God in grace from carrying on souls to the glory which He has set before Him- self for them in Christ, nor prevent the present effect of His carrying them on being, at this present time, a testimony to all around of what He the unchangeable God is. Man held his place in Eden by

subjection to a word spoken of God, and lost it when He ceased to be subject thereto (Gen. 2:7, etc.). Cast out of Eden, his innocence lost forever, he had a word spoken of God (chap. 3. 15), which he carried with him; which if he held to and became subject to by faith, would give a present blessing. God could still be honored, His word still be owned and bowed to, though innocence was lost forever, and a world of woe was his sphere, instead of the Garden of Eden; but an endless life which lay beyond the power

that demanded energy and boldness. The promise of that life which is in Christ Jesus" (1. 2) became his banner: an individual portion truly. But, as we see throughout the epistle, it girded him up to break right through all that might oppose. He saw no possibility of getting rid of the failure which had set, in, and of the deepening of which he had to write; he would keep himself clean from it, cost what the effort to do so might. His heart yearned, too, after companions-a Timothy, or even a Mark, how belonged to have them. He speaks not of replanting churches, but of being alone when none would stand by him, and witnessing for the Lord as to the evil all round about him; and the Lord, who had delivered him, would deliver-this was his joy.

Who now is practically as he was as to life, wholly devoted to Christ in Heaven? Who among us knows what the standing and principles of the Church of God were, from having spent a life in maintaining and teaching them? I may fairly say this, as now putting forth a few thoughts to those who inquire "What as to the house of God, the assembly of the living God?" Surely this consideration is an important one at such a moment: Is mine eye single; is there entire devotedness to Christ in Heaven, through the Spirit and the truth; is there full purpose of heart individually to cleave to the Lord? For of what value is knowledge, when the heart is not ready to obey? If needful, yet is it a humbling thing for nominal Christians to have to inquire in eighteen hundred and sixty-three: IN hat as to the Church and our connection with it?

But, to proceed: When I look back to the day of Pentecost, I do see a deposit of truth and power committed to man's faith, which formed on earth an entirely new habitation. for God through the Spirit, and an assembly, the members of which were in blessed possession of life. Between that and the so-called reformation, what a change had taken, place on earth! What entire failure on man's part to hold the truth, to be faithful to the deposit, to walk in the Spirit, to live for Heaven only. All the leading thoughts of the Church at Pentecost had been taken up by Satan, in order corruptly to form a house and an assembly for himself on the earth. Satan and the world; and the flesh, developed in worldliness on earth, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for eternity and Heaven, clean lost sight of as to any practical manifestation among men, and thus among professing Christians. Man's failure in responsibility was patent; and it has not been judged by God yet-nay, it has not its fullest form of evil yet. I confess the evil, own my being in the place where it has been. done, and so I bear the responsibility and the shame; but I have no thought of displaying myself and my energy in attempting the setting up either of a house, or of an assembly afresh. God formed that which was at Pentecost. Man, as a creature and as in responsibility, has utterly failed in this trust 'again; and, if I see many houses and many assemblies, each differing from the other in its principles, I see no where that of which I can say, this is that which was 'the house and the assembly at Pentecost. But, if that, which was a type of something better to come is now a failure, through man's sins, there is still the living God; and He has not failed, nor has He who said on another occasion, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." Oh that our hearts were Christful and heavenly enough to take in and act upon these solemn realities! This brings me to my real position

and the duties of it, duties 'according to the new nature.

As to my real position, and the duties connected with it: I judge that the second Epistle of Paul to Timothy is our letter of instructions. If they have been hitherto as a sealed letter to us, may we open, and study them now. They do not enjoin us to bring a clean thing out of an unclean; nor do they give us hope of the current of evil being stopped here on earth ere the Lord come: they give no hint of our being called to set up a new house or to gather a new assembly; but they do call for us to do three things: In well-girdedness of loin and fullness of courage, first, to purge ourselves individually from all the evil that is round about; secondly to witness a good confession for the Lord; and, thirdly, in yearning Christ-like affection, to have an open bosom and a ready welcome for all that purify themselves. Oh for more purpose of heart for Christ and Heaven, that we might be Nazarites indeed! As to the principles of our standing and association with any such two or three who meet in the Lord's name, there is nothing new in them from what was true at Pentecost, at Ephesus. Failure in man has not changed God's faithfulness to the Son of His love. God has still the thought before Him, according to His own purpose and counsel, of a habitation for Himself,-of associates with Him in glory,-the new Jerusalem, the Bride the Lamb's wife is for the Son's glory;. it cannot fail, come what may. Creation, providence, government have failed in man's day; so has man failed as to the Pentecostal deposit of truth and the Spirit;- but God still will have a habitation and associates in glory.

I have to act, as best I can (God being my light and my guide) upon. all the standing and all the principles of the Church of God as revealed at Pentecost. If there be evil in the place of profession, or in any who are associated with it, I must keep myself clean, purge myself from it; and, if worldliness, fleshliness and present plans for self or human energy, mark the day we live in-such things stand in contrast with the heavenliness, the spirituality, the love of Christ, which, through faith and the Holy Ghost, marked the early Christian. The best way of being clean of the evil is, and surely for us would be,-to be full of God and Christ and Heaven and the Holy Ghost, as were the early Christians; and, by the light, to put the darkness to shame. Where this cannot be,. I must still keep myself clean, confess and protest. And, under all circumstances, seek to witness for the Lord-in patience and hope.

In a house that is defiled by leprosy, I may find living inmates who have the faith and spirit of Jesus Christ.- I must own all such, and each of such as part of that which God called His house-His assembly; and, as individuals, they will each and all form part of the new Jerusalem. But, are they individually walking as men, or are they walking as the Son of God walked: is earth or is heaven the present dwelling-place of their souls? Paul longed for any that would run the gauntlet, as he felt he had to do. I do not find that the churches, so called, have their communion and association in the commemoration of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord of glory, with the truth before them, that assimilation to His dying is all they have from here below, -until He come. It is not enough to be part of God's house and assembly, so set forth at Pentecost, or to know that we shall individually. form part of the new Jerusalem. At Pentecost it was no scattered flock. If we come together, and we are bound to do so, is it in the name- of Him who was a pilgrim and a stranger here below-a servant because a Son: is it as those who have avowed, plainly, that we are not of the world, but seek a city yet to come. Is it as those who know what God is now doing,, and who openly and practically avow what we know, and' act upon it. So shall two or three who meet. together in His name be able to say, that they are and that they know-they are, in His mind, "of"

His house, and " of." His assembly, and the world and the professing world alb. around them will know it too. The presence of God is a very real thing, even with two or three who are in the power of His name; and they get tokens of His presence.. Such never could say, "We are His house, and His. assembly" without arrogance and pride. If we assume. it, we are in Babel in spirit and mind. We are laying. claim to the judgment due to the house and -assembly as failed in man's hand.- We are walking upon earth, and minding things of our own;. yet, on the other hand,. two or three so met together in His name, could not (without ignorance of the Lord's grace and of their own responsibility under its blessing) deny they are " of " that which he counts and acts towards, in a., peculiar sense, as His own; prospectively as His house, His assembly. If the form of two or three meeting occupy the mind, self and worldliness will be found in a new form. and that is all. But, if the purged people get together in the fear of the Lord, they will find the power of the Spirit, heaven and joy unspeakable.

" What as to the House of God which is the assembly of the living God?" Study the word, and see what it was at Pentecost with the Divine presence in it, and the full savor of heaven and eternity in and upon it. The faith and the Spirit of Christ go together. See what man has done since, and see, too, most especially, the every contrast or want of agreement between your own character and that of Christ Jesus; or, that of a Peter, a Stephen, or a Paul,: and be ashamed before the Lord at the worldliness and carnality, the self-sufficiency and ignorance, and careless self complacency which have marked you. See the down-hill road of everything in man's hand, to infidelity and superstition; but, mark too, above it all, the faithfulness of God, and His purpose of carrying into the new Jerusalem His own. If you find you are now, while it is called to-day, one with Him in that purpose, stand forth for Him a vessel purged from evil in every way.. They that walk by sense and live on earth will find that their connection with the church is connection with a ruined house and a corrupt assembly, about, when the evil is fully ripe, to be judged; but, they who walk by faith and in the Holy Ghost, and live in heaven, will find that their connection with the church, is connection with the living God and the word of His grace in His own eternity-and the counsel of the Lord as to the new Jerusalem-the Bride-it shall stand.

God give us more simplicity and purpose of heart to carry out, at all cost, His principles-first as individuals, and that will secure to the twos and threes their full blessing.

If, as I believe, the whole blessing of the soul and of each of us, and of us all who are believers, purged: believers, turns upon the reality of our having to do, consciously and intelligently, according to the faith and by the Spirit, with the living God who has taken us up, while it is called to-day, in His grace,-let us beware, then, as to our thoughts and conduct in relation to the query-" What as to the House of God, which is the assembly of the living God?"

" Where two or three are gathered together in My name,. there am I in the midst of them"-was the Lord's first declaration and promise,-and that before. the Day of Pentecost; it was His new principle of association for His disciples. The temple in the land had been the rallying point of the people of Israel. His own person, though in heaven, seen by faith, would be the attracting center of union to the disciples of Him who died that He might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered Abroad. On the Day of Pentecost this was acted upon, and by the Holy Ghost, an associate company and habitation formed on earth to which the responsibility was 'committed of the heavenly-mindedness, the. grace, the holiness, and the unity of God's house and assembly.

It was a real thing, and the living God and His power were there. But man failed; and where 'now, on earth, is there that which we can turn to and say: " See the house of God, the assembly of the living God" as they could have done at Jerusalem, without. fear of contradiction, or shame. It was a manifest reality. It bore the stamp upon it of God and of heaven; of His character and ways. But it is not a manifest reality now, that which is in man's hands. And, because men feel the want of the reality, they that think they can still say " Come and see in us the house and the assembly"-are obliged to falsify the truth of God. They are obliged either to change the elements of what was the house and assembly, as Rome has done, from heavenly to worldly, from spiritual to sensual; or they are obliged to make what was visible and tangible to sense invisible and spiritual; but an invisible light and an invisible house for men in bodies upon earth is literally nonsense. When Christ was upon earth, as God's witness there, he was not invisible, but visible, as 1 John 1:1, says, " That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen, etc;" and when He went into heaven and

had sent the Holy. Ghost down from heaven, the Church was not invisible, but visible enough, whether at Jerusalem or at Ephesus, and it made its light and power known, for the Holy Ghost was there, and an absent Lord was loved and served. One house and one assembly of God upon earth; one truth and one Spirit; one set of principles; one origin; one power; one end and one portion marked it every where the house and assembly visible upon earth-witness for an absent and, to the world invisible, Lord and Savior. To change either the principles of the Church, or its visible manifestation, is the work of the Adversary-who thus seeks to destroy the responsibility of the saved people. Rome did the former; Protestantism does the latter. Surely there is neither reality nor the presence of the living God, therefore, with either the one or the other.

But the principles acted upon at Pentecost by God and Christ, and the Holy Ghost, might have been owned fully at the reformation. They were not; nor was man's failure ever seen clearly. If it had, we should not have had on earth that which we had at Pentecost exactly, any more than the temple, when once destroyed, could ever be the same when rebuilt. The Urim and the Thummim, and the Shechinah, were never restored to the temple when rebuilt; moreover, the ten and the two tribes were ever distinct from the days of the kingdom being rent in twain. Still there was, from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah, that upon earth in Israel, which God could own, and did own as His temple and His people,-bear as they did the awful traces of man's past failure. Was there. such an apprehension of what the Church had been, and of the impossibility of man to restore it at the time of the Reformation? I trow, not any where. Nay, for the most part, instead of the Pentecostal Church for model, the temple and kingdom of Israel was taken for model, and Protestant non-conformity, with all its piety and good works, never appears to me to have got hold even of the principles of the Church at Pentecost clearly.., Therefore one spirit and one faith, and a fellowship based upon the holiness, and truth, and grace of Pentecost, were not even sought. after. Had they been sought after, God might, and doubtless would, have marked both man's failure and His own grace in that which He would have allowed to be set up, though that which corresponded to the Urim and Thummim, and Shechinah might not have been given, nor would the rent of Greek and Roman churches ever have been mended. But, in truth, there was nowhere the children of God who had been scattered abroad, gathered, as such, together, according to the promise: " Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.' It was not sought, and it was not found. I need not here say what the Protestant

churches, as such, appear to me to have been,-still I may say that their basis was the seat of government in this world,-so far as I know, in every case. And, if non-conformity went a step further, it never, that I know, apprehended the original unity and visibility of the one habitation of God through the Spirit, of the one assembly of the living God.

When the days came that the return of the Lord was to be brought forth and preached again, the Lord did throw much light upon the minds of the people, that received it; and both the original unity of the Church, and the personal presence of the Holy Ghost with it, as under the Lordship of Christ, at first, and remaining as He did, to witness, for the Lord Jesus Christ, became a commonly known and commonly owned truth. The presence of the Spirit had been seen by a Huss, and by, perhaps, Luther, as also other truths, but were not acted upon by them; and though found. in their writings, in such expressions as the Holy Ghost, and not the Pope, Christ's Vicar upon earth, did not long survive, as truth known to the mass. But now, many in England, and on the continent, saw clearly, in the light of the doctrine Of the Lord's return, the Holy Ghost as the Comforter; who, however dishonored by man, had remained to witness for the Lord, and to spew of His Father's blessedness in heaven to them that believe.

Many, too,' then. pinched and conscience-vexed by man's world-churches, and by the inadequacies of Nonconformity, did find a haven of rest to their troubled consciences in the promise and the meeting upon it, " Where two or three are gathered together in. my name; there am I in the midst of them.' They may have attained, too, to taste of the communion of saints as such-may have met upon a basis large enough for all the children of God that were scattered abroad, and yet practically vital enough to give no attraction to those who obviously sought not the Lord out of a pure heart. It may be, too, that their position was such (however despicable in itself, like the Cave of Adullam, which housed God's king and God's priest) as to be owned of the Lord with an, " I am with them to bless them," and, again (Hag. 1:13), " I am with you, saith the Lord," and that He may have said of them, as thus together, " Of my habitation, of my assembly," pointing them onward and upward to the glory. Before man they never could pretend to be the house or to be the assembly-much less could they pretend to do that which even the primitive church did not pretend to; viz., to gather to themselves, and not to Jesus. Still there was reality in the movement, and God was with it then and there. If any, now, in the present day, wanted me to go back to those days, I should see no reality in so doing, nor do I think God would be with me in the attempt. That movement was not the model, nor the starting point of action by which to judge ourselves; but Pentecost was both model and starting point. Those times are bygone. The state of things is changed now, and the time; but the living God of then is the living God of now, and knows how to apply the promise to our need to-day as much as to our need yesterday.'

The mass who are awake now pass not through the same trouble of conscience to-day as some did forty years ago. But the promise that met us then, meets us now, and the living God is still with us. As God still remembers He is Creator and Provider, and Governor, though man has forgotten it, and denied his allegiance to God, so does the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ remember his title and place as to the Church. He has acted, and is acting upon his own right to give the blessings of these titles to a failed people. Babylon itself cannot hinder His free grace to the people who have failed. If humbled under His hand, they will get it.

I doubt much whether we can safely speak of them as a remnant, it would lead the mind too much back to Old Testament times, and to things of earth, and place them on the earth; yet they certainly may say, "Of His own will begat He us, with the word of truth," which cannot be said of the mass professing; and they may be, as to position also, able to say (which the children of God, who are scattered abroad, can hardly do), of that "kind of first fruits of His creatures."

"Are they a testimony, and if so of what?" Such is a question which has been put, and often. Was the pristine Church, as such, a testimony, and will the New Jerusalem Bride of the Lamb be a testimony?

Is there not a fallacy in both these questions? I think there is; and that the not perceiving this has led to sorrow. The word testimony may be used either in a passive or in an active sense. In the former sense, the church at Pentecost, house and assembly, certainly was a testimony or proof of the unsearchable grace and wisdom of God in Christ (Eph. 2 & 3.) and so, greater proof of divine grace and wisdom than the new Jerusalem, I know not-'tis the chef d' oeuvre of God-something made for Christ. But to whom will the new Jerusalem be a testimony in the active sense?- such a city, such a bride corporate cannot speak (see also Psa. 19). And was the church at Jerusalem either a preacher or a teacher? i. e. a testimony in the active sense? I think not. It was formed by the Word, and dwelt in by the Spirit:-but the gospel existed before the church; and, it had individual men in it who were teachers of it, and there were evangelists who went forth to gather out through the gospel, like Paul, without any man's leave. To receive, to be formed by, to hold the truth and to display the power of it in our ways and habits-are very different things from preaching or teaching the truth, whether to saint or sinner. If men have found grace to be of the two or three who are purging themselves, and do not count that their being there, is of the election of grace, in their own cases and in the cases of all who have found a lair there, where two or three are gathered together, I pity them from the bottom of my heart.

What a sweetness they have lost, in not being to say "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, for His name's sake." The existence of any such spots are, in their very existence, a proof of unchanging grace in God; and, I trust also, they are proofs that the night is far spent, and that the day is at hand. Nothing will make the ruin and failure of the church in man's hand, so tangibly apparent to men, I think, as such gatherings. Nothing will make so apparent to men, that the children of God have had no communion as such in Romanism, etc., as a few meeting in brokenness amid the ruin; yet, amid it all, having, through God's grace, His presence manifested among them, and therefore, communion as children of God. Be they two or three; or twenty or thirty; or two or three thousand, who thus meet together-there is no fear of their not having God with them; they are walking in the faith of Christ, and by the Spirit they have been blessed of God; and, if God gives Teachers and Pastors, these would not be the assembly, nor could they trace their credentials otherwise than as having addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints'-evangelists too, He might give; but they are, though of the church, outside as to their range of work, which is to the world as such.

There is another remark I would make, as to what is called Testimony in the active sense. If I were an evangelist or a teacher, I should be called to give testimony; it would be part of any obedience, and the way I should seek, to be able to do it, is marked in the scriptures.

This would be active testimony. I pray God to give us much more of it, and to make more effectual the little which there is. But I am not called, it is not part of my obedience as a Christian, to have my soul occupied with men, good or bad men's thoughts about the effects of my communion with God. If I walk in the flesh or worldliness, that will be patent to all, and is to be guarded against surely; but if I walk with God and Christ. in Heaven, through faith and the Holy Ghost, my soul is occupied with the objects there, and it is just this absorbedness with Heaven and eternity, which gives that unselfishness, and that care for God and for Christ, which is the passive testimony. If I seek it, self comes in, and man's thoughts in time, which is worldliness. If I am occupied with that which is in Heaven and eternity, the savor of it will appear; a servant of God because a Son.

If any deny' that God has persons now-a-days who are responsible to Him, some to preach the word to the world, and others to explain it to the saints; I leave them to settle that with Him. The assembly of God in no sense ever pretended to be a pastor or a teacher, but to be, what is much higher, the habitation of God, and the assembly in association with God, a proof in its original formation, and in its very existence wherever found, of His love, and wisdom, and power; and, since man betrayed the trust, of how the counsel of the Lord stands firm, and of how the Father -works, and the Son, to form the new Jerusalem-Satan, world, and flesh, not-withstanding. Man's past failure is not to be our excuse for worldliness, or indifferentism in heart or conduct to the person and path of Christ, or for withdrawing of ourselves into corners, each one apart. Nor are we to use it as a place for seeking a quiet and comfortable nest for ourselves, or a place in which any shortcoming of devotedness and holiness will not be noticed; the common failure being the cover for present individual failure. Amid all the fretting of evil unbelieving hearts, let us in patience possess our souls. He gives more grace. May we be the free channels of it to others, in all their trouble. "We are what we are, and God is what He is; and they that walk with Him, the living God, Will soon find that they and He are well met together;" but then, let us keep to reality, to a walk with the living. God while it is called to day, and leave it to Him to settle. with those that lag behind, or that run before, or that ignorantly wander at the side. In this day, it is a great matter to let God break us down into our own places, by what means He is pleased; and sure I am, that there is no danger of His breaking any of us down into a place that is too small for us. Let Him work, and follow thou Him; and the place of work now and of glory hereafter, will tell of His greatness, little as we may be in it. The stone that slew Goliath was a little stone, and David's exertion small. It did a great work nevertheless, and won a great prize, for God was owned and thought of, and Goliath and the Philistines were not thought much about by David.

I would that my brethren-instead of being occupied with questions about what is the Church now on earth in time, and what are we as to it, which only prove, in those that so speak, that they have not done with man as a failed thing, have not ceased from man-were occupied with what the Church is in God's mind in heaven and for eternity. Let them see the failure in -man's hand; let them see their own connection with it, and let them loathe themselves, and all that man has done and been, in the presence of the love that. knows no let, but still goes on with its own purposes and plans; but let them look to it, that they individually are purged vessels fit for the master's use; not of the world, in thought, affection, conduct, even as they are -not of the world in the Spirit of Christ, which has made them partakers of the blessing. But doing and suffering God's will, are great things in this day.

Walk by sense and sight as to the Church, and you are in Babylon; walk by faith and the Spirit, and you are with God on the road to glory and Heaven. The sum and substance of all I have to say is that the Church, as the habitation of God, the assembly of the living God, seems to me to be presented in two ways in Scripture. It is part of the eternal counsel and plan of God the Father, for the Son of His love, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the eternity that lies before us. As such, 'tis the workmanship of God the spirit, through faith in us; and can never fail. But this formed the basis of a responsibility among men on earth, in time, inasmuch as the knowledge of the truth which lay at the basis of it and of the power so brought. in (viz.: the Messiah, earth rejected, displayed in Heaven as the second Adam, life-giving Spirit) was set forth at Pentecost, and entrusted to man.

Man has failed in this as in everything else; hopelessly, and irremediably failed, and judgment is at the door. On the other hand, God has not failed in any wise; and he knows how to turn even this failure also to His own glory, and to the furtherance of the blessing of any who own. it, and walk with Him amid the failure. Such become manifest as persons who purge themselves from all evil; who purify themselves even as He is pure; who walk with Him upon the principles upon which He is acting, in and for His own eternity in Heaven.

(Continued from page 37.)

A. Are the three offerings of the people, on the eighth, day, the bringing in of the children of Israel before the glory appears?

B. You get another element in the consecration of Aaron's sons, they are all connected with himself," with Him" (30). This is not the case in chap. ix; no such connection is marked. When you get Aaron alone, as High Priest, there is no blood; he is anointed with oil, as Christ was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power.

A. But still they are connected with him; and it is not so with the people?

B. No. We only are made kings and priests; and, for us to be brought in, we must have blood put on us and the anointing oil, which was never put on the people, but when Christ went in, it was with His own perfection.

A. Is there not anointing connected with abiding in Christ in the epistle of John?

B. Yes. Only it does not refer to Priesthood there. It is the same thought. It is life. In John, you always get life connected with the Spirit.

A. And with God and with Christ?

B. Then it is not merely life given us of His Spirit Though it is life, it is also spirit for union with Himself as Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; John gives us his person not priesthood. The ground was laid in His person. It is life, there; besides that it is the Holy Ghost. In Eph. always the Holy Ghost. In Col., always life. The same thing, but presented according to their condition. As life, it is as your own [new] nature coming from God.. As the Holy Ghost, it is in power. Whatever He,(Christ) is you get into; Sonship, priesthood, royalty. It is a great thing to have it as life. If it were only the Holy Ghost, I would not say, "I;" if it were without the Holy Ghost, there would be no power. (To be continued.)

Observe, My Soul, Thy Blessed Lord

Observe, my soul, thy blessed Lord:

Whither He beckons-Go.

Does He lead on? Then hasten forth:

Does He hold back? Stand thou.

When He commends thee, stoop thou low

While absent, in Him rest;

When He chastises, then say thou

" I need it, Lord, 'tis best."

When He, His truth, in blessed grace,

Now here, now there displays,

Rejoice in this, that others learn

His mercy and His ways.

If He thy services demands,

Spring up with glad delight;

Or, if He give thee not a word,

Be still as in His sight.

In short, O Lord, with my whole heart,

From this day to the end,

In scorn; or want, sorrow deep,

On thee I would attend!

Free Translation.

Oh Jesus, Precious Savior

OH Jesus, precious Savior,
Oh when wilt Thou return?
Our hearts with woe familiar,
To Thee, our Master, turn.
Our woe is Thine, Lord Jesus,
Our joy is in Thy love;
But woe and joy all lead us
To Thee in Heaven above.
We ponder the long story
Of this world's mournful ways;
We think on holy glory
With Thee through endless days.
We see God's gracious order
All spoil'd by man below;
See all around disorder;
Meek hearts beset with woe.
Where'er we ope' the pages
In which Thy wondrous word,
Man's path through varied ages
Is given us to record,
Of failure, ruin, sorrow,
The story still we find;
God's love but brings the morrow
Of evil in mankind.
To Thee we look, Lord Jesus,
To Thee whose love we know;

We wait the power that frees us
From bondage, sin, and woe.
We look for Thine appearing,
Thy presence here to bless;
We greet the day that's nearing,
When all this woe shall cease.
But oh, for us, blest Savior,
How brighter far the lot
With Thee to be forever,
Where evil enters not.
To see Thee, who'st so loved us,
There, face to face, above,
Grace at first had moved us
To taste and know Thy love.
With Thee, O Lord, forever,
Our souls shall be content;
Nor act, nor thought, shall ever
Full joy with Thee prevent.
Thy Father's perfect favor
Our dwelling-place shall be,
And all His glory ever
Shine forth on us and Thee.
O come then soon, Lord Jesus,
In patience still we wait;
Await the power that frees us-
Our longed-for, heavenly seat.

2.

SING without ceasing, sing
The Savior's present grace;

How all things shine
In light divine
For those who've seen His face.
He's gone within the veil;
For us that place He's won;
In Him we stand,
A heavenly band,
Where He Himself is gone.
There all 's unsullied light,
My heart lets in its rays,
And heavenly light
Makes all things bright,
Seen in that blissful gaze.
Such, here on earth, I am,
Though I in weakness roam;
My place on high,
God's self so nigh,
His presence is my home.
My heart is filled with bliss,
Heaven's own eternal joys!
My soul at rest,
Of peace possessed,
That world its strength employs.
Thus in divine delight,
Of love so richly given;
God's works below
With beauty glow,
His hand, His grace, I own.
And stayed by joy divine,

As hireling fills his day,
Through scenes of strife,
And desert life,
I tread in peace my way.
That way is upward still,
Where life and glory are;
My rest's above,
In perfect love,
The glory I shall share.
Forever with the Lord,
Forever like Him then,
And see His face,
In that blest place,
My Father's house in Heaven.-D.

3.

REVEALER of the Father's love,
And sharer of His Joy!
Be Thou, until we meet above,
Our way-worn hearts' employ.
For Thou, for us, wilt surely come,
And we to Thee ascend;
And then our conflict will be done,
And all our sorrow end.
Yes! we shall meet in heaven above,
Where all Thy glories shine;
Thou God of peace and boundless love,
The glory all is thine.-P.

The Palingenesia

THE Palingenesia, or Regeneration, of Matt. 19:28, is a state or condition already reached. The washing of Palingenesia, or Regeneration, of Titus 3:5, intimates the act or process by which a new state or condition is reached; that spiritual operation which renews, or recreates, or regenerates a sinner.

These are the only two places in Scripture where the word is found. In Matt. 19:28, it is the title of that condition in which all things, or the creation itself, will be displayed, when the Son of Man sits in His kingdom, on the throne of His glory. And this kingdom is called by various other names, or receives different descriptions in Scripture. It is called "the world to come." It is described as "the times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;" or, "the times of restitution of all things." It is again called simply, "the kingdom," and the "kingdom of the God of heaven;" and "the kingdom of your Father." It is the Creation in subjection to the Son of Man. We shortly and familiarly term it "the millennium." The Lord's title for it in the above passage, is "the Palingenesia, or the Regeneration" - a word which intimates that it will be another or a second Genesis - a creation again-creation in a new condition.

And thus, the wisdom of God in Scripture accomplishes a circle, which is said to be the most perfect of all figures; for it returns to the beginning when it reaches the end, losing nothing on the journey it has taken, but rather, by the wondrous and magnificent process, finding all, and re-gathering all, at the close, in richer and advanced conditions. The old Creation had no glory, by reason of the glory of the new that excelleth. If that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. The story of the old is lost in the more wondrous story of the new. The old Creation had its foundation in the power of God; the new has its foundation in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. And this mystery, that the Lamb of God is the new Creator, the Framer or Builder of the new Creation, as well as its Head, is taught us in 2 Cor. 5, where the apostle says, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," thereby telling us, that our new creation is the same as, or, depends upon, our being "in Christ." And he then goes on with the same thought, saying, "old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself."

This is clear and decisive. The new Creation is that great system which stands in and under God as a Redeemer or Reconciler. This is its standing, its character. It has no being, no existence, but in the reconciliation which the blood of the Lamb of God has accomplished. It is a purchased and redeemed, and not simply a created, possession.

So, also, Heb. 2 teaches us the same. "The world to come," of which it speaks, is revealed as a scene, where all the works of God's hand are to be found in subjection to the Son of Man. But it teaches us likewise, in connection with this, that this Son of Man, this Lord of the world to come, had before been made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, for the tasting of death for sinners, that He might, as a suffering Captain of salvation, lead sons to glory, or sinners with Himself into "the world to come."

This is not only great in its bearing and character, but something altogether new and peculiar. Did ever the Blessed- One, in any region of His boundless creation, acquire sovereignty by such a title, or reach His dominions by such a path? It may well be called " the world to come," or a Palingenesia; for not only is it still future, but when it is revealed, it will have to be said, there never was the like of it before. It is founded in atonement. It is laid in the sorrows and sufferings of its divine Lord, the Son of -Man. Bright and happy as it will be for eternal ages, it comes forth into being from the work of reconciliation accomplished by the Cross, and sealed by the crowning of Him who died there, with glory and honor in heaven. It is the fruit of death and resurrection.

How great, indeed, is this way of the grace, the wisdom, and the power of God ! The work of His hands destroyed itself, in the person of Adam, its steward and representative; and now, in the person of the Lord Jesus, God Himself has entered the ruins, the scene of the mighty Catastrophe, and there, in a way which infinitely glorifies, Him, has wrought deliverance from the bondage of corruption, and transplanted His creation into the liberty of glory.

And so, likewise, other Scriptures, in their way and measure, come to tell us the same wondrous tale. The words " until the redemption of the purchased possession," which we read in Eph. 1, are full of this deep and precious secret. There are three thoughts suggested there. 1. The purchase of the possession. 2. The redemption of it. 3. An interval between this purchase and this redemption. These things are surely suggested in this Scripture.

The Lord Jesus, the Son and Christ of God, is both the Purchaser and the Redeemer, and the earth is the possession or inheritance here spoken of. The purchase and the redemption may be otherwise called redemption in two different ways; that is, by blood and by power.

The Lord is a Redeemer by blood, ransoming us and our inheritance, paying the full redemption price, so as to satisfy all the righteous demands of the throne of God.. He is a Redeemer by power, rescuing us and our inheritance from the hand of the enemy and usurper, destroying him who had the power of death, and casting out the prince of this world. So that in the world to come, in the Palingenesia, where the redemption of the purchased possession is to be displayed, the ransomed of the Lord will thankfully look at God, whose grace is the fountain of this glory and blessedness, and know Him in His righteousness, to be satisfied by our Redeemer; and also boldly look at the great enemy, and see him conquered, and cast out from his usurpation, by our Redeemer.

This will be a high condition indeed. Man, in the old creation never attained it, and never could. He was, and the whole scene around him, in a doubtful conditional state. All was exposed to forfeiture and ruin there, in the stead, of being set in victory and redemption. The old creation, and man at the head of it, could never have looked on either God or the serpent, as the new creation and the saints will be entitled to do. " Purchased" and " redeemed" express the condition of " the world to come; " or, " the possession-" or inheritance in the Palingenesia. But, the like of that there never has been in any other part of the creation of God. Angels in their dignities, and Adam in his innocency, did not illustrate it -as, indeed, I need not say.

So, the Epistle to the Colossians, in one verse, gives us a sight of redemption by blood or purchase; the Epistle to the Philippians, in one verse, gives us a sight of redemption by power (Col. 1. 20, Phil. 3:21). This one verse which I have been considering, in the Epistle to the

Ephesians (1. 14), combines the two, giving us a sight of the mystery in its perfection, or the redemption of the purchased possession.

But, further, in the progress of Scripture, we have types, prophecies, and rehearsals of this great mystery., or of the creation of God in a purchased and redeemed condition, as well as these Scriptures which teach it. The world under Noah after the flood,- the land of Egypt as settled by, and under Joseph,- the Jubilee, or the fiftieth year in Israel,- the days of Solomon in 2 Chronicles-these were types or samples of it. The 8th Psalm, Isa. 11, and 35., Ezek. 36, with a number of like Scriptures, are prophecies of it. The scene in Rev. 5, where every creature in heaven, in the seas, on the earth, and under the earth, are heard in their varied but harmonious joy, may be read as a rehearsal of it. And, I may add, there was a great exhibition of this mystery, a purchased and a redeemed possession, in the story of Israel. In the land of Egypt, the people themselves were ransomed, or purchased, or at a full price redeemed from the claims of Divine righteousness by blood. God Himself, for none other could; satisfied His own demand; for he appointed the blood, which turned His sword of judgment aside. And, then,. in due time, this, same people, God's Israel, were redeemed by power, as from the hand of Pharaoh, by the arm and strength

of Jehovah, at the Red Sea (Ex. 12. And 15.).

And as the people themselves, so their inheritance.

The land promised to their fathers, the land already theirs by Divine gift (upon the forfeiture of it by its natural possessors, who had filled up the measure of their sins), is redeemed by strength of arm out of the hand of the Canaanites, in the day of Joshua. And this was upon the ground and warranty of. a previous purchase, or redemption by blood (see Ex. 15:15,16).

From all this, as from many and many another illustration of the same, I might take occasion to say, How finely does Scripture maintain its unity.- Prophets and Apostles, Psalms, Epistles, Evangelists, and the Apocalypse, Patriarchal and Mosaic. words, telling out the same mysteries of God, in harmonies that are beautiful as well as sacred.

And now let me add, that nothing in the coming kingdom, nothing in this Palingenesia, or world to come,. of which we are speaking, will be lost; all that was once seen in the old creation and in the present world will re-appear.

The creation itself, the work of God's hand, will be still spread abroad, in all its order and departments, as of old; its heaven and its earth in their varied provision and furniture-but all will be secured and not exposed; redeemed, reconciled and glorified. Instead of being subject to vanity, it will be " delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of Gad.' It will stand in the strength, and shine in the beauty, of the risen Lord.

The vegetable world shall then rejoice. The ground itself shall be delivered from the curse. Instead of the thorn, shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier the myrtle tree. The wilderness shall blossom as the rose. The field shall be joyful and all that is therein, and the trees of the wood together. And with these, the sea in its' fullness, the floods and the hills. So sing the Psalmist and the Prophets.

The cattle on the mountains, and the beasts of the forests, shall be among the subjects of this universal dominion, this wide-spread sovereignty of the Son of Man. The lion shall eat straw like the ox; the wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the leopard shall lie down with the kid -the the calf, the young lion, and the fatling shall be together, and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

The heavens of that world shall be there also, in their forms of beauty, and in their service of fertilizing and enriching the earth. As we read of the Lord of those days, how He will make the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice; how He will visit the earth, and water it as with the river of God, blessing the spring and the harvest, crowning the year with His goodness, till the pastures clothed with flocks, and the valleys covered with corn, shout for joy and sing together (Psa. 65). Nothing shall then hurt or destroy in that holy mountain of the Lord; and He will hear the heavens, and the heavens shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil; and the corn, and the wine; and the oil shall hear Jezreel (Hos. 2).

'What sights in the visions of the Prophets are these! And yet still, and still further. We learn that not only will all the materials of the whole creation thus reappear, but the systems of the old world will be. reproduced also. Of course, in purified and perfected Conditions of wonder, joy, and honor; but still the systems of the old world, as well as the materials of the old creation, will be reproduced.

The nations, all the earth over, shall be settled in their several homes and inheritances again. And they shall do service to the King in Zion, all people calling Him blessed; the knowledge of His glory covering the earth as the waters do the sea. The daughter of Tire shall be known there, and so the kings of Tarshish and the isles, the kings of Sheba and- Seba--and some shall come from far, and some from the north, and from the west, and some from the land of Sinim.

The people of Israel shall be set again in their own land, and again distinguished among the nations as of old, the head and not the tail, of whose skirts, men of all languages of the nations shall take hold, while they say, "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

Jerusalem shall shine again, as in the presence of the Lord in the day of her glory. It shall be the throne and the sanctuary of the God and King of that world to come, the witness of a world's worship, the home of the children of the kingdom, the seat of righteous, peaceful government, and the happy, honored center of the earth, in the days of the Palingenesia.

Surely it is a great and wondrous sight to see to, a great theme to meditate and to talk of. Our thoughts might well be rapt into wonder and thankfulness while we ponder it. But I ask, Is there not moral admonition for us in' it also? Surely there is. if the atonement of the cross of Christ be the sure foundation of this " world to come," and our only title to it, how should we now triumph in that atonement, and in that only I. And if this same cross of Christ tell. us of the character of this " present evil world," reminding us of its rejection of that blessed Lord, on whom all our hopes rest, how should we be dead to it, and take our place in Moral separation from it! Surely this is so. But the heart knows its own humiliations-how coldly it exults in the one, how feebly it gains its victories over the other.

And I would not close this meditation without observing one other truth. The old creation was not allowed to pass away, till man, God's original workmanship in beauty and perfection, was

vindicated to the full glory of God's blessed and holy name. This was done, in the person, character, and life of the Lord Jesus. He stood in the midst of the old creation, a stainless sample Of humanity, adorned with all moral glory in and for the eye and delight of God-the only such, but the surely such-the perfect immaculate Image of man according to God. But having been this, having thus stood in the midst of the ruin, in which all beside had involved themselves, He died under the judgment of that corrupted thing-meeting its doom, and righteously answering for it, by reason of His personal dignity, being God and man in one Christ, and in one sacrifice. And having done this, as risen from the dead, the triumphant Christ, He laid the foundation of that new creation of which we speak. He has stood where Adam fell; He has conquered where Adam was overthrown. He has broken the gates of hell; and in Himself and in his victory, has founded a kingdom that never can be moved-a new, a redeemed creation. This is the secret. The Lord God is the Foundation, as well as the Builder of this mighty, unimpregnable system. In the stead of a world committed to the issue of a trial of man's allegiance, it is a world sustained in unassailable strength, and in unfading glory, by the accomplished and celebrated victory of. the Lord of life and salvation.

" The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand forever."

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.)

Paradox

The Church was, is, and is not, and yet shall be.

The Church was in God's counsels before the world was; it was, too, as set up by God on earth, as at Pentecost, entrusted (in its principles and the revelation of the truth of the Lordship of Christ in heaven, and of the Spirit sent down here as His Vicar during His absence) to man at Pentecost, and visibly existed upon earth. It was (fruit), for it is now a ruin among men.

The Church is, in the Divine Mind, as that which God is forming now amid the confusion of man's wickedness here below; it is the delight of God, the glory of Christ, the work of the Spirit, the joy of Heaven, for eternity.

The Church is not. Man cannot show now, what he could show at Pentecost, and at Ephesus; and the church, which faith realizes as existing in the Divine Mind and as being the subject of the present actions and operations and care of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (to sense and sight) is not, though, where faith and the Spirit are in practical action, he that has them can identify that which is known and owned of God with something which he sees down here. The Church shall be the New Jerusalem-the Bride, the Lamb's wife in glory.

We have a good deal of need of wisdom and holy fear to hold James chap. 1. verses 3 and 13, as a balance by which to measure all ways of trial. God leads his people through deep waters, often brings them where they have no standing for their feet, but they are always cleansing waters. His people may themselves go to polluted waters which can neither cleanse nor be cleansed, even God's raging waves and billows: even these become, at His bidding, "waters of cleansing." His living ones rest beside still waters; this can never be with the foul waters of the flesh. The desire of man's heart ends only in death.

How cheering to know God as a Father in the midst of all the confusion around.

. The Apostle's sorrows and trials, besides being his present honor as conformity to the sufferings of his Master as a servant now, were also the school of his own soul for eternity.

Quotations

"And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded' unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."-Luke 24:27.

The Lord's -wisdom in dealing with the Sadducees of His day, may well be our pattern in dealing with a like generation in this day. "Ye do err," said He to them, `` not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God" (Matt. 22). They presented a difficulty, as they judged it to be, an insurmountable difficulty; but it was no such thing to Him. Scripture He bowed to, and the power of God He asserted. Scripture was His rule of thought and judgment; and He could rest in the power of God as that which would make every jot and tittle of it 'good.

This was His answer to them at once, His immediate rebuke of them. And it was enough. His Spirit afterward in the Apostle would commend the Saints to God, and to the word of His grace: so now, would Ha Himself lean on God and His word. It was enough for Him that God had spoken (see Acts 20:32).

But after this, He shows these Sadducees, that the difficulty they suggested was simply an imagination of their own, and not a part of the 'Scripture, or the 'revelation of God. And then, in closing with them, He exposes their unbelief by the light of Scripture, rebuking their denial of resurrection by a passage taken from 'Ex. 3- thus again honoring Scripture as the authoritative rule of all our thoughts.

But this only as I pass on to my present subject, the fact that quotations from the Old Testament are largely found in the New. These quotations from the Old Testament, cited, as they are, in all parts of the New, with many and many a glance, or tacit unexpressed reference, link all the parts of the sacred volume together, giving it a character of unity and completeness. The contents of the volume do the same- they also give unity and completeness to it; for they constitute a history (with incidental matters by the way), a series of events which stretch from the beginning to the end, from the creation to the kingdom. And prophecies in the Old Testament of events in the New, act in the same way as quotations in the New of passages in the Old. And thus, as in the mouth of several witnesses of the highest dignity, we have the oneness and the consistency, the unity and completeness of the Book from first to last fully set forth and established.

But this simple fact tells us, further, that all the parts of this wondrous volume are the breathing of one and the same Spirit; and again, the contents themselves speak the same. The moral glories which so brightly, so abundantly and so variously shine in them witness that God is their source. This constitutes the "self-evidencing light and power of the Holy Scriptures," as another has expressed it. And thus the divine Original of the book, as well as its divine Unity and consistency is established; and we hold to these truths in the face of all the insult that is put upon them by unreasonable and wicked men. Oppositions of criticism, falsely so called, only spend themselves in vain, like angry waves on the sea-shore. God Himself has set the bounds and they only return upon themselves, foaming out their own

shame.

In the progress of the New Testament Scriptures, the Lord and the Holy Ghost, each in his several way and season, use the Scriptures of the Old.

As to the Lord, we may find him doing this in several different ways.

1. He observes them obediently, ordering His life and behavior, and forming his character (if I may so speak), by them, and according to them.
2. He uses them as his weapons of war or shield of defense, when assailed by the Tempter, or by the men of the world.
3. He avers and avows their divine authority and original, and their indestructible character, and that too, in every jot and tittle of them.
4. He treats them as authoritative and commanding, when He teaches His disciples, or reasons with gainsayers.
5. He fulfills them

In such ways as these' the Lord honors the Scriptures of the Old Testament., What a sight! What a precious fact How blessed to see Him in such relationship to the Word of God; for that word is to ourselves the warrant and witness of all the confidence and liberty and peace we know before God!

We read the 119th Psalm with delight, there tracing a Saint's relation to Scripture; and we know it to be edifying to mark the breathings of the soul under the drawings and teachings and inspirings of the Holy Ghost. But it is a still more affecting, a more edifying thing, to trace and mark, through the four Evangelists, the relations to the same Scriptures into which the Lord Jesus puts Himself.

Then, when the ministry of the Lord is over, when the Son has returned to Heaven, and the Spirit comes down, He is seen (as in the Apostles whom he fills to write the Epistles) to do the same service for us; and in His way, to put Himself in connection with the Old Testament Scriptures, as the Lord had just been doing. For in all the Epistles, as I may say, we get quotations from them.

And here let me add, there is no limit to this. These quotations are found in every part of the New Testament, and are taken from every part- Of the Old. They are found in Matthew, and on to the Apocalypse, and are taken from Genesis to Malachi. And this is done very largely;

so that in the structure of the divine volume, we have nothing less than the closest, fullest, and most intricate interweaving of all parts of it: together, the end, too, returning to the beginning, and the beginning anticipating the end. So that, in a sense, we are in all parts of it, when we are in any part of it, though the variety of its communications is infinite. It reminds 'me of the figure of the body and its members, used by the Apostle to set forth Christ (1 Cor. 12). There are many members, but one body. There are many books, but one Scripture, one volume. All are equally divine workmanship, though all may not be of equal value to the soul. The foot is not the hand, nor the ear the eye. But God has set them together in one body, - as in the Heavens, He has set stars and constellations together, though one may differ from another in glory.

But to pursue the same figure of the body and the members, we do boldly say, one part of the volume cannot be touched without all feeling it and resenting it. " Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it;" God has so tempered it altogether. If Moses be insulted, Paul feels it: if Daniel or Zechariah be questioned, John and Peter will resent it. Yea, and I may go further in the same analogy, and say, the uncomely parts have been given more abundant honor: The shortest piece in the whole volume is made to be heard in the conclusion of the finest, and. most elaborate and most weighty argument we find in it. Psa. 117 is brought forth as a special witness in Rom. 15 And the book of the Proverbs, dealing as it does with common, practical, every day life, is honored by being - made as rich and blessed a witness to the Christ of God in His mysterious glories, as we get in any part of the whole Scripture (Chapter 8)

Yea and I will take on me to say this further. As all other parts of the volume, like the members of one body, will resent trespass and wrong done to any part, so will the Spirit say of God and of the Scriptures, as He says of God and of His. people, " He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye." The Scripture is His handywork; and God will make the quarrel of Scripture His own quarrel. If he will awake in due time, to the controversy of His temple or His covenant, or His Zion, so will he most assuredly to the controversy of His word. He has magnified His word above all His name. " He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words," Says the Lord Jesus, " bath one that judgeth him."

And again let me speak, as I stand in presence of God and His oracles, Scripture links itself with Eternity in ways that are divine, like everything else in it. If we have quotations in the New Testament of passages in the Old, so have we, in both Old and New, references to the Eternity that is past. And if we have foretellings in the Old Testament of events in the New, so have we, in both Old and New, the foretelling of the eternity that is to come. Scripture, as I may speak, retires behind the borders of time, and discloses the secrets and councils of the past Eternity, unsealing "the volume of the book," and disclosing predestinations formed and settled in Christ ere worlds began; and Scripture passes beyond the borders of time, and is in the scenes and glories of the Eternity that is to come, giving us to hear every tongue confessing " Jesus to be Lord to the Glory of God the Father," and many many kindred voices, and to see many many kindred glories. And happy for us, that it links itself with time as well as with Eternity. It goes before us to. spew us the way all through the confusion and corruption that is abroad, to the last moments of the dispensation. All is anticipated; so that we need not be stumbled by anything, however saddened and ashamed. we may be.." Great peace have all they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." We heed not be afraid with any amazement since we have it. - The confusion and corruption may be infinite, strange indeed in their changeful forms, and deep in their insolent wickedness; but Scripture has prepared us for all, superstitious vanities, and infidel insolence. The tare-field was spread out on the page of Scripture ere, it stretched itself out in the defiled plains of Christendom. The unmerciful fellow-servant is seen in Matt. 18, ere he is seen in the wars and controversies of Christendom.

God in His word has not forecast the shadow of uncertain evils.

It is indeed marvelous, and yet not marvelous because it is divine. The Spirit of Him who knows the end from the beginning can account for it, but nothing else can. The Book itself, as another has said, is a greater miracle than any which it-records.

And I would now end with a word about quotations, as it was with them I began.

These citations out of His own writings by God Himself, first in the Person of the Son, and then in the person of the Holy Ghost, are beautiful in this character; God is sealing what once He wrote: at the beginning He sent forth those writings as from Himself, being the source of them; so now, after they have come forth, and been embodied in human forms as in all languages of the nations, and been seated in the midst of the human family, He comes forth to accredit them there Himself, as with His own sign manual. God has both written them and sealed them, and we receive them as from Him, and in our way of responsive faith and worship, "set to our seal that God is true." "Thy testimonies have I claimed for my heritage forever; they are the rejoicing of my heart." Surely these things are so.

To notice, with some care, the quotations themselves, as they meet us while we pursue our way from Matthew to the Apocalypse, is an edifying exercise of the soul. It helps directly to let us into the fuller light of the Old Testament oracles, giving us nothing less than God's own key for unlocking the treasures that are there. And this exercise has also another direct effect-it binds all the parts, however distant, of the one volume together under our eye, and serves to present the whole as one complete and perfect piece of workmanship in full consistency with itself throughout. The light is one, though it may be that of the Patriarchal dawn, of the Levitical or Mosaic morning, of the prophetic forenoon, of the Gospel Meridian or noon-tide, and then of the Apocalyptic evening hour with its shadows, just before the solemn night of judgment which is to precede the second morning, the morning of millennial Glory. But this indeed it is. In Scripture, from beginning to end, we are in the light of God, from the first morning of creation to the second morning of the kingdom; having passed our own noon and evening hours, and also the season of the world's midnight.

Revelation

As regards Peter and Paul, we have scriptural authority for regarding them as the apostles respectively of the circumcision and of the uncircumcision. Peter and the twelve remain at Jerusalem when the disciples are scattered, and continue (though God was careful to maintain unity) the work of Christ in the remnant of Israel, gather into an assembly on earth the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Paul, as a wise master-builder, lays the foundation, having received the ministry of the Church, as of the Gospel to every creature under heaven (Col. 1). Peter sets us off as pilgrims on our journey to follow Christ risen towards the inheritance above. Paul, in the full development of his doctrine, though owning this, as in Phil. 3, shows us,¹ sitting in heavenly places in Christ, heirs of all which He is heir of. All this was 'dispensational, and it is full of instruction. But John holds a different place. He does not enter on dispensation, nor, though once or twice stating the fact (as 14. 1, 17. 24, 20. 17, 13. 1), does he take the saint up to heaven, nor does he the Lord Himself. Jesus, for him, is a divine person, the Word made flesh manifesting God and His Father-eternal life come down to earth. The epistle of John treats the question of our partaking of this life, and its characters. But, at the close of the Gospel, after stating the sending of the Comforter on His going away, Christ opens to the disciples, though in a mysterious way, the continuations of God's dealing with the earth, of which John, ministerially, is the representative, linking the manifestation of Christ on earth at His first coming, with his manifestation at His second; Christ's person, and eternal life in Him, being the abiding security, and living seed of God when dispensationally all was corrupted and in confusion and decay. The destruction of Jerusalem formed a momentous epoch as to these things; because the Jewish church, as such, ceased. Nay it had, even before. Christians were warned to leave the camp. The breach of Christianity with Judaism was consummated. Christ could no longer take up the Church as His own seat of earthly authority in the remnant. But, alas! the Church, as Paul had established it, had already fallen from its first estate, could in no sense take up the fallen inheritance of Israel. All seek their own, says Paul, not the things of Jesus Christ. All they of Asia, Ephesus, the beloved scene where all Asia had heard the word of God, had forsaken Him,-they, who had been specially brought with full intelligence into the church's place, could not hold it in the power of faith. Indeed, the mystery of iniquity was at work before this, and was to go on and grow until the hindrance to the final apostasy was removed. Here John's ministry comes in. Stability was in the person: of Christ, for eternal life first, but for the ways of God upon earth too. If the church was spued out of His mouth, He was the faithful witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Let us trace the links of this in His Gospel. In John 20, as elsewhere noticed in detail, we have from the resurrection of Christ till the remnant of Israel, the latter being represented by Thomas's look on the pierced One, and believing by seeing. In chap. 21., we have the full millennial gathering besides the remnant. Then, at the close of the chapter, the special ministry of Peter and John are pointed out, though mysteriously; the sheep of Jesus of the circumcision are confided to Peter; but this ministry was to close like Christ's. The church would not be established on this ground, any more than Israel. There was no tarrying. here till Christ came. Paul, of course, is no way noticed. For him, the church belonged to heaven-was the body of Christ, the house of God. He was a builder. Peter's

ministry, in fact, was closed, and the circumcision church left shepherdless, before the destruction of Jerusalem put an end to all such connection forever. Peter asks as to John. The Lord answers, confessedly mysteriously, but putting off, as that which did not concern Peter who was to follow Him, the closing of John's ministry prolonging it in possibility till Christ came. Now, in fact, the bridegroom tarried; but the service and ministry of John by the word, which was all that was to remain, and no apostle in personal care, did go on to the return of Christ. John was no master-builder like Paul; had no dispensation committed to him; was connected with the church in its earthly structure like Peter, not in the Ephesus or heavenly one, but was not the minister of the circumcision, but carried on the earthly system among the Gentiles, only holding fast the person of Christ. His special place was testimony to the person of Christ come to earth, with divine title over it-power over all flesh. This did not break the links with Israel as Paul's ministry did, but raised the power which held all together in the person of Christ, to, a height which carried it, through any hidden time or hidden power, on to its establishment over the world at the end; did not exclude Israel as such, but enlarged the scene of the exercise of Christ's power so as to set it over the world; and did not establish it in Israel as its source, though it might establish Israel itself in its own place, from a heavenly source of power. What place does the Church, then, hold in this ministry of John? None in its Pauline character, save in one phrase, coming in after the revelation is dosed, where its true place in Christ's absence is indicated (22. 17). But we have the saints, at the time, in their own conscious relationship to Christ, in reference, too, to the royal and priestly place to His God and Father, in which they are associated. with Himself. But John's ministerial testimony, as to the church, views it as the outward assembly on earth in its state of decay-Christ judging this-and the true church, the capital city and seat of God's government over the world, at the end, but in glory and grace. It is an abode, and where God dwells and the Lamb. All this facilitates our intelligence of the objects and bearing of the book. The church has failed; the Gentiles, grafted in by faith, have not

continued in God's goodness. The Ephesian church,-the intelligent vessel and expression of what the church of God was, had left its first estate, and, unless it repented, the candlestick was to be removed. The Ephesus of Paul becomes the witness on earth of decay, and of removal out of God's sight, even as Israel had been removed. God's patience would be shown towards the church as it had been towards Israel, but the church would not maintain God's testimony in the world, any more than Israel had. John does maintain this testimony, ministerially judging the churches by Christ's word, and then the world from the throne, till Christ comes and takes to Himself His great power and reigns during this transition-dealing of the throne. The heavenly saints are seen on high. When Christ comes they come with Him.

The first part of the epistle, then, of John, is the continuation, so to speak, of the Gospel before the last two dispensational chapters; the Revelation, that of chaps. 20. And 21., where, Christ being risen and no ascension given, the dispensational dealings of God are largely intimated in the circumstances which occur. 'While it is shown, at the same time, that He could not personally set up the kingdom then. He must ascend first. The two short epistles skew us that truth (truth as to His person) was the test of true love, and to be held fast when what was anti-Christian came in; and the free liberty of the ministration of the truth to be held fast against assumed ecclesiastical or clerical authority, as contrasted with the church. The apostle had written to the church. Diotrephes rejected free ministry.

I now turn to the book itself.

The Revelation is one belonging to Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him, and He signifies it to John. Though God over all blessed forever, He is here seen as Son of Man; the rejected Messiah, or Lamb, and so Head over all things. This fact, that the revelation is one confided to Him is important, because it at once makes it the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God; being commuted by Jesus, and given to Him by God. This testimony of Jesus and Word of God comes as a vision to John, who bare record of all he saw. All of it is prophecy, not the Spirit of God the messenger of the Father and of the Son's grace to the church in its own place,-a direct inspired communication to the church itself for itself; as in its own right place,-but a prophetic revelation to John about it as in the world, and about the world itself. The Church being already in decay and to be retrieved, whatever the delay of grace, the time was at hand, and the rejection of the church on earth to be taken as a starting point. Another system was to be set up. The apostle has not his face turned towards the churches at all, but his back. The mind of the Spirit is towards Christ's taking the kingdom. Still Christ was yet amongst them, but as Son of Man, the character in which he judges and inherits the world. The apostle turns and sees Him. Still it behooved, if he was accounting the coming dealing with the world in judgment, to notice by the bye the things that are. By giving them in seven contemporary churches, no time was necessary; it left the final results as at the door, for they were in the last days, yet gave, if there was delay, opportunity for a full moral picture of the whole of the church's history: I see in this only the wisdom of the Spirit, and exactly the character of John's ministry. I cannot doubt, then, for a moment, that, while professedly of universal application for every one that had an ear-not an address to the general conscience of the church,-the seven churches represent the history of Christendom,-the church as under man's responsibility, the fact of the judgment of the world coming after on its close, (the churches being the things that are), and the character of events beginning With the church leaving its first love, and ending with holding fast till He comes, and with being spued out of Christ's mouth. The adoption of the number seven, which cannot mean completeness at the same time, because the states are different; the reference to Christ's coming; the reference to the great tribulation to come on all the earth, in the letter to Philadelphia; the clear object of warning the church till Christ came, the world being then in scene for judgment: all leave no cloud upon the conclusion that the seven churches are successive phases of the professing church's history, though not absolutely consecutive, the fourth going on to the end; new phases then commencing, and going on collaterally to the end also. But God Himself appears here as the administrator of the world, even when addressing the church; and Christ, as man, coming under Him to this purpose; the Holy Ghost being noticed as the direct agent of power in the sevenfold perfection in which it is exercised. It is not the Father and the Son, but God who is, but embraces past and future in His being, and is never inconsistent with Himself, making good in time all that He has announced Himself in, in the past. The form of this, however, is peculiar here. It is not merely the abstract idea of Jehovah, who was, and is, and is to come. He is first announced by His present absolute existence: "from Him who is" the "I am," God Himself. And then to connect Himself with previous dealings, not present church-relationships, declares that He is the One who was; had revealed Himself in previous ages to the earth or to men, to the Abrahams and Moses of old times, and at the same time was the coming One who would make good everything revealed of and by Himself. Jesus Christ, who conies last as the man, in immediate connection with God's witness to, and government of, the earth, is presented as the faithful witness,-as He was personally on earth,-of

God; as risen from the dead (but no ascension or headship of the church),. taking all in this character not after the flesh; and, lastly, in government not yet made good: the Prince of the kings of the earth. The saints then express their own consciousness of what He has done for them. Yet still, in reference to the kingdom, not the body or bride, or their own heavenly joys, yet the highest possible, as regards the given glory and place. This is the necessary consequence of the consciousness of a near and blessed relationship. Whatever the glory of the One we are in relationship with, it is what He is for oneself, one's own nearness to Him, that comes to the mind when the glory is declared. Were a general to march in triumph into town, the feeling of a child or a wife would be, " that is my father," " that is my husband." Here the feeling, though of this character,- is more unselfish. "To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." It is His love to us which is celebrated still with the personal feeling " us." The saints know what He has done for them, and further, what He has made them. His love is perfect; king and priest are His highest characters here: nearest to God in power downwards, and in approaching Him upwards. He has made us kings and priests to God. and His Father; to Him be - glory! Such is the saint's 'thought when He is spoken of. He had loved us, cleansed us, and given us a place with Himself. This flows out the instant He is named. It is the answer of heart when He is announced before any communications take. place. His having done this is not announced; it is the saint's own consciousness.. As to others,' all must be told. The next 'point, the' first announced, is His appearing to the world. No direct communication to the church for its own sake, the book is not that. Here the church has that in its own consciousness only, as we have seen. Behold! He cometh with clouds; every eye shall see Him. The Jews, too, who pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. His appearing is in judgment. We then find, what is so remarkable in John, the mixing up God and Christ. Verse 8 cannot be said to be one or the other. It is Christ; but it is Christ Jehovah, Almighty, the Lord who is, and who was, and who is to come; the first and the last (compare 22. 12, 13). Thus we have the saints of these days, Christ's appearing to judgment; He is God, the first and the last, Alpha and Omega; the complete circle of Position, from John's day to the end. The practical position John takes with all the saints, is the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. He. belongs to the kingdom, but must wait while Christ waits, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. The generic name given to testimony applies to all his ministry, as well as to the prophecy; the word of God and the testimony of Jesus: only one might have thought that prophecy was not so, as it was not to the church about itself from its Head; but the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

Such is the introduction to this book. We now enter on its contents. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. It is his place and privilege as a Christian, though, which is stated, not the prophetic period into which he entered. In the day of resurrection, his own place,-the day on which Christians meet,-the apostle, removed from the society of Christians, still enjoyed the special elevating power of the Holy Ghost, though alone; and is thus used of God, allowed to be banished for the purpose, for what He could not, in an ordinary way, have communicated to the church for its edification. The persecuting emperor little thought what he was giving to us when he banished the apostle; no more than Augustus, in his political plans as to the census of the empire, knew he was sending a poor carpenter to Bethlehem, with his espoused wife, that Christ might be born there; or the Jews and Pilate's soldiers, that they were sending the thief to heaven, when they broke his legs, in heartless respect for their own superstitions or ordinances. God's ways are behind the scenes; but He moves all the scenes which He is behind. We have to learn this, and let Him work, and not

think much of man's busy movements. They will accomplish God's. The rest of them all perish and disappear. We have only peacefully to do His will.

The same voice that called John up to heaven, he now hears behind him on earth. The voice of the Son of Man. It summons his attention with power, and turning to see the voice as Moses towards the bush, he sees, not the image of God's presence in Israel, but the vessels of God's light in the earth, and a complete summary of it all, and in the midst of them, Christ as Son of Man. We find thus in the Revelation, God's whole history of the world, or of what is of Him in it, from the first decay of the church, to the new heavens and new earth. But it was impossible for God to set aside the present expectation of Christ, or to justify the church in its careless but sinful thought: my Lord delayeth His coming. Hence, as always, this history, and especially that of the church, is given in a way which leaves time out altogether. The moral progress of the church is given in pictures of the state of existing churches selected for that purpose, beginning with its first decline, and ending with its entire rejection. Being taken up as churches-the general principle of responsibility is in view, and the church viewed not as the infallibly blessed body of Christ, but such as that it may be rejected and set aside on earth; for a local church and the external visible church clearly can. These churches are seen as distinct light-bearers; that is, service, or rather position of witness in the world. They are viewed in their own proper character as of God, as set by Him in the world, they are of gold;. He may take them away because they give a dim, or no true light or witness for God; but the thing taken away, was founded in divine righteousness, and founded originally by a divine hand; but the Spirit first occupies itself with the character of Him who stood amongst them. First, we get His actual position before stating what He was. He stood as Son of Man. We have nothing, here, as-Head of the one body, nor even as heavenly Intercessor; nor have we the Christ, of course, i.e., the Jewish character of the Lord. It will be found that these are just the characters of Christ, omitted also, in the first chapter of John's Gospel. He sees Him in the wide character in which' He is set over all the works of God's hands, and Heir of all promises and purposes of God to man, according to divine righteousness. He is not the Son of Man in service. His garment is down to His feet, and He has the girdle of divine righteousness about His loins. This is His character. We have. then, His qualities or attributes. First, He is the Ancient of Days. In Daniel, the same truth comes out. The Son of Man is brought to the Ancient of Days; but further on in the chapter, it is the Ancient of Days who comes. The Son of Man is Jehovah. This characterizes all the testimony. The King of kings and Lord of lords shows Him; but, When He comes, we find He is King of kings and Lord of lords. But in this glory, He has the attributes of judgment. Eyes of fire. That which pierces into everything,,and fire is ever the sign of judgment. This was its piercing searching character. His feet, the firmness with which sin was met, for brass is righteousness, viewed not as intrinsically, in God to be approached, but as dealing with man, on his responsibility as man. The mercy-seat was gold, the altar and laver, brass; but there it was, as an altar, that is, dealing with sin for man, a sacrifice though fire was there, but here, the burning furnace of judgment. The voice was the sign of power and majesty. Next, we have official supremacy. He held all that was subordinate authority in light and order, here spoken of as regards the church in His right hand, in His power. He had the power of judgment by the word, and supreme authority, the sun, in the fullness of its highest character. We have His personal glory as Jehovah; His qualities as divine Judge, and His supreme official position. But He was not less the Redeemer, the gracious Securer in blessing of them that were His. John, as ever in prophetic vision of Jehovah, for it is not the Spirit of adoption here, falls at His feet as one dead. So Daniel.

So in spirit Isaiah (6.), but His power sustains the saint, does not destroy him. He lays His right hand on John himself, declares Himself the first and the last, Jehovah Himself, but withal the same that died in love, and has complete power over death and Hades, the Deliverer from it, not the Subjecter to it. He has risen out of death and Hades, and has the keys-full power over them - divine power or support; and He who died and rose again, and lives forever even as man, does so not simply in the power of divine life in man, but of victory over all that man was subject to by sin and infirmity,--this is the position He here takes with John His servant, and with the churches respectively. We shall see that the state of the later churches brings out other characters known only to the opened eye of faith. These were what John had seen, and which he was to write. As regards prophetic facts, he was to write the things that were, the church-state---a history; and the things which should be after them, that is, when church-history had closed on earth. The whole church, therefore, is thus to the Spirit-present time. The future was what came after it, God's dealing with the world. This, while it left the coming of the Lord, or preparatory prophetic events in immediate expectation, left, if there was delay, and there was to be, the period undefined, and the expectation, though prolonged, still a present one. We may remark, that we have the personal glory Of Christ here; the position as to the churches accompanying it. He is. not personally revealed as Son of Man, i.e., as taking the Son of Man's place. Only He who is Ancient of Days is seen, so as to understand that it was one who had that place,-was Son of Man. Subsequently, in the Apocalypse, it is not His intrinsic personal character, but some relative character or place He takes. Only we have something analogous to this, when the account of future things comes in. As regards the world, He is seen as the Lamb, one whom the world has rejected; but who has redemption-right over it. There, He is seen with the seven horns and seven eyes. His power over the world, as with the seven stars here as Son of Man.

We now pass to the things that are. The stars are in Christ's hand; He speaks of them first. He walks in the midst of the churches. The latter are light-bearers, the churches or church as set in a given position, and viewed as such before God; not what the people become,' but what the church is in His sight. 'Just as Israel was His people whatever the Israelites became, The stars are that which is held by Christ to give light and have authority, what He holds responsible to, this end before Him. It is, in a certain sense, all composing the church, therefore, and so it is often said in the addresses to the churches; but more especially those who stand in responsibility through their connection with Himself, the stars in His hand. They should shine, and influence and represent Him, each in its place during the night. That the clergy gradually took this place, and in this sense are responsible in it, is quite true; but that is their affair, to answer for themselves before the Lord. The Spirit does not so take it here. They assume it as honor; they have it as responsibility. If ever they were called angels, it was evidently just this assumption, and taken from this place.. Again, it cannot be doubted that leaders, elders, or others, were in, a special place of responsibility, supposing them to be rightly such. In Acts 20, they are so treated; but the Spirit does not so own them here. Christ does not address himself to elders, nor to the modern notion of a bishop, which did not indeed exist then. Nor is a diocese thought of in these addresses. You have not the authorities (elders) spoken of in scripture, of which there were always several; and this passage of scripture cannot be applied to human arrangements as now existing. What then is the Angel? It is not a symbol properly speaking. The Star is the symbol; and it is here seen in Christ's hand. It is, as Angel is always used where it is not actually a heavenly or earthly messenger, the mystical representative of one not actually seen. It is so used of Jehovah, so used of a child, so spoken of

Peter. Elders may have practically been specially responsible from their position; but the angel represents the church, and especially those to whom, from nearness to Christ and communion with Him, or responsibility for it through the operation of His Spirit in them for His service, he looks for the state of His church in his sight. No doubt the whole church is responsible, and, therefore, the candlestick is removed when unfaithfulness is brought home to it; but Christ is in immediate communication with these in respect of it. A solemn thought for all who have the good of the church at heart. The way in which the angels and the churches are identified, and any distinction in the degree or manner of it, requires a little more detailed attention. That the churches are addressed in their general responsibility in the addresses to the angels is evident. For it is said, "-What the Spirit saith to the churches." It is not a private communication to an authority for his direction, as to a Titus or a Timothy, but said to the churches. That is, the angel represents their responsibility. So we find distinct parts of them noticed.

"The devil shall cast some of you into prison," "fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer," "But I have a few things against thee, thou past there: My faithful martyr who was slain among you: But unto you, I say, the rest in Thyatira" (so it is to be read). Yet the angel and church or candlestick are distinguished. "I will remove thy candlestick out of its place. Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel." But this separation between the angel and the church does not take place in the three last churches. The angel is addressed throughout. As to them, too, it is only said: Christ has the seven stars, not that He holds them in His right hand. In Smyrna and Philadelphia there is no judgment; they were tried, as faithful, and encouraged. As to judgments or rather warning threats. In the case of Ephesus, which presents the general fact of the church's first decline, the warning is given that the candlestick would be taken away unless they repented. That the church did not we know from scripture and fact, and these churches looked at as a successive history. In Pergamos and Thyatira the offenders are those specifically judged. In the case of Thyatira fearful judgments on Jezebel and those connected with 'her, but here the change of everything is looked for at the Lord's coming. All this shows the angels to be the representatives of The churches, but morally such; Christ's warning to be addressed to them, as we can easily understand to be the case in any who had the interest of the church at heart, whom Christ trusted with this; but, to be so far identified with the churches, that it concerned all who composed them, while particular judgments were denounced on guilty parties.

We may now enter on the series of particular churches; but briefly, in connection with the whole structure of the book. rather than entering into the instructive details which I have done elsewhere in a series of lectures.

The first great fact is, that the church in this world is subject to judgment, and to have its whole existence and place before God as light-bearer in the world set aside. Secondly, that.- God will do this if it departs from its first spiritual energy. This is an immense principle. He has set the church to be a true witness of what He has manifested in Jesus, of what He is when Jesus is gone on high. If it be not this it is a false witness, and it will be set aside. God may have patience, and has blessedly so: He may propose to her return to first love, and does so; but, if this do not take place, the candlestick is removed; the church ceases to be God's light-bearer in the world. The first estate must be maintained, or God's glory and the truth is falsified; and the creature must be set aside. But no mere unsustained creature does this; none as such. Hence all fails and is judged, save as in, or upheld by, the Son of God, the Second Man. Ephesus had gone on well in

maintaining consistency, but that forgetfulness of self and thinking only of Christ which are the first fruits of grace were gone. As heretofore remarked, there were works and labor and patience; but the faith, hope, and love had in their true energy disappeared. They had rejected the pretensions of 'false teachers, and labored and not fainted. All that can be said of them is said, to show Christ's love, and that He is not forgetful of them, or the good manifested in them, still they had left their first love; and this, unless repented of and the first works done, involved the taking away of the candlestick.

Another important principle is found here, that when the church has departed from faithfulness, when, collectively, it has ceased to be the expression of the love in which God has visited the world, God throws back individuals on the word of God for themselves. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." The church is judged, and cannot be the security for faith, the individual is called to hear what the Spirit says. The warning of taking away the candlestick here is specially worthy of notice, because there was a great deal the Lord highly approved of- encouraged them by spewing He did but, for all that, if first love was departed from, the candlestick would be removed. The character and promises are general, as the church is characteristic of the whole principle on which the church stands. Christ has the stars in His right hand, and walks amidst the candlesticks. It is not a special character applicable to a special state, but the whole bearing of His position in midst of the churches. The Church, viewed as having left its first love, is never promised anything. It cannot direct a believer

when it comes under reproof and judgment itself. The promise is then to the individual overcome a very important principle. The promise given to Him that overcomes is the general one, is the contrast to Adam's ruin; but in a higher and better way than that in which he enjoyed the good which he lost. He that overcomes shall eat of the 'tree of life. But this is not the tree of life in man's paradise in this world, but the paradise of God Himself. We must remark, too, that it is not as the first Adam now, individually, keeping one's first estate, but overcoming. And what is before us to overcome in, is not only the world and its hostilities, though that may be, but in the sphere of the church itself: It is the call, to hear what the Spirit says to the churches which gives occasion to the speaking of over coming. This, in respect of the claim- of the church to be heard, is an immensely important truth. The message is addressed to the church, not by it to individuals, and 'she is warned of her delinquency and the individual saint called to overcome. The word to Smyrna is short. Whatever the malice and power of Satan, at the utmost, if permitted, he has but the power of death, Christ is first and last, beyond as before death God Himself; but more than that, has met and gone through its power. The saints were not to fear.' Satan would work, be allowed to sift, to imprison. Let the saints only be faithful to the extreme point of his power, all beyond was beyond him, was Christ's, and the faithful one would receive from Him the crown of life. Tribulation, poverty; the contempt of those who pretended to have the legitimate hereditary claim to be God's people - always the persecutors - be they Jews or Christians, was the portion of the church here; and God suffered it. It was really mercy to the declining church. Their hope was beyond it all when Christ gave the crown of life. This made the church, sliding into the world, or about to do it insensibly through decline of its first love, sensible that the world was in Satan's hands, was not the rest of saints. But if the Lord permitted, He limited the tribulation. All was in His hands; not only was there the crown for the sufferers, but whoever overcame his portion was secure; the death of judgment, the second death, could not hurt him.

We now need a closer judgment. Christ appears as the one having the two-edged sword of the word proceeding out of His mouth. It will be remarked here, that, in Smyrna and Pergamos, a special character of Christ applies to a special state. There is no general result for the church. In Ephesus, we have Christ's position as Judge, in the midst of the candlesticks, and the church threatened with removal from its place of witness upon earth. In Thyatira, He takes His place as Son of God, Son over His own House, and, as things are, as to the church, got to the worst, is revealed in all piercing and immutable judgment, and the whole blessing of the new state is promised to the overcomer. In Pergamos, we have faithfulness found in its previous path, Christ's name and faith held fast in spite of persecution. It differs from Philadelphia, that His word is not said to be held fast as that of Christ's patience; that, the church, in its Pergamos state, did not do; but it did hold fast the confession of Christ in the midst of persecution. But another kind of evil came in-seduction to fall in with the world's ways, by evil teaching within, The doctrine of Balaam was there. Idolatry flowed in. There were also sects within who taught pretended sanctity but evil practice. These the Lord would judge. The general truth of removing the candlestick had no place here, neither as a general truth, when the church could be called on to keep its first love, nor as fiery judgment, because it was gone wholly astray; but there were corrupters, and Christ's servants-led into idolatry and evil. Individual approbation by Christ, communion with Himself in future blessing (in spirit then), as the once humbled and rejected One (which the church was ceasing to be), a name given by Christ, and so of tenderness on His part, a link known only to him who had it. In a word, individual association and individual blessing of secret delight, this was the promise to the overcomer when corruption was advancing, not dominant and unhindered in the church.

In Thyatira, the church reaches to the close. There was found, in what Christ owned in this state of things, increasing devotedness; but Jezebel was allowed; and both connection with the world (idolatry), and children begotten to it in the Church itself. All would be judged; great tribulation fall on Jezebel, and her children be killed. Christ searched the heart and reins, and applied judgment in unchangeable righteousness. The faithful ones of this epoch,-the "you" that Christ specially addresses, are but a "rest," a remnant, but specially and growingly devoted. It is, we may remark here, what the churches are towards Christ, which is specially in view. What Jezebel did towards the faithful ones is not noted. The Lord's coming is the time looked to; 'and the whole millennial blessing is promised to Him that overcomes; both the reign with Christ, and Christ the Morning Star Himself. He that bath an ear is now put after the overcoming; not said in connection with the Church, but with those who overcome in it. The state is the state characterized by this. It may go on to the end, but does not characterize the witness of God to the end; other states must be brought in to do that. It is, I have no doubt, the Popery of the Middle Ages, say to the Reformation; Romanism itself goes on to the end. The judgment on Jezebel is final. The Lord had given her space to repent, and she had not repented. It would be a forced association with those whom she had once seduced to the ruin of them all. The whole character here is piercing judgment according to God's own nature and requirements. The blessings not special united to special trial; but the portion of the saints at large in that which they have with Christ, as the departure and judgment, were complete-adultery, not merely failure in first love. We have seen the close at the Lord's coming contemplated in Thyatira. Sardis begins a new collateral phase of the Church's history. Save the having the seven stars, none of the ecclesiastical characters of Christ, none of those noticed in Him as walking in the midst of the churches, are noticed. Still, the Church is noticed as

such. It is still Church history. But the Lord's coming having been noticed, all the characteristics of Christ belong to what He will have in the kingdom. Still He has yet the seven stars-supreme authority over the Church. It is nothing peculiar to this Church. He has it over, and as to, all. It is in this character He has to do with Sardis. He has the seven spirits, the fullness of the perfection in which He will govern the earth. Thus, He is competent to bless in the Church, though there is no regular ecclesiastical connection. He has power over all, and the fullness of the Spirit; both in perfection. Whatever the Church is He is all this. This is a great comfort. The Church cannot fail in the place of witness, through want of fullness of grace in Him. Nor can. He fail him who has ears to hear. But the state of the Church showed, that this was far from availing itself of it. It had, indeed, a name to live; was superior in its pretensions to the evil of Thyatira; nor were there Jezebels and corruption. But there was, practically, death. There was no completeness in her works before God. It was not evil here, but lack of spiritual energy. But this did leave individuals to defile their garments in the world. She was called, not to remember her first works, but what she had received and heard, the truth committed to her, the Gospel, and word of God; if not; she would be treated as the world. The Lord would come as a thief; for the Lord's coming is now always in view. There is no threat of removing the candlestick. That was settled judgment; setting aside the Church was fixed. But this body would be treated as the world, not ecclesiastically as a corrupt Church (compare 1 Thess. 5). However, some had preserved their integrity, and would be owned; and they would walk with Christ as those that had done righteousness. -This was the promise too. They had confessed His name practically before men, before the World, and theirs would be confessed before God, when the nominal Church was treated as the world. They were real Christians in the midst of a worldly profession, and their names would not be struck out of the register, then ill-kept on earth, but infallibly rectified by heavenly judgment. It has been remarked, that, simultaneously with bringing in the Lord's coming, the ear to hear comes after the distinguishing the overcomers. Such a remnant only is looked for. I cannot doubt that we have Protestantism here.

The church of Philadelphia has a peculiarly interesting character. Nothing is said of its works; but what is interesting in it is, that it is peculiarly associated with Christ Himself. Christ, as in all these last churches, is not seen in the characters in which He walked in the midst of the Churches; but, in such as faith peculiarly recognizes when ecclesiastical organization has become the hot-bed of corruption. Here it is the personal character, what He is intrinsically - holy and true; what the word displays and requires, and what the word of God is in itself;-moral character and faithfulness. Indeed, this last word includes all;-faithfulness to God within and without, according to what is revealed; and faithful to make good all he has declared. Christ is known as the Holy One. Then, outward ecclesiastical associations or pretensions will not do. There must be what suits His nature, and faithful consistency with that word which He will certainly make good. With this He has the administration, and opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens. See what His path was on earth, only then graciously dependent, as we are. He was holy and true, to man's view had a little strength, kept the word-lived by every word that proceeded out of God's lips-waited patiently for the Lord-and to Him the porter opened. He lived in the last days of a dispensation, the Holy and true One, rejected, and, to human eye, failing in success with those who said they were Jews,- but were the synagogue of Satan. So the saints here; they walk in a place like His; they keep His word; have a little strength; are not marked by a Pauline energy of the Spirit, but do not deny His name: that is the character- and motive of all their conduct. It is openly

confessed, the word kept, the name not denied. It seems little, but in universal decline, much pretension and ecclesiastical claim, and many falling away to man's reasonings, keeping the word of Him that is holy and true, and not denying His name, is everything. And this element is noticed. Christ the Holy and True One is waiting. Here on earth he waited patiently for Jehovah.

It is the character of perfect faith. Faith has a double character-energy which overcomes-and patience which. waits for God and trusts Him - (see the first, in Heb. 11:23-34; the latter 5.8-22). It is the latter which is found here; the word of patience kept. But as regards the former substantive qualities, keeping the word and not denying Christ's name, though with a little strength, in presence of ecclesiastical pretensions to a successional God-established religion, promises were given: Christ would force these pretentious claimants to divine succession to come and own that He had loved those who had kept His word. An open door was given at present, and no man could shut it, just as the porter had opened to Him; so that Scribes and Pharisees and priests could not hinder it. In the future, they would have to own themselves humbled; that those who followed the word of the Holy and True One, were those He had loved. Meanwhile, His approbation was sufficient. This was the test of faith, to be satisfied with His approbation; content with the authority of His word. But there was a promise also as to the Lord's judgments in the earth. Christ is waiting till His enemies be made His footstool. We must wait for it, to see the world set right. We have to go on where the god of this World has his way, though under divine limitation. The thought that good is to have its rights in this world, is to forget the Cross and Christ. We cannot have our rights till He has,. for we have none but His. Judgment, since Pilate had it, and Christ was the righteous one before him, has not yet returned to righteousness. Till then, Christ waits, though at the right hand of God; and we wait. it is not persecution and martyrdom as in Smyrna. It is as hard a task, perhaps, or, at any rate, our task now; patience and contentedness with Christ's approbation, keeping His word, nor denying His name. But then there were other and blessed encouragements. There was an hour of temptation coming upon all the world, to try those who belonged to earth, who dwelt there as belonging to it. Some might be spared victorious in the trial; but those who kept the word of Christ's patience would be kept from it. On the whole world it would come; and, where were they?:-Out of the world. They had not belonged to it when in it. They had been waiting for Christ to take His power,-waiting His time, to have the world. They belonged to heaven, to Him who was there; and they would be taken to be with Him when the world was to be in the time of terrible trial. There was a special time before He took His power; and not only would they reign with Him in result, they would be kept from that hour, and had the assurance of it in the time of their trial. And hence, the Lord points them to His coming as their hope, not as warning, that, unrepentant, they would be treated as the world when He appeared. He came quickly, and they were to look for the crown then, holding fast what they had, feeble, but spiritually associated with Him as they were, lest any one should take it. We have now the general promise in heavenly places, marked by special association; with Christ; and they are publicly owned in that in which they seemed on earth to have nothing. Others had the pretension to be the people of God, the city of God, to- have Divine religious title; these were only consistent with His word, and they waited for Christ. Now, when Christ takes His power-when things are real according to Him in power, they have it according to God., It was the cross and contempt below; it is the display of God's name and heavenly city above. Let us examine the promise to the overcomers here. He who had but a little strength is a pillar in the temple of the God in whom and with whom he is blessed. He was held, perhaps, for outside the ecclesiastical unity and order. He is a pillar in it in heaven, and will

go no more out. On him' who was hardly owned to have a part in grace, has the name of his rejected Savior's God been stamped publicly in glory;:-He who was hardly accounted to belong to the Holy City has its heavenly name written on him too, and Christ's new name-the name not known to 'prophets and Jews according to the flesh, but which He has taken as dead to this World, where the false church settles down, and risen into heavenly glory. The careful association with Christ is striking here, and gives its character to the promise. " The temple. Of my God," says Christ;. " the name of my God; of the city of my God, my new name." Associated in Christ's own patience, Christ confers upon him what fully associates him in His own blessing with God.. This is of peculiar blessing, and full of encouragement for us.

Laodicea follows. Lukewarmness characterizes the last state of profession in the Church. It is nauseous to Christ; He will spue it out of His mouth. It was not mere want of power, it was want of heart; the worst of all ills. This threat is peremptory, not conditional. It brought irremediable rejection. With this want of heart for Christ and His service, there was much pretension to the possession of resources and competency in themselves. " I am rich," whereas they had nothing of Christ. It is the professing church accounting itself rich, without having Christ as the riches of the soul by faith. Therefore He counsels them to buy of Him true and approved righteousness, clothing for their moral nakedness, and what gave spiritual sight; for they were, as respects what Christ is and gives before God, poor, naked, and miserable and specially so. This is Christ's judgment of their pretended acquisitions according to man. However, as long as the church subsisted, Christ continued to deal in grace, stood at the door and knocked, pressed reception of Himself in the closest way to the conscience. If any one, still in what He was going to spue out, heard His voice and opened, He would give him admission to be with Him, and a part in the kingdom. There is no coming here. Nor was there for the judgment of Jezebel. That was practically Babylon; and she is judged before Christ comes. This is spued out of Christ's mouth, cast off as worthless to Him; but the general body is judged as the world. The Lord's coming is in Thyatira for the saints, and in Philadelphia too. That is its church aspect, and that only. Sardis is reduced, if unrepentant, to the condition of the world, and judged as such. When the state of Laodicea arrives, the church is disowned, and rejected of Christ in that character; but for that His coming has not to be spoken of; although Thyatira goes down to the end and closes ecclesiastically the church's history. Yet only in the first three is the church at large treated as the subject of repentance. In Thyatira, space had been given Jezebel to repent, and she did not; and the scene is to close and be replaced by the kingdom. In this respect, the four last churches go together. There is no prospect of repentance of the whole church, or restoration. Sardis is called to hold fast and repent, and remember what she had received; but, if she does not watch, is to be treated as the world. Hence, as we have seen, the call to hear is addressed after the promise to overcomers. The character of Christ, in connection with this church, must not be passed over. It brings out the passage from church-relationship to His authority above and beyond it over the world. Christ personally takes up what the church has ceased to be. He is the Amen, the fulfillment and verifier of all the promises, the real witness and revealer of God and of truth, when the church is not, and the beginning of the creation of God-Head, over all things, and the glory and witness of what it is as from God-as the new creation. The church ought to have displayed the power of the new creation by the Holy Ghost, as if any man is in Christ it is in a new creation, where all things are of God. 'We, as its first fruits, are created again in Him. The church has thus the thing; which remain (2 Cor. 3). But she has been an un faithful witness of it. Does she possess a part in it? It is because Christ does, and

He is the true beginning of it as really displayed. The responsible witness of it by the Holy Ghost having failed, Christ now takes it up, coming in for its effectual display. But the series of preparatory events in the world must first be gone into. And here it is to be remarked, that there is no mention of the coming of the Lord here in reference to the church. It is promised that He will come quickly; and the church is threatened with being spued out of his mouth. But the fact of His coming for His own or the church's rapture at any time is not stated. This falls in fully with what 'we have seen of John's ministry; his being occupied with the manifestation of the Lord on earth, and scarce touching, and only when needed on leaving the disciples, on heavenly promises. In John 14 and 17. he does it exceptionally.

Here it is left out. Even in chapter 12., which remarkably confirms what I say, the rapture is only seen as identified with the catching up of the Man-child, Christ Himself. Hence we have no specific relative epoch noted for the taking away the saints here, save that they are taken before the war in heaven which leads to the last three. years and a half. But, on the other hand, the saints belonging to the church, or before, are always seen above when the epistles to the churches are ended. They are waiting for judgment to be given to them for the avenging of their blood; but they are never seen on earth. But we have to consider where the fourth chapter commences God's ways. It does not follow necessarily that the church has been speed out of Christ's mouth. It had been threatened, but the judgment on Sardis or even on Thyatira was not yet come. But it is after Christ has ceased to deal with the professing church as such, looking to it as His light-bearer before the world. What it may call itself still, is not stated; He is not dealing with it. An open apostasy will come. Its date is not revealed - nor is it revealed as to the rapture. But I gather from 2 Thess. 2, that the rapture will be before the apostasy. What we have stated then is, that it is after all dealing with the churches by Christ is closed, that the subsequent dealings with the world in the Revelation begin. The churches are the things that are; what follows, the things after these. Christ is not seen walking in their midst; He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne. John is not occupied seeing Him there, or sending messages to the churches, but is called up to heaven where all the ways of God are now carried on, and that towards the world not the church. The kings and priests we read of in chapter i. are now on high. There may be others follow them, but they are in heavenly places seated on thrones, or themselves worshipping, or presenting their censers full of incense. On the other hand, the Lord is not come to judge the world, but He is about to receive The inheritance. The saints, then, who will be caught up to meet Christ are seen only on high here; they belong to heaven, and are no longer dealt with on earth, but have their own place in heaven.

The connection between the two parts of the Apocalypse is this:-Christ who was judging in the midst of the professing church, is now seen on high, opening the book of this world's judgment, of which He is about to take the inheritance publicly. From this scene of judgment the saints are far. The apostle's occupation with the church now ceases,-an important point, for the Holy Spirit must be occupied with it as long as the saints are in it on earth,-and he is taken up to heaven, and there He sees God in covenant with creation, on a throne of government; with a rainbow round about it. The living creatures celebrate Him as the Creator, the One for whom all things were created; the throne was not a throne of grace, but the signs of power and judgment broke forth from it; but around it, those who represent the saints received at Christ's coming, the kings and priests are sitting on thrones, in a circle round the throne. No altar of it were a time of approach, -the brazen laver has glass instead of water. It is a fixed accomplished holiness, not a cleansing of feet. The

elders are crowned, twenty-four recalling the courses of the priests. The seven spirits of God are there in the temple, not Christ's to wield for the church, or sent out into the world, but the perfections in attribute which characterize the actions of God in the world. This it bears light now into the world. Besides these, four living creatures are there, in the circle of the throne itself, and around the throne. They may be viewed as forming the throne, or apart from it, though connected with it as a center. They have some of the characters of the cherubim, some of the seraphim, but somewhat differing from both. They were full of eyes, before and behind, to see all things according to God, and within; having also six wings; perfect in inward perception, but given perception, and in the celerity of their motions. They embraced also the four species of creation in the ordered earth: man, cattle, beast of the field, fowl of the air: these symbolizing the powers or attributes of God themselves, worshipped by the heathen; here, only the instruments of the throne. Him who sat on it, the heathen knew not. The intelligence, firmness, power, rapidity of execution which belong to God were typified as elsewhere by them. They are symbols.' Divers agents may be the instruments of their activity. But though there was the general analogy of the cherubim, judicial and governmental power, these had a peculiar character. The cherubim in the temple had two wings, which formed the throne. They looked on the covenant, and at the same time, as of pure gold, were characterized by the divine righteousness of the throne to be approached. In Ezekiel, they were the support of the firmament above which the God of Israel was. It was a throne of executive judgment. They were like burnished brass, and like fire—a symbol we have considered already. They had four wings, two to fly with, two to cover themselves. From Ezek. 10; it appears they were full of eyes. It is not said within. It was to govern what was outside, according to God, not divine intelligence within. In Isaiah. 6, the seraphim (or burners) have six wings as here. They are above the throne, and cry as here: Holy, holy, holy! They, with a burning coal, cleansed the prophet's lips. They were above the throne. The symbols here become clearer through these cases. The living creatures are in and around the throne; for it is a throne of executory judgment, with the attributes of cherubim united to it. But it is not, as in Israel, mere earthly providential judgment, a whirlwind out of the north. There is before us, the government of all the earth, and executory judgment according to the holiness of God's nature. There is not only full perception of all, but intrinsic perception morally. It is no seat of gold to be approached. The intrinsic holiness of God is applied to judgment. He is making good His nature and character in all creation. Providence would be no longer a riddle. It was not complex attributes unsolved, so to speak, though applied in special circumstances; each act would have its character. Here, too, remark, it is not as in the first chapter; the God who is, though embracing past and future, God in Himself; but the God of ages, who was, and is, and is to come. Still He has all Old Testament names: Jehovah, Elohim, Shaddai. His attributes now celebrate His full name, as the Holy One who lives forever and ever, - has no passing power nor, being, like man at his best estate vanity. And the saints here fall down before the throne, bow themselves before His place in glory, and worship Him in His endless being, and lay down their given glory before His supreme and proper glory, ascribing all glory to Him alone, as alone worthy of it but here, according to the nature of the celebration of it, the Creator for whom all things are. In all changes these remained true.

It will be remarked here, that the living creatures only celebrate and declare; the elders worship with understanding. All through the Revelation, the elders give their reason for worshipping. There is spiritual intelligence in them. Further, remark, that when thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, the signs of terror in judgment, go forth from the throne, the throned elders remain

unmoved; they were' on thrones around, when 'the throne of judgment was introduced. This is their place before God in respect of judgment. Whenever He takes judgment in hand this is their position. They are part of the glory-assessors. of the throne from which its terror goes forth. When He that sits on it is celebrated, they are all activity, own all glory to be His, are prostrate on their faces, and cast their crowns before Him, more blessed in owning His, than in possessing their own. We do not find the Father here; it is Jehovah. And, indeed, should we ask in whom He is personally displayed, it would be, as always, in the Son; but it is in itself simply the Jehovah of the Old Testament here. In the next chapter, we find the Lamb: A book was in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. It was -counsels, wielded by His power. Who could open them and bring them forth to execution? Who had the title to do so? None in heaven or earth, but one. The elders explain to the prophet, who mourned that the ways of God should be shut up, that the Mighty

One of Judah, the true source of all promises to David, had prevailed to open it and loose the seals. This was the Lamb, the rejected Messiah. He was more than this, as the chapter goes on to show; but He was this. The rejected Messiah was in the midst of the divine throne, and, within all the displays of providence and grace-the living creatures and elders,-stood a Lamb as it had been slain. He had the fullness of power over the earth, seven horns as of God, and the seven spirits of God for the government, according to God's perfection, of all the earth. When He has taken the book, the living creatures and elders fall down before Him, with golden censers full of the prayers of the saints. They are priests here. Now a new song is sung to celebrate the 'Lamb. What seemed His dishonor and rejection on earth, was the ground of His worthiness to take the book. He who had glorified all that God was, at all suffering and cost to himself, was able and worthy to unfold what made it good. in the way of government. It was not the government of Israel, but of all the earth; not merely earthly chastisements according to God's revelation of Himself in Israel, but the display in power of all God was in the whole earth. He who had glorified all He Was, and redeemed by the gospel of what He was through His death out of all the earth, was the fit one to bring it forth in power. He does not yet come forth; but His work is the worthy instrument, the divine motive for the display of it all. He can unlock the seals of God's ways and mysteries. I read the passage thus:-" Thou wast slain and hast redeemed to God, by Thy blood, out of every kindred, etc., and has made them unto our God kings and priests, and they shall reign over the earth." Thus, it is not any particular class, but the value of the act which is the motive of praise, and all being confided to Him. There, the angels come into praise, not in the iv. chapter. I can hardly doubt that a change in administrative order takes place here. Until the Lamb took the book, they were the administrative power; they were the instruments through which what the four living creatures symbolized was exercised in the earth. "But unto the angels bath. He not put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." Hence, as soon as the Lamb appears, and takes the book; as soon as the idea of redemption is brought in, the living creatures and elders are brought together, and the angels take their own place apart. Like the living creatures before, they give no reason for their praise. As the heads of creation as to their nature, they celebrate with all creatures the title to glory of the Lamb and own His worthiness. Ascribing praise to Him that sits on the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever. The four living creatures join their Amen, i.e., all the exercise- of God's power in creation and providence, and the elders worship God in the excellency Of His being. But the living creatures and elders are joined in verse 8, in falling down before the Lamb. I do not think they are meant to be distinguished in the latter part of the verse, but merge in the elders symbolizing different service, but not now two classes. 9- is the general fact, not " they

sung," but " they sing." This takes place in heaven; but those named are in the mind in a general way. Thus, the source of what follows, the throne and the persons engaged in heaven before God in all that passes are displayed-whence the judgment flows; who surround the throne of God above; and who is in it have been brought before us; the heavenly scene, and choir, and assistants. What is to follow on earth now begins, when the seals are opened. It will be remarked here, that John, standing in the ruin of the church, gives prophetically, all that passes from that failure till Christ comes, in chapter 19. There is no ascension, no rapture, save so far as chapter 12. gives both together.

The first seals are simple; nor have I anything to offer very new upon them. First, imperial conquests, then wars, then famine, then pestilence, carrying with it, what Ezekiel calls God's four sore plagues; sword, famine, pestilence, and the beasts of the earth. They speak of the providential course of God's dealings, and hence the four beasts call attention to it; but they have God's voice

. in them, the voice of the Almighty, that the ear of Him who has the Spirit hears. These complete providential plagues as spoken of in scripture. Then direct judgments follow; but these are what we may call preparatory measures. These saints are those whom God is really thinking of, and they come in remembrance before other scenes are brought out. Those who had been martyred for the word of God and their testimony, demand how long before they are avenged; for we have ever to do here with a God of judgment. Their being under the altar, means simply that they had offered their bodies, as sacrifices for the truth, to God. The white robes are the witness of their righteousnesses-God's declared approval of them; but the time for their being avenged was not yet. I do not think giving white robes is resurrection. The first resurrection is sovereign grace, giving the same place with Christ (forever with the Lord); consequent on His work and His being our righteousness which. is alike to all of us. White robes thus conferred, are the recognition of the righteousnesses (δικαιώματα) of the saints; hence, in chap. 19., at His appearing. --They shall walk with me in white,- for they are worthy. I am not denying that we are made clean, and our robes white- in the blood of the Lamb. But, even where that is said in chapter 7., I think it refers especially to the way they have been associated by faith with the suffering position of Christ. Here, white robes are given them-their service owned; but, for avenging, they must wait till a new scene of persecution had brought them companions who had to be honored and avenged like them. Still, this marks progress, and finds its cause in the dealing of God to bring about this new state of things which issues in final judgment and setting aside of evil. Here, it is providential. The next thing to the claim for avenging, is the breaking up of the whole system of earthly government, and the terror- of all on earth. How clearly we see here, that we are in a scene of judgment; and that God is a God of judgment. The desires of the saints are like the desires of the Psalms. We are not with children before the Father, with grace, with the Gospel, and the Church; but with Jehovah, where God is a God of judgment, and by Him actions are weighed. We are on Old Testament ground, i.e., prophecy, not grace to the wicked, though judgment brings in blessing. I have to notice, that, in the full plagues of verse 8, the whole Roman earth is

not included. It is a fourth, not a third. The plagues too, note, are limited in extent of sphere, not universal. The opening of the sixth seal brings an earthquake, that is a violent convulsion of the whole structure of society. All the governing powers are therein visited; and seeing all subverted, small and great think (with bad consciences as they have), that the day of the Lamb's wrath is

come. But it is not, though preparatory judgments with a view to His kingdom are.

But God thinks, too, of His saints on earth, before the scenes which follow, whether judgments on the Roman earth, or the special workings of evil, to secure and seal them for that day.

First, the perfect number of the remnant of Israel are sealed before the providential instruments of God's judgments are allowed to act 144,000, 12 x 12 x 1000. to God's purposes, and set apart by Him. Not yet seen in their blessings, but secured for them. Afterward, the vast multitude from among the Gentiles is seen: We must remark here, there is no previous prophetic announcement of the blessing of the spared ones in the great tribulation (not the three and a half of Matthew, 24.-that refers to Jews-but that mentioned in the epistle to the church of Philadelphia). Hence, this is fully given to us here, and we are distinctly told who they are. A multitude of Gentiles is seen standing, not as around the throne, but before it, and before the Lamb, their righteousness owned, and themselves victorious. They ascribe salvation to God thus revealed, i.e., to God on the throne, and to the Lamb, They belong to these earthly scenes, not to the church. This is answered by the angels who are around the throne, the elders and the living creatures-all together composing the heavenly part of the scene already connected with the throne; the angels surrounding the others, which form the center and immediate circle of the throne. The white-robed multitude before it, they give their Amen, and pronounce the praise of their God too. All this belonged to the white-robed multitude and the angels; only the former speak of the Lamb, who was also their salvation. The angels add their Amen to it; but praise their God. They had worshipped the Lamb before; but, naturally, salvation to the Lamb was not their own part of the song. But the four living creatures and the elders do not worship here, because their own relationships were different, and these are not what are spoken of here. They would speak to the Father and the Son. Their relationship was with them-the angels with their God. The white-robed multitude with the God of the throne, and the Lamb revealed in this revelation. That the Lamb was the Son, yea, the God who created the angels, is not the question here, but of each speaking in his own relationship-so as to bring these out. We have thus the heavenly hosts, the glorified saints, and the white-robed multitude, each in a different relationship, but the first and last thrown in the main together - the glorified saints forming a class' apart. They do not worship here. But one of the elders, who have always the intelligence of God, explains to the prophet who they are. It formed no proper part of prophetic revelation as yet, and it was not the church's own place.

Sir, thou knowest," says the prophet. They had come out of the great tribulation; faithful in it, their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. They were not millennial saints, subject by birth to the responsibility of that condition (which grace had to meet). They were cleansed and owned to be so, having the consciousness of it and victory when it began, so that they, as already cleansed and owned are always before the throne a special class, and serve Him day and night in His temple. This, at once distinguishes them from the heavenly worshippers. There, there is no temple, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple, and He that sits on the throne tabernacles over them, as once over the tabernacle. They are not only as Israel in the courts, or the nations in the world,-they have a priest's place in the world's temple; the millennial multitudes are worshippers; these priests, as Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, ever in the temple itself; they have always access to the throne; but they had blessings under the Lamb also, to whom they alike ascribe their salvation-the good Shepherd cast out, and who had passed through tribulation Himself, also, so great, would feed them. They would not hunger any more, thirst any more, as

they had often done; nor should persecution or tribulation reach them. The Lamb, as known in this transitional time, but exalted in the throne, would feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water. It is not, as to us, the promise of a well of Water, springing up into everlasting life, and flowing out as a river; but they would be fed, refreshed, and perfectly cared for by the Lamb's grace, whom they had followed; and God Himself would wipe all tears from their eyes. They would have the consolations of God, worth all the sorrow they had passed through. They are thus a class apart, distinct from the elders or heavenly saints, and distinct from those who will never see tribulation, having a known position fixed in grace before God. It is a new revelation, as to those passing through the great tribulation. The 144,000, of chap. 14., are a similar class from among the Jews, coming out of their special tribulation. Again, divine interest in the saints, brought out into action by the effectual intercession of the great High Priest, brings down judgments on the world. For those under the altar, there was no intercession; they were perfected, having been rejected and slain, like Christ. There are saints upon the earth who yet need this intercession, so that their cry in their infirmity should be heard and answered. The smoke of the incense came up with the prayers of the saints. The great Mediator took of the fire off the altar, put it into the censer, and cast it on the earth. The intercession turned into judgment in the answer, and the signs of God's power were manifested, and subversion of order on earth followed-voices, thunderings, lightnings (as when the throne was set), and an earthquake. Then follow specific judgments, on the signal being given from above. They fell on the Roman earth, the third part of the earth (see 12. 4). First, judgment from heaven, hail and fire, and violence or destruction of men; on earth, blood. The effect was the destruction of the great ones in the Roman earth, and of all general prosperity. Next, a great power, as the judgment of God, was cast into the mass of peoples; still, I apprehend, in the Roman earth,-for destruction of men, and all that belonged to their subsistence and commerce followed in those limits. Next, one that should have been a special source of light and order in government, fell from his place, and corrupted the moral sources of popular motives and feelings, what governs and sways the people so as to characterize them. They became bitter; and men died of it. The last of these four plagues falls on the governing powers, and puts them out in their order, as from God. All in the limits of the Roman earth. This closed the general judgments, subverting and producing disaster and confusion in the Roman earth, where the power of evil, as against the saints, was. Woe, specially on those who had their settled place on earth, in contrast with the heavenly calling, and unawakened and unmoved by the judgments on the earth, but clung to it in spite of all as their home, is then announced. Threefold woe! The term dwellers on, or inhabitants of, the earth, has not yet been used, save in the promise to Philadelphia, and the claim of the souls under the altar. After all these dealings of God, they are a distinct and manifested class, and spoken of in what passes as such. Against this perversely unbelieving class, the earthly judgments of God are now directed: the first, against the Jews; the second, against the inhabitants of the Roman earth; the last, universal. The fifth angel sounds, and one who 'should have been, by position, the instrument of light and governmental order over the earth, was seen as having lost his place; and the power to let loose the full darkening influence of Satan, was given him. He opened the bottomless pit-the place where evil is shut up, and chained; 'not where it is punished that is the lake of fire. Supreme authority, and all heavenly light over the earth, and healthful influence of order, were darkened, and made to cease, by the evil Satanic influence which was let loose. Nor was this all; direct evil instruments of Satanic power came out of this evil influence in numbers; crowds of moral locusts, with the sting of false doctrine in their tail: but it was not to destroy

temporal prosperity on the earth, but to torment the ungodly Jews; not to kill, but to harass and vex them. This was to continue five months; for it is not the final judgment. The torment was worse than death,-pain and anguish of heart. But they had the semblance of military imperial power, crowned, and with masculine energy, to those that met them; but they were, if seen behind, and the secret disclosed, subject and weak: their faces were as the faces of men, their hair as the hair of women. But they were armed in a steeled conscience. They were the direct instruments of the power of Satan, and under his Orders. The angel of the bottomless pit-he who rules the depths of Satan's wiles, as the ruler of the power of darkness-led them. We are too unbelieving as to the direct influence of Satan in darkening men's minds, when permitted,-when men are given up to his darkening influence. Cruel, harassing torments, worse than death, with darkening of their minds, becomes the portion of the once beloved people. One woe was passed. The sixth angel sounds. The woe which follows is much more human and providential. It is directed against the inhabitants of the Latin Empire. The instruments of it are let loose from beyond Euphrates,-a countless crowd of horsemen. But they were not simply such. Their consciences and their words both were in the power of Satan, but in judgment from God. But it now killed men. Their mouths belched forth the power of Satan, and their influence in doctrine was Satanic; with both they did hurt. I do not believe this death here is mere temporal death. There may have been such; but I suspect making apostates. The rest, who did not thus fall, did not repent of their idolatry and misdeeds. These were preliminary woes on the body of Jews and Christianized Gentiles; not the direct antagonism of the power of evil with God. This is now unfolded; but first, in the little open book, put in its place in the general history. The book is open as part of well-known prophecy, and now brought to a direct issue on known ground; not the unrevealed and more unmanifest ways of God, introducing the final issue. Christ comes down, and affirms His right to all below; puts His right foot on the sea, the left on the earth, and utters the voice of His might, to which the voice of the Almighty in power answers; but its revelations were sealed up, but Christ swears by Him that lives for

ever and ever, there should be no more delay. All things are drawing to a final issue. In the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of God would be closed-His direct power come. The prophet is to recommence his prophecy as to nations, and tongues, and languages. We are here at once in the center of prophetic subjects,-Jerusalem, the temple, the altar, and worshippers. The worshippers and the altar are recognized and accepted of God:-those worshipping in the secret of God within. The general profession of Judaism is rejected and disowned. It is given up to be trodden down under the Gentiles, and that for the half week of sorrow. Those who held the place of priests were owned. Real worshippers' according to God's mind, were there, and owned; and God gave also an adequate testimony-two witnesses -what was required under the Law; and they continue day by day constantly to give witness the whole period, or half week. The witnesses were in sorrow and reproach, but with power; as Elias and Moses were when the people were in apostasy and captivity. It was not the re-establishment of Israel with royalty and priesthood as it would be-the candlestick of Zechariah with the two olive trees-but the sufficient witness to it. Nor could they be touched while the half week of their prophecy lasted; their word brought death on their adversaries. We have priesthood and prophecy in the remnant, not, of course, royalty, but a testimony to it practically; suffering marked its absence, yet none could touch them till their time was come. In this they were like Christ in His humiliation in the midst of Israel, only He did not slay His enemies. In the Psalms, he marks it out as the remnant's portion: Complete humiliation, and the full answer of God to their prophetic word marked their state. But when they have finished their

testimony, the case is different. They have to do with the beast out of the bottomless pit. They stood before the God of the earth,-not preachers of a heavenly gospel, but witnesses to God's title to the earth-His love to his people in connection with it. They bore witness to God's claim when hostile Gentiles were in possession. The beast, now their hour is come, slays them, and their bodies are cast into the highway of the city.

Those of the nations rejoice over them, and make merry. The dwellers upon earth, who would have the earth theirs, and ease upon it, were delighted; for they tormented them; but, in three days and a half; quickened by the power of the Spirit of God they ascend to heaven in a cloud, not as Christ now, apart, but in the sight of their enemies. A tenth of the great city of the world fell at the same time, in the convulsion that took place on the earth; and the remnant are affrighted, and give glory to the God of heaven. But God was dealing already as the God of the earth.. The second woe was now passed; Thus we get the close of the half week indicated; the seventh trumpet was quickly to sound, which was to finish the mystery of God. It sounds; and there were great voices in heaven, declaring that the worldly kingdom of their Lord, (Jehovah) and of His anointed (Christ) was come,-the greatest woe and terror of all, to the inhabitants of the earth. Satan's woe had been specially on Jews; man's woe, specially on the men of the Latin empire; this is God's woe, when the nations are angry, and God's wrath is come, and full reckoning and final deliverance come. We have again the elders here announcing the reason of praise and thanksgiving.. Voices in heaven announced the fact of the reign of Jehovah, and of His Christ, according to Psalm 2.; and that He, for (as ever) John unites both in one thought, should reign forever and ever; and so it will be. But both the earthly and eternal kingdom are celebrated. Only in the eternal kingdom, the distinction of the worldly kingdom and of Christ's subordination is omitted. In the thanksgiving of the elders, Jehovah Elohim Shaddai is also celebrated, as the great King who takes to Him His power and reigns; for it is God's kingdom. We have two parts in their statement; the nations angry-this brings in the time of God's wrath, and the- time of the dead to be judged. That is the first half, wrath and judgment. Then He gives reward to prophets, saints, and all that fear His name, and set aside from the earth those who corrupted it. This is blessing: the first part is general, the time of wrath and judgment; the second is reward and deliverance of the saints and earth. This closes entirely the main symbolic history. The last trumpet has sounded, and the mystery of God is closed.

In what follows, we have details. The beast, and the connection of the church and Jews with it; Babylon; and then the marriage of the Lamb judgments of beast and false prophet; binding of Satan; two resurrections, and final judgment; and the description of the heavenly city. 'But this (11.19) has, as to earthly prophetic dealing, special reference to the Jews. The temple of God is opened in heaven, the ark of His covenant, which refers to Israel, is seen there; but judgment characterizes it now; judgments of all kinds, those coming down from above, and subversion and disaster below.

Chapter 12 gives us a brief, but all important, summary of the whole course of events viewed, not in their instruments on earth, or the judgment of these, but the divine view of all the principles at work, the state of things as revealed of God. The first symbolical person, subject of the prophecy and result of all God's ways in it, is a woman clothed with the sun, having a crown of twelve stars, and the moon under her feet. It is Israel, or Jerusalem as its center, as in the purpose of God (comp. Isa. 9:6, and Psalms. 87:6); she is clothed with supreme authority, invested with the glory of perfect administration in man, and all the original reflected glory of this, under the old covenant,

under her feet. She was travailing in childbirth; distressed, and. in pain to be delivered: on the other hand, Satan's power, in the, form of the Roman empire, complete in forms of power, but incomplete in administrative supremacy. But Satan, as the open infidel enemy of God and God's places in Christ, sought to devour the child, as soon as born, who was to have the rule of the earth from God. But the child, Christ and the church with Christ, is caught away to God and His throne,-does not receive the power yet, but is placed in the very source of it from which it flows. It is not the rapture as regards joy; for it goes back to Christ Himself, but the placing Him and the church, in and with Him, in the seat from which power flows for the establishment of the kingdom. There is no time for this; Christ and the Church are all one. But the woman, the Jews, after this, fly into the wilderness, where God has prepared a place for them, for the half week. The church, or heavenly saints, as Christ, note, go up to heaven, to be. out of the way. The Jews, or earthly ones, are protected by providential care upon earth. This gives the whole state of things, and those in view in this scene, and their respective places. She that is to have glory, and hold power in the earth, is cast out. The child that is to have power, in and from heaven, is previously taken up there. This makes the position very clear. The historical course of events is now pursued, the child being supposed to be already caught up. There is war in heaven; and the devil and his angels are cast out, and have no more place. This brings out yet more clearly the distinction of the heavenly saints and the Jewish remnant. The heavenly ones had overcome the accuser by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony, the woman's seed have the commandments of. God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ, that is, the spirit of prophecy. What they have of God in the word, is according to the Old Testament. But to follow now the latter part of the chapter, a loud voice, not voices, proclaims in heaven that the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ is come. The testimony still of the second Psalm, only as 'yet it was only proclaimed from heaven, where the power of the kingdom was already made good by the casting down of Satan. Satan's anti-priestly place was over forever. King and prophet he might yet put on; but his heavenly place was past. The saints of the heavenlies had overcome him by that which made their conscience and their title to heaven good-the blood of the Lamb, and the word out of their mouth, God's sword by the Spirit-and gave up their lives to the death. The heavens and the dwellers there could now rejoice; but it was woe to the inhabitants of earth and sea; for the devil had come down, knowing he had but a little time left. I think this implies saints killed after the rapture, and belonging to heaven. If there were such killed because of their faithfulness, were they not taken up, they would lose earth and heaven, though more devoted than those who had earth. We see them mere-over in chap. 20., in the first resurrection. The souls under the altar also had to wait for others-their brethren who had to be killed, as they were; and we are to note that here, those celebrated as happy are slain, none others. Yet it is before the last three years and a half, so that we have these parties in view. The voice and some associated with Him (our), their brethren who had overcome; and those who would be in the three years and a half of Satan's rage, which had not yet begun. Now, if the man-child in heaven be, as we have considered it, Christ and the raptured saints, the voice would be Christ, and all self-evident: Christ speaks, the raptured saints being associated with Him; and He, speaking in the sense of their conscious connection with Him, says " our brethren ": the brethren whose conflict with the accuser was over, as he was now cast down, but who had had. to resist him as a heavenly potentate, an Anti-Priest, all which part is mystery for John, and those who now would be in trial, when He would act with rage on earth, as king and prophet; for the dragon cast to the earth, and unable to accuse in heaven, or oppose saints having a heavenly

calling (and the priesthood refers to such, not to union), persecutes the Jews, and seeks to destroy their testimony; but God gave-not power of resistance, the Lord must come to deliver-but power to flee and escape. and find refuge where she was nourished the whole half week out of the serpent's reach. He seeks to pursue; wings, he has none, but he uses a river, the movements of people under the influence of special motive and guidance, to overwhelm the woman. But the earth, this organized system in which men live, swallowed the waters up. This influence was in vain,-was not met by an army, a counter power, but was nullified. There was such a disposition or course of the earth as neutralized the effort wholly. So God ordered in His providence; and the dragon turned to persecute, individually, the faithful remnant of the seed-the Jews who held fast by the word.

In 13. we have the clear and full development of Satan's instruments of evil. They are two: the ten-horned and the two-horned beast. To the first, the dragon who swept with his tail a third part of the stars to earth, Satan, under the form of the Roman Empire, gave his throne, and much authority. The second not only wielded the first power, administratively before 'him, but was the active power of evil, to lead men to recognize the first, and therein, the dragon. The beast is the original Roman Empire, but largely modified., and in a new character. It has perfect completeness in its forms of government, or heads; but is composed of ten kingdoms, indicating also, I doubt not, imperfect administrative completeness. It has not twelve horns. It is incomplete. Seven would be completeness of a higher kind. The Lamb had seven horns; the woman twelve stars on her head. One is perfectness in itself; the other administratively in man, seven, is the highest prime number; you cannot make it; twelve, the most perfectly divisible, coin-posed of the same elements, but multiplied, not added as a simple number. So four is finite perfection, as is a square, and still more a cube, perfectly the same all ways, but finite. But the beast had names of blasphemy. It was the open enemy of God and His Christ. It absorbed the previous empires, and represented them. The dragon, Satan's direct power, in the form of the heathen Roman empire, gave his throne and power to this new beast. It was not of God. God owned no power. on the earth, now the Church was gone, till He took His own. The earth was at war with Him. One of the beast's heads, I doubt not the Imperial, was seen as wounded to death, but healed. The Imperial head was restored, and the world was in admiration; and they worship the dragon as giving the beast his power. Nothing in their eyes equals the beast; but God is wholly thrown off in the earth. The beast is given to have the greatest pretensions in his language and outrage against God. He blasphemed God, His name and dwelling-place, and the heavenly saints; all Christianity, and the God of it.

The dragon had been cast out from heaven; the raptured saints had been received there. He blasphemed, but could only blaspheme them. As regards those who dwelt on earth, for the division was not merely a spiritual one now, all worshipped the beast, save the elect, those who had been written from the foundation of the world in the Lamb's book of life. Human resistance by force was not the path of obedience. Here the patience and faith of the saints was shown. He who took the sword would perish by it. It is never Christ's way, but unresisting patience; but the beast who did would perish. This, then, was the Imperial power, a blasphemous power set up by Satan, with the place of the old Roman empire, which represented all four, modified in form, but the Imperial head restored. But there was a second beast; it rose not out of the mass of peoples (the-sea) to be an empire, but out of the already formed organization, with which God had to say as such. It had the form of Messiah's kingdom on earth, two horns like a lamb, but it was the direct power of Satan.

He, who with a divinely taught ear, heard it speak, heard the voice of Satan at once. All the power of the first beast it exercises before it; is, with its power, its minister, and makes the earth and the dwellers on it worship it--the Roman empire restored in its head. It is Antichrist, the false Christ of Satan, who subjects the earth to the Satanic Roman empire. He does great wonders, so as to give us good proof of the beast's title before men, as Elijah did of Jehovah's. Compare 2 Thess. 2, where the man of sin gives the same proofs that Jesus did of being the Christ. He deceives the dwellers on earth by his miracles, making them set up an image to him. This image he gives breath to; so that it speaks, and causes those to be killed who do not worship it. All likewise were obliged to take the stamp and mark of the beast's service in their work, or open profession, and no man was allowed to traffic who had not the name of the beast as a mark. Such is the power which has the character of Messiah's kingdom in its form, is animated with the fullest energy of Satan, and recognizing the public power which Satan has set up in the world, will have every one bow to it, none to traffic without acknowledging it. And all will, save the elect. The anti-priestly power of Satan in the heavens is over; royalty and prophecy as yet remain to him, in opposition to Christ, who has not yet appeared. These he assumes; but he does not, and cannot set aside the power of the Gentiles--that remains for Christ to do--but sets it up as his delegate; and, as the apostate Jews of old, so now that people, as his instruments, bow to it and minister to it. Thus, you have all Satan's power exercised. But in setting up his Messiah, he is obliged to deceive, and advances, by his miracles of deceit, what he cannot set aside--the Gentile power--and subjects the Jews to idolatry and to the Gentiles; and all the Gentiles themselves dwelling on the earth, to the depository of Satan's authority--the first beast. This is a singular state of things, far from Jewish feelings and modern Gentile hopes; but the unclean spirit of idolatry is to return to his house. Signs, not truth, will govern the superstitious mind of man; they will be given up to believe a lie. Here, though he takes the character of Christ in his kingdom, it is chiefly his action on the Gentiles which is spoken of; the Jews are mixed up with them, as we see in Isa. 66, and Daniel. It is a liberal time, but one of most complete tyranny as regards all who did not bow to Satan's power, and the ordinances established by him. What characterizes it is the absence of truth.

As regards the number of the beast, I have no doubt that it will be very simple to the godly, when the beast is there, and the time of spiritually judging it comes, and that name will practically guide those who have to do with him. Till then, the speculations of men are not of much value; Irenæus's old one of *Ἀρτεμιος* is as good as any..

In chap. 14. we have the dealings of God with the evil, only first owning and setting apart the remnant. That remnant belongs entirely to the renewed earth; they are seen on that which is the center of dominion and glory in it--Mount Zion, where the Lamb shall reign. They had His and His Father's name on their foreheads; that is, by their open confession of God and the Lamb, had been witnesses of it, and suffered as Christ had suffered in His life in owning God His Father, only they had not suffered death. It was a new beginning, not the Church, not heavenly, but the-blessing of a delivered earth in its first fruits in those who had suffered for the testimony of it. Heaven celebrates it with a voice of many waters, and as of thunder, but with joy. This Voice was the voice of harps. A new song is sung before the throne, and beasts, and elders. Here the fact is the important thing; there had been a song in and of heaven, in chap. 5., in connection with redemption; but those who were redeemed there were made kings and priests. Here it was redemption in connection with earthly blessings, not with the kingdom and priesthood on high; and

it is sung before the heavenly company and throne. Heaven is directly connected with the song, however. It was connected with triumph over the power of evil by patient endurance of suffering. What specially characterized them was purity from the contamination that surrounded them. This passing through sorrow, and overcoming, connects them directly with the heavenly conquerors. It was not the new song of heavenly redemption; still it was victory when down at the gates of death, though not actually in it. It was, as it were, a new song. This none could learn but those who had shared the earthly sufferings of the Lamb, and would now be His companions in His earthly royalty; they had followed him, they would follow him whithersoever he went. They are the first fruits of the new scene. They had not corrupted themselves where all did. They were not of those who loved or made a lie, or gave into it. Corruption and falsehood they had been kept free from; openly confessing the truth. They have not the heavenly place, but they are without fault before the throne, and they share the Lamb's earthly place and glory, accompanying Him whithersoever He goes, in the manifestation of that glory. All this had no place when the kingdom was set up. It was then too late to show faithfulness this way. 'There is a connection with the heavenly saints which is not in chap. 7. The white-robed multitude stood before the throne and the Lamb. They are before the throne of God, worship in His temple, and the Lamb comforts them. Here there is special association with the Lamb on earth, in their path, and in their consequent place. It is the remnant of the Psalms, specially 1.- 41. But, though on earth with the King, they are redeemed from among men, before Christ comes to earth; and the song they learn to sing is sung before the elders and living creatures. They are not with them, but they sing the song sung before them; that is, the Gentile multitude are admitted to special privileges before God and the Lamb; the Jewish remnant are associated with the Lamb on earth. and, in a certain sense, with heaven. The progress of God's ways follows, warning to the earth to leave idolatry; for the hour of God's Judgment was come. The everlasting gospel is the testimony of Christ's power from Paradise, as 'in contrast with the special announcement of the Church, and glad tidings connected with it. Babylon is announced to be fallen. Threats and warnings to any that should. own the beast. But the time was now come when dying in the Lord was to cease; only their blessedness remained henceforth. Dying and tribulation were. over. They are looked at as one whole body; and while any remained yet to die, they were diers in the Lord, not rested and blessed. Now their rest is come, and their reward. Christ then reaps the earth,-separating, gathering, and judgment,-and treads the winepress, exercises unmingled vengeance on the wicked. Hence, in this last judgment, it is the angel who had power over fire who calls for it; it was full divine judgment. This judgment was not within the limits of Babylon-was not in the sphere in which man had formed and ordered his organization in opposition to God. This closes the whole scene of that of which the history had begun by the catching up of the Man-child to heaven. He has returned in vengeance. An interesting question here arises,-What is the vine of the earth? It is that which is the fruit-bearing organization, or what should be so; that is the idea of it, in professed connection with God, as His planting in the earth. Israel was the vine brought out of Egypt. Christ on earth was the true vine. - It is not connection with him in heaven. There we are looked at as perfect, not to bear fruit and be pruned. But, analogously, it went on after He ascended on high, and professing Christians are the branches. But here it is the vine of the earth, that which has its character and growth therein, but with the pretension to take the religious place by succession on the earth. The true saints are gone on high, or are a persecuted individual remnant. I have no doubt the Jews Will be the center of that system then; but they will be mixed up with Gentiles, have turned to idolatry, and have seven

spirits worse than that, and the apostate Gentiles will be fully associated with it all (see Isa. 65;66, and 34. And 63.).

Chapter 15 unrolls before the prophet another scene, the last plagues or judgments of God, and specially that of Babylon, before Christ comes. The main object of the vision was the seven angels, having the seven last plagues; but, as ever, the saints, who have to do with this scene, are seen in security before the judgments begin. They have been purified, but have come through the fire of tribulation, too. They stand on a sea of glass mingled with fire. They have belonged to the time when the beast and his image were in power, but had got the victory over it. They seemed, perhaps, to have succumbed-it was real victory. Their song is very peculiar. The song of Moses is triumph over the power of evil by God's judgments. The song of the Lamb is the exaltation of the rejected Messiah, of the suffering One, and like whom they had suffered; for it is the slain remnant amidst unfaithful and apostate Israel whom we find here. The song celebrates God and the Lamb, but by victorious sufferers, who belong to heaven. What they celebrate are the works of Jehovah Elohim Shaddai (the God of the Old Testament), but who now has manifested Himself in judgment; known by His works, that are public for the people - He showed His ways unto Moses, His works unto the Children of Israel. His works are celebrated now. They are the works of Jehovah Elohim Shaddai,-the Judge of all the earth. But His ways are celebrated too. There was intelligence of them, as far, at least, as righteous judgment went. These ways in judgment were just and true. Israel would understand deliverance, and how it came; but Moses knew God's ways. 'But this is all. It is not merely celebration of qualities and attributes, as the angels do, nor the full' knowledge of God's work in salvation by the blood of the Lamb. It is not the heart going up, 14 the sense of its own relationship, but a celebration of the glory of the Lord, who would now be worshipped by the nations, for His judgments were manifested. It was intelligence when judgments were manifested, not where all was yet. to be learned, within the wail. This celebration of what was just bursting forth being made, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened, not merely the temple,. with the ark of the covenant seen. That secured the result for faith, when evil was raging in power on- earth. The ark of God's covenant secured Israel. It was a testimony opened out, not a covenant, which secured in the hour of evil, but -a testimony which made good what the ark of the covenant secured; for the temple was opened, and the messengers of judgment came forth-God's judgments for the restoration and blessing of Israel, by the judgment of the Gentiles and all who corrupted.. the earth. Cleanness in God's sight and Divine righteousness characterized and animated this judgment. apprehend the former, in answer to corruption in what should have had this: Babylon. Compare 19. 8. That is, it was judgment which required it, and was according to it, and also to Divine righteousness. It is not brass burning in the fire, simply execution of judgment in dealing with men, though that took place, but God making good His own nature and character against corruption - the essential character have the Eternal God, which the Church ought to have displayed; whereas Babylon was entirely the contrary, and the beast too. The seven angels judge all according to these characters of God, because it is really the. avenging of what God was, as fully revealed to the Church; but the white linen refers, I doubt not, specially to Babylon, though the men. with the mark of the beast would come under the judgment. One of the four beasts gives the vials, for it is the judicial power of God in creation, not yet the Lamb: God's glory in judgment filled the temple; and no man could have to say to Him in worship, or approaching Him, while these plagues were executing. It was the full display of God in judgment.

The four first plagues have the same objects as the judgments of the four first trumpets-the whole circle of symbolical nature-but here directly as regards men. Earth, sea, rivers, and sun-the ordered prophetic sphere of God's dealings; the masses of peoples, as such, viewed as unorganized; the moral principles which give an impulse to their movements; and sovereign authority. But it is not a third here, i.e., the Roman earth, but in general. The first vial of wrath brought the utmost distress and shameful misery on all who had taken the mark of the beast. The second brought. the power of moral death on the mass of peoples; all who were among them, within the limits of the prophetic earth, died-I apprehend, gave up mere outward profession. We have here an example of the use of symbols which it is well to note. All the vials are poured out on the earth, applied to the sphere of already formed relationship with God. But, in this, there might be a special relationship in which men had to do with God in this world-were inhabitants of earth:- or the mass of people within that sphere.

The third vial was poured out on all the sources of popular influence and action; and they became positively deathful. It seems to me, that the deadly influence in alienation from God, within the sphere of prophecy, is strongly marked here. Death is used generally as the expression of the power of Satan. Then the supreme authority is made frightfully oppressive. This gave the first four, according to the usual division of direct judgment. The fifth vial strikes the throne of the beast, the seat and stability of his authority, which Satan had given him; and his kingdom became full of darkness. All was confusion and wretchedness, and no resource, they gnawed their tongues with anguish and blasphemed God.. The sixth angel pours out his vial on Euphrates-destroys, I apprehend, the securing boundary of the Western prophetic power-not the seat of its power, but broke its frontier, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. I look at this simply as the bringing in of the 'powers of Asia into the conflict, for the universal conflagration of powers. The sixth vial sends forth three unclean spirits the sum of all evil influences-Satan's direct power as antagonist of-Christ; of the power of the last Empire, the beast; and that of the second beast of chap. 13. henceforth known as the false prophet,. Satan's influence as the Antichrist, an idolatrous wonder-working power; and the kings of the world were gathered-together to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. The allusion is to Judg. 5:19,20. At the seventh vial. there is a general break-up and subversion, and Babylon comes into judgment. And the hail of God, the. judgment of God, -came on men from heaven. Compare Isa. 32 All separate independent interests and established powers disappeared. This was over the earth-God's judgments by providence and instruments-but the Lamb was -not come yet. The details of Babylon's judgment are reserved for the following chapters.

The characters of Babylon are first portrayed; like the beast, she is only one thing in the judgment, but morally she is more important than all the rest. The general character is the great active idolatress. that has gained influence over the mass of the nations. Next, that the kings of the earth have lived in guilty intimacy with her, seeking her favors, while those that dwell on the earth have lost their senses through her pernicious and inebriating influence. This is the general idea first given, a character plain enough to mark the Roman or Papal system. But more details follow.. There was a woman, a religious system sitting on an imperial beast, full of names of blasphemy, having the form- which marked it Roman. The woman was gorgeously and imperially arrayed, and every human glory and ornament on her, and a rich cup of prostituting yet gross idolatries in her hand, Abominations are simply idols, filthiness of her fornication, all the horrible corruption that

accompanies it-her cup was full of them. She was in the desert; no springs of God were there. It was not, so to speak: God's land, no heavenly country. To spiritual understanding, she bore on her forehead her character yet one known only when spiritually known, of the great City Of corruption, source Of all seduction to men and of all idolatry in the earth; such was Popery. But this was not all; all the blood of the saints was found in her, she was the persecuting murderess of those God delighted in, and who bore witness to Jesus. The prophet was astonished - for it was what the Church had come to. The angel then describes the beast on which she rode. It had been-ceased to exist-and then comes up again from direct diabolical sources, comes up out of the abyss. The renewed Roman Empire, which had disappeared, is blasphemous and diabolical in nature, and in this character goes to destruction; but all but the elect on the earth will be in admiration of it when they see the beast that was, is not, and yet is present. Of itself, this marks the Roman or Latin. Empire, only that it will re-appear more formally. But Rome is more distinctly marked. It is the city of the seven hills. Nor was this even all. It was the existing authority in the time of the prophecy; five of its governing powers had fallen, one was there. There was then one yet to come for a short space, and then the beast out of the abyss; the last diabolical state of the Empire would appear, and it would be destroyed. This last, however, is not a new form, it is one of the seven though an eighth. My impression is, that the first Napoleon and his brief empire is the seventh, and we have now to wait for the development of the last. The beast, though imperial, has ten horns, ten distinct kingdoms. They have their power and for the same period with the beast. But they all give their power to the beast and make war against Christ, the rejected one on earth; but he shall overcome them, for, despised as he may be, supreme authority is His, and there are others coming with Him, not merely angels but called ones,-His saints.

Details are then added. The waters are explained, as peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues. Masses of population in their diverse divisions. Next, the ten horns, the kingdoms which are associated with the beast, and the beast (for so it is to be read) hate the whore and eat her flesh and burn her with fire; first, take all her substance and fatness, and then destroy her; for they are to give-their 'kingdom to the. blasphemous beast, until. God's words are fulfilled. And then we are expressly told that the woman (not the whore - the last is her corrupt idolatrous character-but the woman) who as riding the beast was to be such, is Rome. All this chap. 27. is description. Chapter 18 announces the judgment. The one difficulty here is ver. 4. coming' where it is. But, as every difficulty in Scripture, leads into further light. The destruction of Babylon is. simple enough; she falls by God's judgment just before Christ comes to judge the earth, and first, perhaps, losing her power and influence, is destroyed by the horns and 'beast. The comparison of chap. 14., ver. 8, and the place it holds, chap. 16., ver. 19, 18., ver. 8, and the beginning of chap. 19. make this plain. Chapter 18, ver. 4, is a warning from heaven, not the angel of judgment on the earth. It is not consequent on events, but supposes spiritual apprehension of heaven's mind. This is the case when it is simply a voice from heaven. This call, then, was a spiritual call, not a manifest judgment. It may be more urgent and direct just before judgment, and I doubt not will be, as the Hebrews' call to come out of the camp because Jerusalem's day was at hand. Hence I believe this applies whenever we see the system to be Babylon. And the sense of her iniquities is pressed upon the conscience. The chapter then goes on to the actual execution of judgment according to chap. 17., ver. 16. The horns or kingdoms connected with the beast have destroyed her. The kings mourn over her; so do those that have sought profit and ease and commerce in the earth. The Royal and Commercial system is shattered to pieces by the upset of the system. What characterizes her, that

for which she is judged, is idolatry, corruption, worldliness and persecution. She is judged and destroyed, and the prosperity of the worldly is smitten by her fall, and the hopes of the kings who had commerce with her. The blood of all saints was found in her, as in Jerusalem in her day. Persecution comes from religion connected with worldly advantage. But, what a picture we have here, of the world, the relations of the kings, and of the saints to Babylon! Chapter 19, ver. 2, clearly shows the aspect in which she is judged, the great whore who corrupted, and God avenges the blood of His 'servants. This judgment of Rome is the great joy of heaven. Hallelujah and salvation are sung. The elders and four living creatures fall down and worship, and the voice of a multitude proclaims the bringing in of the marriage. of the Lamb, when the false woman is set aside. Till then, though espoused, the Church thus actually united in the heavenly marriage to the Lamb Still there was no greater event could be than a judgment of Rome. No doubt the beast had to be destroyed. Power, when God gave it scope, would soon do that. But here, the old corruptress and persecutor was set aside forever. Heaven is full of joy. There is no celebration of joy like this in the Revelation. The rest of the book is simple and clear enough, for the mystery of God is closed. I do not myself attach any importance to the distinctions, as a class, of those called to partake of the joy of that day. It means, I believe, just that, according to the parable of the marriage of the king's son, the guests are those who have share in the marriage-joy. But several points have to be noticed; God has come in, in power to set up His reign. The true, though not yet the open, seat of the power of evil has been judged, and destroyed. Two characters of evil, falsehood or deceitful corruption and violence, have existed since Satan himself began his career; false in himself; he was a murderer to others. The mystery of iniquity contained both, though hiding the latter and using others for it. Still she was characterized by corruption and what was false. Direct violence was in the hands of the beast. The destruction of that would no doubt relieve the earth of oppression; but, for heaven and all that was heavenly-minded the destruction of this Christ-dishonoring, soul-enslaving and soul-debasing corruption, was joy and gladness, and the witness that Divine power had come in. It had set aside the worst evil, the corrupting what was God's, under pretense of being what Christ had purchased for himself, the one precious object of His especial love. They sing "Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" This Was to make way for the introduction of what was His own--the manifest power of His Christ; but, before that, the Church must have her place of association with Him in that, must have Himself; the -marriage of the Lamb is come. Till the evil woman had been set aside, this could not be. This. is the character of heavenly joy and redemption, by which we are brought into it. Man on earth is first good, then yielding to temptation. Redemption supposes, first, evil and even slavery to it, but then deliverance from it and our being set beyond it, God having taken to him His power. The Church is presented to Christ without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, cleansed and white, suited to Christ. The apostle was disposed, in sight of all this blessedness, to fall down and worship him who had revealed it. His mind was thrown into devotion by these scenes. Its immediate object was the heavenly messenger, and he turns to bow to him, but is forbidden. He was a fellow-servant, and the same to all who had the testimony of Jesus; for the spirit of prophecy, we are told, is the testimony of Jesus. The testimony not to worship intermediate beings is the last warning left to a declining Church, as, so to speak, one of the first, in Colossians. We now arrive at the great announcement of the coming of Christ in power. Heaven, which had been opened on Jesus and to Stephen, now opens for Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. Holy and true, He had been known by faith, and the faithful and true Witness. The last He is now; not as witness but in

judgment, save as judgment itself is the witness of His faithfulness and truth. The characters in which He appears are plain, but all important. It is first in general judgment, but in the form of war, not what we may call sessional judgment, but overcoming power. Sessional judgment is in chapter 20., from verse 4. His eyes have the piercingness of divine judgment. He had many crowns-witness of his various and universal dominion. But though, thus revealed as man, He had a glory none could penetrate into; of which He had the conscious power, but which was not revealed. He was the avenger, His garment was dipped in blood. All characterized Him we may note here, according to that in which He is manifested by the judgment itself. He was the Revealer, the Word of God-His eternal character-what He was before creation; now making it good in judgment. The armies in heaven had not garments dipped in blood. They were triumphant; they followed Him in His triumph, pure and perfect, His chosen, called, and faithful ones. The vengeance of Idumea was not their part, though they share His victory over the beast. The vengeance in Edom had a more earthly character, and is connected more with Judah. The Assyrian is there, not the beast, (see Psa. 83). The beast and the false prophet are destroyed by Him, as coming from heaven. He smites the nations with the rod of his mouth, he rules them with a rod of iron-this the saints will have with Him, (chap. 2. 26, 27). He treads the wine-press too. This is the part that is more earthly, as the 63. of Isaiah spews. So He that sits on the cloud, thrusts in his sickle on the earth. It was an angel who cast the grapes into the winepress, and the wine-press was trodden. It is not said, as by one sitting on the cloud. The character of the judgment of the beast, and the false prophet is heavenly; it is the Word of God, the Lord from heaven, the wine-press-earthly. He is publicly, officially, and intrinsically King of kings, and Lord of lords. The beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire. This was a present final judgment-the rest were judicially slain. The final judgment of these deceived ones is not said to take place here. Satan is not yet cast into the lake of fire, but into the bottomless pit, where the legion of devils besought the Lord they might 'not be sent. He is bound there, so as not to deceive the nations for a thousand years. There will be no. seduction by Satan, during the thousand years. We now come, power having been set aside, to the exercise of judicial authority in peace; and this is conferred on the saints. The prophet does not merely see the thrones as set, in Dan. 7, but sitters on them too. Besides all, to whom judgment is given in general, two special classes are mentioned, because they might seem to be too late, or to have lost their part, those beheaded, (after the Church was gone, for it is the revelation-period we have to do with), for the witness of Jesus, and those who had not worshipped the beast (compare chap. 6. vers. 9-11., chap. 13. vers. 15). These, as well as all previously departed saints, had their part in living and reigning with Christ a thousand years. But those who were not Christ's, the rest of the dead did not live again till the thousand years were over These were finally delivered from the second death. The first death they had undergone, the natural wages of sin but in faithfulness; in the second death, the final judgment against sin, they would have no part. It could have no power over them; on the contrary, they had special relationship with God and Christ, they were priests of God and of Christ, and would reign with Him a thousand years. Note here, how God and Christ are here united in one thought, as continually in the writings of John. Thus, the beast, and the false prophet are in the lake of fire, their armies slain, and Satan bound in the abyss, and the risen saints are priests to God and Christ, and reign with Christ a thousand years. The details and effects, mark, are not given here. The object is to give the place of the saints, and especially of the sufferers during the time of this book. The rest come in as a general fact; there were sitters on the thrones of

judgment,-but the faithful of the prophecy is specially mentioned. When the thousand years are finished, Satan is let loose again. He comes up on the earth, but he never gets up to heaven again. But the nations are tested by his temptation. Not even having seen Christ and enjoyed the fruits of his glory, can secure the heart of man, if it is to be depended upon, and men fall, in number as the sand of the sea, in to Satan's hands as soon as tempted; enjoying blessing where unfaithfulness would have been present loss, perhaps cutting off, and there was nothing to tempt them, but unfaithful as soon as they are tempted, as soon as the heart is tried. It was the last and needed trial of man; needed because they could not have finally enjoyed God with natural hearts, and the natural heart had not been tested, where present blessing was on the side of owning a present, visible, glorious Christ. The deceived multitude, not limited now to a third of the earth, or a special prophetic district, but taking in the breadth of the earth, went up against the camp of the saints, and surrounded it and the beloved city, Jerusalem. It is remarkable here, there is no special presence of Christ amongst them. They are left apparently to be surrounded by their enemies. The Lord has allowed all this testing separation of personal faithfulness. Had He appeared, of course these hostile crowds could not have come up, nor would the thorough trial of the heart have proved the faithfulness of the saints, who would not follow the seductions of Satan. They are pressed up and -surrounded by the enemy, but faithful. Once this separation and full testing has been accomplished, God's judgment fell on them from heaven, and destroyed them. The devil was then cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet were already, where they are tormented forever and ever.

This closed the exercise of wrath, of the destruction of hostile power-a wondrous scene -that God should have enemies in this world! Now judicial power comes in. It may be remarked, that the exercise of this on the quick, forms no part of the contents of this book. The hostile power of the beast was destroyed by Him who judges and makes war, the heavenly saints having been taken to glory. The crowds of apostates at the end of the thousand years are destroyed by fire from heaven. But the judgment of Matt. 25 is not found here. Unless there be a possible connection with the judgment of the fourth verse of 20. Now there comes the judgment of the dead. There is no coming here, a great white throne is set; judgment is carried on according to the purity of God's nature. It was no dealing with the earth, or the power of evil, but with souls. Heaven and Earth - all mere scenes of judgment - disappear. The secrets of men's hearts are judged by Him who knows them all. Heaven and Earth flee away before the face of Him that sat on the throne, and the dead small and great stand before God. Judgment was according to works, as it was written in the books of record. Still, another element was brought into view. Sovereign grace alone had saved. There was a book of life. Whosoever was not written there was cast into the lake of fire But it was the finally closing and separating scene for the whole race of men and this world. And though they were judged every man according to his works, yet sovereign grace only had delivered any; and whoever was not found in grace's book, was Cast into the lake of fire. The sea gave up the dead in it; death and Hades, the dead in them. And death and Hades were put. an end to forever by the divine judgment. The heaven and earth passed away, but they were to be revived; but death and Hades never. There was for them only divine destruction and judgment. They are looked at as the power of Satan. He has the power- of-death and the gates, of Hades; and hence-these are forever destroyed judicially. They will never have power again. They are personified; but, of course, there is no question of tormenting them, or punishment. When the devil himself is cast in, there is. But death was not then destroyed; for the wicked dead had not been raised for judgment.

Now they had; and the last enemy is destroyed. The force of the image, I. doubt not, is, that all the dead now judged, the whole contents of Hades, in whom the power of death had been, were cast into the lake of fire, so that death and Hades, which had no existence but in their state, were entirely and judicially ended by their being cast in. The saints had long' before passed out of them, but they subsisted in the wicked. Now these were, consequent on the judgment of the white throne, cast into the lake of fire-the second death. The limits and measure of escape, was the book of life. But there was a new heaven and a new earth; but no more sea. No separation, nor part of the world not brought into an ordered earth before God. Here we do not find any mediatorial kingdom. The Lamb is not in the scene. God is all in all. No sorrow or crying more, no people of God distinct from the inhabitants of the earth. There are God's people, and God is with them Himself, but withal His tabernacle is with them. This is the holy city, the new Jerusalem. The Church has her own character, is the habitation of God in a special way, when the unchanging state comes, and all is made new. God is the end, as the beginning. Him that is athirst now, God will refresh with the fountain of the water of life-the overcomer shall inherit all things. The world for the Christian is now a great Rephidim. This is the twofold portion of his final blessedness. He shall have God for his God, and be his son. Those who feared this path, did not overcome the world and Satan, but had walked in iniquity, would have their part in the lake of fire. This closes the history of God's ways. What follows is the description of the heavenly city, as before we had that of Babylon. Its heavenly character and millennial connection with the earth is revealed. One of the seven angels, as in the case of Babylon, comes to show the prophet the Bride the Lamb's wife. The result of judgment on the earth is the introduction of better and higher blessings. The prophet is taken, like Moses, to see the scene of promise, and sees that great city, new Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. This was its double character from God, divine in its origin, and also heavenly (compare 2 Corinthians, chap. 5.) It might be of God, and earthly. It might be heavenly, and angelic. It was neither, it was divine in origin, and heavenly in nature and character. It was clothed with divine glory, it must be as founded on Christ's work. It was transparent jasper, jasper being used as a symbol of divine glory (chap. 4. ver. 3); it is secure, has a wall great and high. It has twelve gates. Angels are become the willing doorkeepers of the great city, the fruit of Christ's redemption-work in glory. This marked the possession, too, of the highest place in the creation, and providential orders of God, of which angels had previously been the administrators. The twelve gates are full human perfectness of governmental administrative power. The gate was the place of judgment. Twelve, we have often seen, notes perfection in governmental power. The character of it is noted by the names of the twelve tribes. God had so governed these. They were not the foundation; but this character of power was found. there. There were twelve foundations, but these were the twelve apostles of the Lamb. They were, in their work, the foundation of the heavenly city. Thus-the creative and providential display of power, the governmental. (Jehovah), and the Church once founded at Jerusalem, are all brought together in the heavenly city, the organized seat of heavenly power. It is not presented as the Bride, though it be the Bride, the Lamb's wife. It is not in the Pauline character of nearness of blessing to Christ. It is the church, as founded at Jerusalem under the twelve-the organized seat of heavenly power. The new and now heavenly capital of God's government. They had suffered. and served the Lamb in the earthly, and founded the heavenly under Him. It is alike vast and perfect, and all measured and owned of God. It is not now a remnant measured, it is the city. It has not divine perfection; that could not be, but it has divinely given perfection. It is a cube equal on every side, finite perfection. So the wall (they

are merely symbols) was perfect, 12 x' 12. The wall which secured it was the divine glory. As it is written of the earthly Jerusalem, salvation had God appointed for walls and bulwarks. The city was formed in its nature, in divine righteousness and holiness. Gold transparent as glass. That which was by the word wrought in and applied to men below, now, was the very nature of the whole place (compare Ephesians 4. ver. 24.) The precious stones or varied display of God's nature, who is light, in connection with the creature, seen in creation Ezek. 28-In grace, in the high priest's breastplate, now shone in permanent glory, and adorned the foundations of the city. The gates had the moral beauty which attracted Christ in the Church and in a glorious way. That on which men walked, instead of bringing danger of defilement, was itself righteous and holy, the streets-all that men came in contact with was righteousness and holiness Gold transparent as glass. There was no concealment of God's glory in that which awed by its display-no temple where men approached, but where they could not draw nigh; where God was hidden. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb were its temple. They were approached in their own nature and glory, surrounded only by that fully displayed. Nor was there need of created light. here; the glory of the Divine nature lighted all, and the Lamb was the Light-bearer in it. Note here, we have not the Father as the temple. It is the revealed dispensational Ruler, the true. God and the Lamb who has made good His glory. This was the character of the city. This vision goes on to spew its relationship to those on the earth and its inhabitants, a seeming inconsistency, but no real one; for the city is viewed as the state of the Bride. Where the inhabitants are spoken of, it is the individual blessing. The nations, spared in the judgment on earth, walk in the light of it. The world does, in a measure, in that of the Church now. Then the glory will be perfect. The city enjoys the direct light within. The world, the transmitted light of glory. To it the kings of the earth bring their honor and glory.. They own the heavens and the heavenly kingdom to be the source of all, and bring there the homage of their power. Night there is not there, and its gates are "ever open; no defense against evil is 'needed, though Divine security leaves no approach to evil. The kings themselves brought their willing homage to it. But, the glory and honor of the Gentiles is brought to it too. Heaven is seen as the source of all the glory and honor of this world. Hence, it is true. Nothing defiled enters there, nor what introduces idols and falsehood. Neither man's evil nor Satan's deceit can exist, or produce any corruption there. How often, where anything good is set up now, the considerate heart knows that evil will enter, and Satan deceive and corrupt. There we have the certainty that this can never be. But it was not merely the absence of evil; but the impossibility of its entrance which characterized the holy city. There was that which, having its source in perfect grace, involves all blessed affections in connection with the Lamb in those within the city. Those only found place in the city whop names- were in the Lamb's book of life. The connection of the holy city with the earth, though not on it, is everywhere seen. The river of God refreshed the city, and the tree of life whose fruits, ever ripe, were food for the celestial inhabitants of it, bore in its leaves healing for the nations. Only the glorified ever ate the fruit of constant growth; but what was manifested and displayed without, as the leaves of a tree, was blessing to those on earth, We see grace characterizing the Church in glory. The nation and kingdom that will not serve the earthly Jerusalem shall -utterly perish.. It preserves its earthly royal character. The Church its own. The leaves of the tree it feeds on are for healing. There is no more curse. The throne of God and the Lamb is in it. This is the source of blessing, not of curse, and His servants serve Him. Often they cannot, as they would, here. Note too, again: here, how God and the Lamb are spoken of as one, as constantly in John's writings. His servants shall have the fullest privilege of His constant

presence, shall see His face, and their belonging to Him as His own be evident to all. There, there is no night, nor need of light, for the Lord God gives it; and as to their state, they reign, not for the thousand years, as they do over the earth, but forever and ever. This closes the the description of the heavenly city and of the whole prophetic volume,. What follows consists of warnings, Or the final expression of the thoughts and. relationship with Christ of the Church.

The Angel declares the truth of these things, and that the Lord God of the prophets not as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor as directly teaching the Church as dwelling in it. by the Spirit - the Lord - God of the prophets has sent His angel to inform His servants of these events. " Behold." says Christ, speaking as of old in the prophetic spirit, rising up to His own personal testimony, " Behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." The Church is viewed, not as the subject of prophecy, but as the things that are, time not being counted, -specially time to come. Those that keep it are. those concerned in the book, who are warned that Christ will soon be there. No doubt we all can profit by it, but we are not in it. John, impressed with the dignity of the messenger, fell down and would have worshipped him. But the saints of the Church, even if made prophets of, were not to return into the uncertainty of. ancient days. The angel was a simple angel, John's fellow- servant, and fellow-servant of his brethren the prophets; he was to worship God. Nor were the sayings to be sealed as with Daniel-the time was at hand When it closed its testimony, men would remain in the same state for judgment or blessing. And Christ would quickly come, and every man receive as his work was. The 7th verse was a warning to those in the circumstances referred to, to keep the sayings of the book, the record of Christ's coming to the general judgment of the quick. Finally, Christ announces Himself, having taken up the word in person in verse 12, as Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end -God before, and after all, and filling duration, I suppose we are to take as the true reading: Blessed are they that have washed their robes, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city. The redeemed, cleansed ones, can enter there and feed on the-tree of life; for I suppose it is the fruit here. Without, are the unclean and violent, and those who love Satanic falsehood, and idolatry-sin against purity, against their neighbor, against God, and follow Satan. This closes the summing up. The Lord Jesus now reveals Himself in His own person, speaking to John and the saints, and declares who He is, in what character He 'appears to say it to them. " I am the root and offspring of David," the origin and heir of the temporal promises of Israel, but much more than that. He is the bright and Morning Star. It is what He is before He appears, in both respects; only the former regards Israel born of the seed of David according to the flesh. But the Lord has taken another character. He has not yet arisen as the Sun of righteousness on this benighted globe; but, to faith, the dawn is there, and the Church sees Him in now the far-spent night, as the Morning Star, knows Him while watching according to his own word, in His bright heavenly character, A character which does not wake a sleeping world, but is the delight and joy of those who watch. When the. sun arises, He will not be so known, the earth will never so know Him, bright as the day may be. When Christ is in this place, the Spirit dwells in the Church below, and the Church has its own relationship. It is the Bride of Christ, and her desire is towards Him. Thus " the Spirit and the Bride say, Come." It is not a warning from one coming as a judge and a rewarder, but the revelation of Himself which awakens the desire of the Bride, according to the relationship in which grace has set her. But the Spirit turns also, and the heart of him who enjoys the relationship, to others. Let him that heareth-let him who hears the voice of the Spirit in the Church-join in the cry, and say, Come. It is one common hope, should be our common desire; and

the sense of what is coming on the earth, and the sense of failure in things that are, ought only, though it be in truth an' inferior motive, to urge the cry in all. But while still here, the saint has another place also. Not only do his desires go after God upwards and the heavenly Bridegroom, but he reflects God's known character, by having His nature and Spirit as manifested also in Christ's love; and in possession of the living water, though not of the Bridegroom. He turns round and invites others.: " Let him that is athirst come," and proclaims it forth then to the world: " Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Thus. the whole place of the heavenly saint, conscious of the Church's place, is brought out in this verse, from his desire of Christ's coming, to his call to whoever will to come.

The integrity of the Book is preserved by a solemn warning. The Book of life is not life, nor our being written there final, though a *prima facie* register, unless, indeed, written there before the foundation of the world; even so, it is not the same thing as the possession of life. Christ then cheers 'the Church's heart, by assuring her He would quickly come; and the heart of the true saint responds with unfeigned and earnest desire: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"-and then, with the salutation of grace, the book ' closes, leaving the promise and the desire as the last words of Jesus on the heart.

Let the reader note here, that, in the beginning and end of the book, before and after the prophetic statements, we have, in a beautiful way, the conscious position of the saints. The first at the opening of the whole book,. giving the individual conscious blessing, the latter the whole position of the Church, thus distinguishing clearly the saints under the gospel, from those whose circumstances are prophetically made known to them in this book. " Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests to God and His Father." As soon as Christ is named, and it is so in both cases, it awakens in the saints the consciousness of Christ's love, and their own place in relationship with Him. They are already washed from their sins in His own blood, and made kings and priests to God and His Father-have their place and state fixed, before any of the prophetic part -is developed, and in the coming kingdom will enjoy that place;'. not of being blessed under Christ, but of being associated with Him. Here they have their place, simply in the kingdom and priesthood-it is individual title, resulting from his first coming. They are loved, washed in His own blood, and associated with. Him in the kingdom. At the end of the book, Christ is revealed as the Morning Star, a place forming no part of the prophecy, but that in which the Church, who has waited for Him, is associated with Him for herself, not the kingdom (compare the promise to the overcomers in Thyatira). This draws. out in active love (not as before, simply being loved and what we are made)-love first directed towards Christ Himself in the Church's known relation to Himself, then to the saints who hear, then to the thirsty, then to all the world. The desire of the Church, as the Bride with whom the Spirit is, is directed to Christ's second coming, to the possessing the Morning Star; then the Spirit. turns to the saints, „calling 'on them to say, Come to Jesus, to join in this desire. But we have the Spirit, though not the Bridegroom; hence, whoever is athirst, is called on to come and drink, and thus the gospel proclaimed abroad: " Whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." It is. love acting in the saint all round, from Christ to sinners in the world.

Scripture Difficulties

1. MARY.

His mother and His mother's sister,

Mary, the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene.

Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of James and Joses. Matt. 27:56.

{John 19:15.}

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. Matt. 27:61;28. 1.

Mary Magdalene and Mary (mother) of Joses. Mark 15:47.

Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of James. Mark 16:1.

Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of James the Less and Joses.

Mark 15:40.

Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary (mother) of James. Luke 24:10.

JAMES.

Jude, brother of James. Jude 1.

James, son of Alpheus. Matt. 10:3.

Judas (brother) of James. Luke 6:16.

James, son of Alpheus. Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15.

James and Joses and Judas

And Simeon, Christ's brethren

And His (Christ's)sisters

James, the Lord's brother. Gal. 1

{Mark 6:3.}

In comparing these statements, there cannot, I think, be any doubt that Mary the mother of Jude, James, Joses, and the other Mary- constantly associated with Mary Magdalene - are the same; nor that Mary the wife of Cleopas is also. Jude is brother of James; and James is son of Alpheus, alleged to be the same as Cleopas (■) ■■■■■■; and James (Jude), and Joses, sons of Mary, are Christ's brethren; and are sons of Mary, I suppose, wife of Cleopas. Thus the identity and connection of persons is evident. Mary, called the other Mary, the constant companion of Mary Magdalene, was wife of Cleopas, and mother of James, Jude, Joses, and Simeon; and these were

immediate relations of Christ: whether by Cleopas or Mary does not appear. This does not affect the question as to Mary's having a family after the birth of Christ, nor her living with Joseph; of which, I think, Scripture leaves no doubt. But, further, this would determine, that that James the Lord's brother is the Apostle, James the Less; because James, the Lord's brother, is brother of Jude (Mark 6:3). And James the Apostle is Jude's brother (Luke 6:16), and son of Alpheus, and I think from the place James holds in the Acts and in Galatians, it is the same James and not another. For in Galatians, it is " James the Lord's brother," and " certain came from James; " and in Acts, " tell it to James," and James presides, in a sense, in Acts 15.

It would have been quite incongruous to introduce the Lord's name in an Epistle; whereas Jude, the brother of James, was the distinctive name he had acquired in contrast with Iscariot (Luke 6:16).

The absence of all addition, in the case of James, is the natural proof of his being the well-known James.

2. In 1 Kings 15 there is certainly confusion comes in after Abijah. It is some question to me if Maachah was Absalom's daughter or granddaughter. If Absalom's daughter, allowing only five years from Absalom's death, she must have been six years old at David's death. The common chronology gives eight. Rehoboam was a year old when Solomon began to reign; so that she was five or seven years older than Rehoboam, if Absalom's daughter, supposing her born within a year before his death, the shortest time possible.

Solomon reigned forty years, this makes her forty-six or forty-eight, at Rehoboam's accession; he reigned seventeen; hence she was at least sixty-three or sixty-five at Asa's accession. It is possible she may have been his grand-mother, as in Chronicles it is not said his mother was Maachah, only the idol referred to. If 2 Chron. 11:20,21,22, be directly connected, it is clearly so. The mother's place was a kind of official one in the East, not the wife's, and still is. There remains 2 Chron. 13:2, which if not a mere misreading, must be compared with 11: 20-22; and if the same Abijah, raises further the question if Absalom or Abishalom is Absalom the son of David. The fact of 1 Kings 15:2 and 10, skews that something is to be sought out; some key I mean to it. The author of Kings and Chronicles cannot contradict themselves (nor each other), in the same passage and both on the same point.

I think it evident that it was not Absalom's daughter. It might be his granddaughter, but it is very doubtful. Maachah may have been Abijah's grandmother. But, there seems little doubt Abijah's mother was of Benjamin. It maybe, she was called Michaiiah and Maachah, as the change of name is the commonest thing possible. Uriel and Abishalom were both known, one Uriel I suppose her father, the other a well-known ancestor. So Abihail, 2 Chron. 11:18, is evidently only a descendant of Eliab's. It is thus, though I doubt it, that Maachah may been a granddaughter of Absalom's, and daughter of Uriel. What adds to the probability of this is that Absalom was son of Maachah, so that the name may have been kept in the family, 1 Chron. 3:2. Uriel was a Benjamite, and called his daughter Michaiiah, Maachah was given in Judah, where David's family connection was naturally kept

Sermon by the a.P.U.C

THE A. P. U. C.

"In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.-Amen.

"We speak to you on this occasion of a wise and charitable work which was set on foot in the metropolis of Great Britain some years ago to bring about a corporate Re-union between those separate churches, which, taken together, make up what is commonly regarded as the Christendom of the present day. It is a work of love, in which the only work done is the powerful labor of daily prayer and intercession. The orison which is used is taken from the Sacred Mass, added to which a Paternoster is said daily. The founders of this excellent Association-an Association which breathes in its very address the messages of good-will and of peace in one well-blended sentiment,-have displayed great wisdom by wisely resolving to pledge those who joined themselves in the work to the policy of carefully avoiding needless disputes and argumentative frivolities with regard to doctrinal differences. With them these are not discussed; they are not called upon to dwell either on the cause or the fact of division, but on its abundant and increasing evils. They are not solicited to attach themselves to this political section or to the other, to this ecclesiastical school or to that, nor are they expected to accept ecclesiastical opinions as of dogmatic force; but they are asked, and they voluntarily oblige themselves so to do when they join the society, to pray simply that, when Providence may think well to restore the peace and unity of past generations, unjust prejudices and misrepresentations on their part may be unknown. We are informed under his own hand, by a Right Reverend Brother of the mother country, who is himself a member of the Association, of the many important objects which the Re-unionists are enabled to bring to pass, of which evidence is afforded. And it is pointed out to us by others who are accurately informed, that the blessing of the ALMIGHTY appears to rest on their charitable labors.

Now surely we may hope, when we see such excellent intentions so well set forth to the Christian public, that great good may be produced by what we must all admit to be at least a very remarkable movement in the Established Church of Great Britain. Our separated Brethren, if we understand them rightly, appear to desire what they call a "corporate re-union " with the mother Church, with the mother and mistress of all Churches, the Holy Catholic and Roman Church,. And from the nature of their publications which we have examined, there is little difficulty in understanding in what manner they would wish to see their desires carried into operation. They speak with respectful and affectionate regard of the British saints, of the great and holy Saint Thomas, of the Sacrifice of the Mass, of the blessed Mother of our Lord; while their publications are filled with commendable defenses of the Catholic religion, ably planned and judiciously carried out, such as would do no discredit to any Catholic theologian.

" What, then, should be the attitude of Catholics with regard to all this? I have little hesitation in publicly declaring that our attitude should be one of deep thankfulness to the Almighty Source of all mercies for a fresh and apparently large outpouring of His Spirit. Those who were called to curse have blessed us again and again. Those who were aliens in fact as well as in spirit have

proved themselves-or, at least, are far on the way to prove themselves-children of Holy Church and followers of our Savior Jesus Christ. Deo gratias! the Lord be praised! Added to this, therefore, we should take heed that no unkind words nor any unnecessary fault-finding be made use of to those who are thus laboring for so blessed an object, and are proving themselves to be what both they and we should wish them in deed and in truth to become. We should further remember that for Great Britain the miseries of division and heresy were brought about by those who denied their Lord, and by others who left Him and fled away. The schism of the sixteenth century was, if it may be allowed us to call it so, a corporate act. The people effected it because they were prepared for it, and willed it so to be. Kings and ministers would have been impotent for evil had priests and prelates of a previous generation been watchful to sound an alarm. Still less could such evils have been brought in, if the practices of religious duties had not given place to a mere formal profession of faith. And deep as was the mischief, and wide spread, yet may we be thankful that the unbelief of Geneva and the rationalism of Germany have little hold over the British people.

"Therefore, in bringing these remarks on this interesting subject to a close, I would counsel a kindly watchfulness, an earnest sympathy, a charitable bearing, and that many thanksgivings should be made. Prayer is the center of the Association's

With but prayer it would be but the bare scaffolding of some well-designed fabric, as yet unbuilt; but having prayer for its great means, and " the restoration of intercommunion and peace " for its aim, it thus possesses, of its own very nature, a divine property, of which none shall be able to rob it, and by this means acquires a power of working which, in God's way and time, may enable its promoters-whom we bless with a divine benediction-to reverse by degrees the evils of past separation, and to restore in the end the Visible Reunion they desire. P. 307-311. " A."

Further remarks:-1. The work is dedicated (in Latin) to Pius, by divine providence Pope, Bishop of the Apostolic Chair; and to Sophronius, Archbishop of Constantinople (both of whom are blessed and most holy); but also to Charles Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England (he is most honored and most reverend)-in hope of the future union of the flock of Christ. (This pious breathing is added): "Alas how long internally divided, and in the expectation of the universal diffusion of the Catholic faith throughout the whole world, which may the Lord God Almighty grant.-Amen."

The Association is seven years old (p 9 of preface); contains about seven thousand names.

" The Association was originated in the year 1857. On the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, certain Roman Catholics, Greeks, and Anglicans met in the parish of S. Clement Danes, Strand, in the city of Westminster,-having that -morning previously, at their respective altars, asked Almighty God's blessing upon their contemplated plans,-and after duly arranging its organization, and drawing up the well-known paper of the Association, thirty-four persons formally enrolled themselves members. A dignitary of the "Scottish Episcopal Church" was in the chair. The following resolution was moved by a distinguished Roman Catholic layman, seconded by a well-known clergyman of the Church of England, supported by members of the Greek Church and others, and was unanimously adopted:-

" ' That a society, to be called the Association for the Promoting the Unity of Christendom, be now formed for united prayer that Visible Unity may be restored to Christendom; and that the Paper now before this meeting be sanctioned, printed, and circulated, as the basis upon which this Society desires to act.'

"Since that day the Association has steadily increased, as will be seen from the following statement

" On September 8, 1858, a year after its formation, there had enrolled themselves members. 675

" On Sept. 8, 1859 (in addition) 833

1860 1,060

1861 1,007,

1862 1,393

1863 1;202

1864 929*

Thus making a total of 7,099

"Of these the great majority are members of the Church of

(* "The record for the present year is incomplete, many of the local secretaries not having made any returns.)

England; but there are nearly a thousand belonging to the Latin communion, and about three hundred members of the Eastern Church. The paper of the Association has been circulated far and wide; about thirty-nine thousand copies in English have been already distributed. It has been translated into Latin, French, Greek, and Italian, and sent abroad in various ways and by different channels. Local secretaries, both at home and in foreign countries, are being increased, and many correspondents are laboring energetically, and with considerable success, in the cause. The Association has been approved in the highest ecclesiastical quarters, both among Latins, Anglicans, and Greeks. The Holy Father gave his blessing to the scheme when first started, and repeated that blessing with a direct and kindly commendation to one of the English secretaries, who was more recently granted the honor of a special interview.. The Er-Patriarch of Constantinople and other Eastern Prelates have approved of the Association, and so likewise have several Bishops, both Anglican and Roman Catholic, in England, Ireland, and Scotland, as well as on the Continent and in America. And no wonder; for the work proposed is simply to pray for the restoration of Visible Unity to Christendom, and to ask continually for the blessings of peace." (Preface, p. 10.- 13.)

Sermon I. (Our Lord's Continued Presence a Pledge of Future Unity, signed H. H.) begins with the Emperor Constantine's appeal to the Synod assembled at Tire, A.D. 335, commanding the

prelates to hasten to Jerusalem.

The decree was obeyed, and the representatives of the Macedonians, Pannonians, Moesians, Persians, Bithynians,

Thracians, Cilicians, Cappadocians, Syrians, Mesopotamians, Phoenicians, Arabians, Egyptians, Libyans, &c.,

completed the reverend chorus; such was " the multitude which flocked to the consecration of the Church round which the sympathies of the greatest number of Christian men center, and in which they converge-that sacred building which embraces within its precincts the spot where the Savior of the world suffered death, and also the tomb from which He rose victorious over death. (Page 2.)

" On this spot we may see, as it were in a glass, the fortunes of Christendom reflected. Here, during the long depression of the Church under the powers of the world, the greatest pains had been taken to efface those memorials, so precious in the eyes of Christians; first, by heaping upon the spot piles of earth and rubbish, and ultimately by building upon the mound a temple for the impure worship of Venus. Here then, on that central spot of Christendom, was a vivid representation of what was going on throughout the entire Christian Church. At Rome, the metropolis, the Church was worshipping underground, in the darkness of the catacombs; whilst above, all the impurities and impieties of heathenism were celebrated in open day, and with the additional zest derived from its opposition, now open and declared, to the spreading religion of Christ our Savior.

at length passed that phase of its existence. The Emperor Licinius was subdued by his Christian coadjutor, A.D. 323. In three years from that time, it was revealed to the piety of S. Helena where she was to find the memorials of our Blessed Lord, which from henceforth were designed to exercise so abiding an influence over Christendom. Having served her generation, the pious empress was summoned to her rest; her work remained to testify to her piety, and now, seven years after her death, the spots to which she had directed the workmen having been in the meantime enclosed in a noble building-worthy of God, writes the historian, and of royal magnificence,-all that man could do was completed, and the imperial summons collected for its consecration the august assemblage described by Eusebius." (P. 3-4).

Then come (p. 4) the strange admissions: " Athanasius was under the ban of that very Council And though we know that all who took part in the proceedings were not heretical, yet the Council at which they had most of them been assisting was so. Arianism was for the time triumphant, and where but at the sepulcher of Christ should it show that it was so? Piety caused the Church to be built, but heresy must needs consecrate it to His service, whom it denied to be truly God! (P. 4).

" He, too, Who suffered so many of the heretical opinions to be represented on the day of the consecration, yet confided to the hands of His true servant Macarius, the actual dedication of that Church which was to last as long as the world itself, and long after that special error which then prevailed was laid asleep. On that day, then, 13th of September, 335, He came down, in answer to the prayers addressed to Him, again to resume possession of that house which was His, and had been occupied, in token of His right, for forty hours, three hundred years before. He accepted the sacrifice of commemoration offered for the first time on the newly raised altar, and He appeared, notwithstanding the shocking divisions of the time, which may even make ours appear tolerable,

as the future cementer of all schism, in the Sacrament of Unity.

"No longer now was the tomb empty. It could not be said, as on the morn of the Resurrection, " He is not here," for the whole house was filled with His glory. No longer was the Cross concealed underground, but was reared in the face of all men, to proclaim the triumph of Him Who, having vanquished death,

had raised to new life the world formerly lying dead in sin. All things there were full of His Presence, and people from the furthest regions of the known world acknowledged that the Lord had taken, up His abode.** in His holy temple, by flocking to worship on the spot consecrated by the memorials of what had there been done for the sins of men, and to assist at the Sacraments, the evidence of His abiding Presence." (P. 6-8). Pass on to p. 15.

"The multiplication of heathen systems led of necessity to hopeless disorganization; but all separatists from the true Church, who have carried with them a Priesthood and a Sacrifice, have really in possession that which not only enkindles love, but on each repetition also increases and supports it." (P. 15).

Turn now to pages 16 and 17.

Is Christ, then, still in His holy temple at Jerusalem? Undoubtedly He is. He Who in watchful care preserved the true Cross under the ruins of Jerusalem,-He Who sealed up the tomb wherein He lay for three days, until, three hundred, years after, by special revelation He pointed out its site to the mother of the first Christian emperor,-He Who, meantime, tolerated upon that spot the impure worship of the heathen goddess, whose name was a by-word of heinous immorality,-He Who with such fore-knowledge guarded the spot rendered sacred in the eyes of all Christendom, and which exercises, and will continue to do so, the most extensive influence upon Christian souls,-He, be sure, has not given over the temple, which He first condescended to bless fifteen hundred years ago, to the spoiler. Never has proceeded from the high altar in that Church the Voice which did proceed from the holiest place of the temple hard by, "Let us depart hence." Though the powers of hell have done their worst, and intruded themselves into the Very Divine Presence, and have there successfully sown the crop that has sprung up, hatred and variance, emulation and strife, seditions and heresies, yet, have they not prevailed. If they could not succeed in defiling that spot by the impure worship thereon celebrated for two hundred years, and if God has, throughout its history down to the present time, still preserved the precious memorials there enshrined from fire, robbery, Mahometan spoliation, and the intestine jealousy of Christians themselves, shall we deny that He still fills that Church with His Presence, and dispenses to those who seek Him in it aright the Sacraments which are to begin and continue the Union between Himself and the members of His Body." (P. 16-17).

In a foot-note a little lower down on page 17, we are told that the dome is now unsafe, that repairs are to be undertaken on the responsibilities of Russia and France.

"East and West in this case are working in common."

It is hard to read such a bare-faced falsification of -facts laid as the basis for idolatrous worship with the thought that the writer is an honest man.

Next I open, page 19.

" But if, despite these unseemly separations, which all confess to be indefensible and most profess to deplore, God still continues to reside in His Holy Temple at Jerusalem, and has attracted to Him the hearts of all people; we need not fear that He continues to reside with those who elsewhere carry out the several rites the diversity of which does not absolutely repel Him there." (P. 19.)

Sermon 2. (Work for Reunion, signed D. C.). 1. " Prayer: it is not powerless Christ has said that prayer made in His name will be heard; and S. Philip Neri has not hesitated to assert that it is all

but omnipotent " (pages 29 and 30). 2. Self-denial (p. 30).

" As regards the form it is to assume, I may say that the Baptist's camel's-hair and Anthony's solitude are too severe the penances of the saints are not likely to be practiced. But though the form need not be such as that which pleased S. Rose of Lima, and Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice, yet self-denial can be exercised without long vigils and exhausting fasts. Even divested of every mark of severity; and hidden from the searching eye of daily companions, self-sacrifice may do its work, and that too effectually. It is difficult, however, to state exactly what mortifications may be used as a test of the sincerity of prayer for the great and holy object of union; but it is easy enough to hint at them. For instance, a prayer for those who have wronged us; a glass of water left untouched when pressed by thirst to take it; an alms to the poor, an offering to a church, a visit to a lonely invalid,-when frequently and systematically practiced, and offered along with our prayers for the union of Christendom, cannot but test their sincerity." (P. 31).

What a corrupting of both self-denial and of prayer! And Sister Emmerich learned in a vision, " Let thy sufferings teach thee a lesson, and offer them to God for all who are separated." (P. 33).

Sermon III. (The Joy of Unity, signed G. A.), " We may well hope that it (the Holy Eucharist) may propitiate the Father, and by His blessing kindle anew in her (the Church) her first love, and restore the visible unity which was once her chiefest glory." (P. 44).

" Ere long the half-extinguished spark of ancient heresies burst out into a flame, and the internal corruptions of the Church inspired such men as Wickliffe and Luther and Calvin to form the parricidal idea of setting up a new religion, and making war against their Mother." (P. 47).

The human mind, away from God and under the pressure of Satan, has felt the need of something to lean upon; it has thought upon unseen things and their connection with things seen; and false gods have been the result. But these men, the library of God in their hands, have been a-thinking, and have confounded God's earthly witness in Jerusalem with His Heavenly Witness; flesh and man's standing in the first Adam they have substituted for the Spirit and the standing of the Saint in the last Adam, and a worldly sanctuary in place of a heavenly one. The stupid senselessness which must result when man trifles with the word of God-to mold and interpret it according to his own notions! Piety, without faith in God's word as the word of God, and without the guidance of the Holy Ghost, has led them into an imaginary world of their own creation, as unreal so far as God's word is the test, as their notions are contrary to the faith of God's elect.

In Sermon 4. (The Church's Unity; signed H. C.) we have more of rationalistic than of pious error. New foundations are introduced. P. 52, " Man must be considered as one whole, each individual being but a part of this whole.... Mankind feels drawn together, for they are the same flesh and -blood. They are necessary to each other's well-being; to separate them is an act of rude violence, since they are all part of one Adam," and p. 56, " For this purpose God sent His Son into the world, that, taking human nature to Himself, He might make it the medium of regeneration for the rest of the human family. He, as, man, was to be the head of the renewed human nature, and an inexhaustible fountain of regeneration to all mankind. ' P. 57, " The Church, then, is the mustard-seed of the gospel." "The Church not only received His (Christ's) mantle, and a double portion of His spirit, but became the extension of Himself.... Her life is His life, her wisdom His wisdom, her love His love." P. 64, " The Church offers men also a treasury where each may place in common their merits, their prayers, their offerings, their sacrifices." P. 71, " Power, influence, and Wealth are poured into her (the Church's) hands, because she does not seek these things."

In Sermon 5. (Unity a Motive of Action and a Pledge of Grace; signed H. N. O.), p. 75, we read of " the nine-fold choir of the angel hierarchy;" p. 86, " God has been pleased to accord to His children's prayers, a power over His own divine will, and made them, so to say, the law of His providence, the measure of His compassion' the illimitable limit of His love."

Sermon 6. (The Blessing of Unity; signed R. F. L.), p. 104, " She (the Church of England) is pledged to no quarrel with the East; no impassable gulf divides her from the West. Still the Catholic Creeds resound in her temples; still the three-fold hierarchy ministers at her altars, still the one bread is broken, the one Sacrifice presented."

Sermon 7. (Reunion our Need and our Desires; has no signature). Sermon 8. (Visihr. Reunion a special Necessity), p. 131, " We make the Bible, the written Word of God, the standard of our whole system; not indeed as understood by you or me, this person or that, each one for himself, but as interpreted by the records of the early Church, when the remembrance of the New Testament writers was, so to speak; fresh in men's minds, and the traditions they had imparted were held fast in their original purity." P. 132, " We have only one rule given us to walk by, one manual of faith, devotion, and practice, to which we are all alike bound to conform-our Book of Common Prayer." P. 138, speaking of the blessings possessed by the Church of England,-" The full Catholic faith, Apostolic order, an edifying ritual, the heavenly nourishment of Christ's body and blood, the ministry of the Holy Ghost in confirmation, the graces of the lesser Sacraments, the due observance of holy times, communion with the saints living AND DEPARTED."

I will not weary my readers by more citations. My object is not to warty-them against the errors of the book: Those for whom I write are not of the night.;

I have referred to it as showing another proof of the state in which the so-called Church of Eng1and now is. What could it do against the writers of the- "- Essays and Reviews"? What has it done as to Colenso?. What can it do as the mother of such an association (or confederacy) as this? It is constrained to be the harbor of refuge and protection to all of these. Being an integral part of the world itself, it cannot purge itself from the works of the flesh or of the mind. A stronger than man rules in it.

The tenth Sermon, " Shall not the Church of England. be heard " (signed N.) is, to do her justice, a most wicked libel upon the establishment as set up and as a-subject of history.

P. 329, " N.B.-The names of members will be kept strictly private."

There is in the volume one witness who signs himself + D. His paper (though written under shelter of a false view of prophetic truth,-namely, that a millennium of blessing is to set in for the Church down here, after an eventide of persecution and trouble), has some pointed and true words in it. The zeal may be as that of Jehu, but it has a fervor about it which savors of natural honesty, which is more than can be said of the other productions.

John 12:31: " Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,' says our Lord. Here is the evil spirit of heathenism.. ejected from the civilized world, But his rejection is not final. ' With seven 'other spirits more wicked than himself,' he ultimately regains possession of his once deserted habitation, and '-the -latter end ' of his victim is worse than the first.' Heathenism dies into Christianity, but is revived in a more intensified and blasphemous and diabolical form in. anti-christianity "(p. 283). Confusion between 'kingdom' and "Church," and ignorance of the difference between house ' and ' body ' are here 'apparent. But the words-" Heathenism dies into Christianity, but is revived in a more intensified and blasphemous and diabolical form - in ANTI-CHRISTIANITY," are-remarkable words, and so are these-" Many seem to think that, if only visible intercommunion in Christendom can be re-established, on whatever terms, all will be well. The world will meekly bow her neck to the yoke of the Cross, and a bright millennial period will be peacefully inaugurated.

Ah! they forget that the evening precedes the morning, that life only comes through death, the Cross prepares the Crown, the Church suffers with Christ before she reigns with Him" (p. 287). So again, " Many seem to imagine that visible unity, at any price, is a great boon. But no ! A restored intercommunion based on anything, either short of, or more than, the One Old Faith,' once for all delivered, would be no blessing, but a curse to the Church, a perpetuation of weakness, a deadly enervation and enfeeblement of her real powers" (p. 288).

What God may permit, it is not for us to guess. Certainly, a new central Church, such as the A. P. U. C. proposes, would be " the WHORE" in unclouded simplicity. But' that is not my point now; nor are the many signs of the day which seem to point the same direction. What is the hierarchical establishment, and what is it about, when such things are proposed in it, and are being actively sought after by its members? What is the body corporate which could not deal with the writers of the Essays?-which could not deal with Colenso?-which cannot deal with this new form of evil?

*** The italics are often mine as Editor.

What have I to do down here? To learn to know God better and to serve Him, Entire surrender of all one is is what I covet,-surrender to God and to His work, To be an imitator of God as a dear child,-Christ Himself my ensample; that is my calling. I have divine life; I would walk in it, and offer up, all that I am and all that I have, to God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. He claims me; and to meet His claim is my bounden duty and my highest present privilege.

The Doctrine of the Soul in Life and Death

I PROPOSE, as God enables me, to point out briefly what the word of God teaches as to this foundation truth. Everything is in question at the present day-nothing ever so undoubted hitherto but is doubted now; and that by men who profess at least the greatest respect for Scripture. Hence the necessity for the appeal to its testimony upon the present most momentous subject. It is not enough to say that the doctrine of the soul, its nature and immortality, has never been doubted of. The reply is simply it is doubted now. Nor will it do to appeal even to the unenlightened heathen, as more fully enlightened upon this point than many so-called Christians; for then we shall be accused of ourselves adopting the vain speculations of pagan philosophy. A happy necessity sends us simply to the word, that "we may be able to give an answer for the hope that is in us," in this matter. May this answer be required and given, dear reader, as the same word teaches us, "with meekness and fear."

The opposers of the soul's immortality, however they may differ upon other points, agree pretty well upon these. They say that man is simply material, of the dust, and to return to the dust again. That he differs nothing from "the beasts that perish," except in possessing a higher organization. That to this is due his intellect, his moral powers,-all in short that he is or has. That he lays all down at death and is reduced to nothing-whether saint or sinner;-but will be raised up again at the resurrection to receive his reward: the just to inherit incorruption in the "spiritual body," the unjust to be again reduced to non-existence, which, they say, is "the second death;" (the arguments will come up presently; I notice only the views themselves just now), Besides which they say that the soul is merely the life imparted to man; the spirit, either His "breath," or else a principle of life communicated indeed to man, but only lent him by his Maker, forming no part of his individual being, never identified with the man himself, and returning to God at death, unchanged, as it was given.

This is a simple and truthful statement, I believe, of views put forth confidently by many as almost self-evidently Scriptural, and attempted to be proved from Scripture, not seldom with a great parade of knowledge of original tongues, and unhappily less seldom still with many bitter charges of priestcraft and willful perversion of the truth on the part of those who hold the commonly received doctrines. Happily they invite us to an appeal to an impartial witness,-"Search the Scriptures" is the motto on both sides. May the Spirit of truth guide and bless us while we attempt compliance. May He be with the word of which He is Himself the author; and teach us the most absolute, implicit, reverential subjection to it in all things. "If they speak not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them."

I begin with remarking at the outset, that there are two words which are used in Scripture for man's immortal part, and that whether in Hebrew or Greek, and the distinction is sufficiently observed in our common translation. The words I refer to are "soul" and "spirit." They are often used indifferently for what we also call indifferently either man's soul or spirit. Nevertheless they are not in strictness precisely the same. They are distinguished for instance in 1 Thess. 5:23. "That your

whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless," and again in Heb. 4:12, where the word is characterized as "piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." Here surely, what can be "divided asunder" must be distinct from each other. Just noticing this here, I confine myself for the present to the word "soul," because it meets us first in our inquiry, in fact at the very threshold of Scripture-"Man became a living soul."

Now, it is quite true that this expression itself decides nothing. Great exultation has been made over the fact that precisely the same term is made use of in relation to the beast and to the reptile, to go no lower; and, while the exultation might have been spared, the thing is true. In Gen. 1:30 (not to speak of many other passages), where man is carefully distinguished from the lower animals, these latter are spoken of in general under the term, "everything wherein there is a living soul," (marginal reading.) And they say, "if you make man immortal because he was made a living soul, you make the beasts so too, because they are said equally both to have and to be souls." But the exultation might have been spared, as I have said; in fact, the real argument from the use of this expression lies all the other way. We cannot prove immortality from it doubtless. No one in his senses would think of doing so. Nor can we even prove man's pre-eminence above the beasts that perish from it; for the one term is applied to man and beast. But is it nothing that we have in this way something beyond mere matter referred to the beast? Look around you, dear friend, we say; look in how many varied forms the instinct (so called) of the beast displays itself. Look at the sagacity, the fidelity, the affection they manifest, often so conspicuously. Is it nothing for our argument that Scripture, instead of referring these qualities to mere "organization," teaches that even the beast possesses a "living soul" to which we can refer them. I am thus so little afraid of any argument drawn from the beast's possession of a soul, that I say it greatly helps in testing the consistency of Scripture-teaching with our own. Of all the animal creation is the term used: "Everything wherein there is a living soul." And we are not afraid of this. It does not, whatever men may say still, level man with the beast. A "living" soul is not necessarily an immortal soul. Nor is the soul of the beast necessarily like the soul of man, either in kind or derivation, or in end. What the Apostle says even of flesh conies in with singular force here. "All flesh is not the same flesh. There is one kind of flesh of man, another of beasts." If that be so, how truly we may say then also; "There is one kind of soul of man, and another of beasts." Different in their derivation we know they are. It is never said of beasts that "God breathed into their nostrils the breath of life." They sprang simply out of the ground at the word of the Lord, but there was no impartation of anything from the Lord. But, by THIS, man,-formed out of the dust before,-became a living soul. And that which came from God, in that peculiar way, returns to God.

The spirit of man goeth upward," while "the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth." "The dust," indeed, "returns to the earth as it was," but "the spirit to God who gave it."

Mark, dear reader, these two returns; "dust to dust," "the spirit to God." Is the latter ever once said of beasts? Does not the whole sentence prove to demonstration that man has some better part, given of God, more immediately than the body, and which returns to God, while the spirit of the beast goes downward to the earth? In a word, that the soul of man is in every way abundantly distinct from the soul of the beast.

A writer of some notoriety among those we are speaking of, goes further still in his zeal against the doctrine of the soul's immortality.

He contends that a " living soul " is nothing else than " natural body." He argues it from 1 Cor. 15. and, that I may do him justice, I quote his argument in full. " Writing about body, the Apostle says, There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body.' But he does not content himself with simply declaring this truth; he goes further, and proves it by quoting the words of Moses, saying, For so it is written, The first man Adam was made into a living soul,' and then adds, the last Adam into a spirit giving life. ' The proof of the Apostle's proposition, that there is a natural body as distinct from a spiritual body, lies in the testimony that Adam was made into a living soul; skewing that he considered a natural or animal body, and a living soul as one and the same thing. If he did not, then there was no proof in the quotation of what he had affirmed." (Elpis. Israel, p. 28.)

This is about the most extraordinary piece of argument, upon so serious a subject, with which. I am acquainted. Especially, coupled as it is with a mis-quotation of Scripture in its support. The Apostle does not say, "For so it is written," but " and"; meaning not to prove his statement by the passage produced, but only to show its harmony with other parts of the word. If a natural body suited one that was made a living soul,- -a spiritual body suited one who was made a quickening spirit. But all Scripture confutes the idea that a natural body and a living soul are one. Take only the verse before mentioned, " Everything wherein there was a living soul." Could you say WHEREIN there was a natural body? It is simply an absurdity, and having mentioned it, we may leave it as such.

That the soul of man is distinct from the body, a multitude of passages plainly prove. So distinct are they, that to kill the one, leaves untouched the other, as a familiar passage shows: " Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Plainly this is something that is not the body; and death is not the end of it-it lives beyond that.

I return to look at the distinction between " soul" and " spirit." We have seen that even a beast is stated to have a living soul. And, in man, it is throughout Scripture spoken of as that part of his inner being which is connected with his purely animal propensities. It is the seat of his passions, instincts, appetites. " As for me I humbled my soul with fasting. "Hungry and thirsty their soul fainted in them." " Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat." " If he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry." "All her people sigh, they seek bread, they have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve the soul." " I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." A. concordance will skew a number of other instances.

These things are never said of the spirit, which is the seat of the mind; the loftier part of man's immortal nature. So, too, there is an adjective derived (ψυχικός from ψυχή) from this word soul, the use of which affords further proof of the distinction that I speak of. It is used just six times in the New Testament. Twice, James 3:15, Jude 19, it is translated " sensual." Three times it is used in 1 Cor. 15, in the expression " a natural," or, if you please, animal " body,"-a body governed by the senses,-and once in 1 Cor. 2:14, " the natural man "; in the same way, a man governed by his senses-temporal and sensible things-and rising no, way higher. Alas, I know that even the spirit in man naturally is debased, and the mind, naturally, but a fleshly mind. The expressions plainly, however, give us the use of the term-show us the soul of man as the seat of the senses, passions and appetites which relate to the body.

And surely this is another great argument against the views of annihilationists, that even such like of the lower instincts of man, many of which he really possesses only in common with the beasts,

are never referred in Scripture to the body, never spoken of as the result of organization merely of the body, as these men say, but ARE uniformly referred to the soul. And that even the beasts that possess them have also within them a living-I do not say an immortal, but a living-soul. While, with regard to man, this living soul is immortal, as we have already seen, for they who "kill the body," as our Lord says, "cannot kill the soul."

Let us now look at the use of the word πνευα or spirit. As before said, it is often put indifferently with soul or ψυχη for man's immortal part. When distinguished from it however, it is uniformly characterized as the seat of the reason, or mind, and not (as in the last instance) the senses, or appetites. Such passages as those just cited, cannot be found in connection with it. Debased and earthly in fallen man indeed it is; yet it is that part in him, which, if any, retains for him some feeble degree of likeness to his Maker. It is that, too, which governs and inspires the rest of his being, as we say a man's spirit is so and so,-meaning his temper and deportment which are governed by his spirit.

Now, as I remarked before there are two theories by which men try to set aside the Scripture with regard to this. The less subtle of the two makes of the spirit of man mere breath, deriving the argument (if it can be called such) from this being the acknowledged meaning of the original word in many passages in Scripture. The other speaks of it as a kind of all pervading principle or element, the instrument used of God for giving life to material bodies; thus belonging solely to God, and no part really of man, though for a time lent him; but which returns again to God unchanged, at death. The advocates of this theory, moreover, contend that man is never in Scripture identified with his spirit, but everywhere with the body; and they gravely tell us how Joseph was embalmed and put in a coffin in Egypt; how Moses died and the Lord buried him in a valley over against Bethpeor, and how Peter, standing up at Pentecost with the eleven, declared to all his hearers that David was not ascended into the heavens, but was dead and buried, and his sepulcher remaining unto that day.

A very brief examination will suffice to show how thoroughly unreliable are all these statements.

In the first place, that the spirit of man is not a mere communication from God, given to inspire the lifeless clay, one passage of Scripture alone will prove. "The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1). Is that a mere communication? Is it not a creation? and numbered with the other grand creations of God, as of equal, or more importance than "stretching forth the heavens, and laying the foundations of the earth." The spirit Of man is therefore, we cannot be wrong in saying, something very specially belonging to him. As I have before said, it forms his whole character.

"Poor in spirit,"-"of a contrite spirit,"-"a meek and quiet spirit,"-"a perverse rebellious spirit," and such like expressions continually recurring, mark how perfectly the spirit gives its character to a man, and is that to which he owes everything of moral individuality, yet after all no part of him? A principle of life common to all could give no distinctiveness to any; and there could be no proof, I believe, stronger of the spirit being indeed of the very essence of the man, than that this distinctiveness it does give.

But we are warranted in going further still, " For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" All intelligence is thus referred to it. If this, then, be not something in the truest sense belonging to him, I know not what can belong. Formed within man by his Maker, giving him intelligence, characterizing, individualizing him; and yet no part of him! But I go further: Man is identified with his spirit in the language of Scripture, not once or twice, but constantly. It is its common phraseology; so far from man being everywhere identified with his body, wherever the inspired writers speak their own faith, and to faith, it is invariably the reverse. " Before I go hence." I will endeavor that after my decease (ἐξοδόν, departure) ye may have these things in remembrance." " I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." " Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Take a slightly different class of expressions. We that are in this tabernacle do groan." " Not that we would be unclothed." " At home in the body." " Absent from the body." " Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." " Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell."

Let me ask anyone possessed only of common fairness, with which, body or spirit, is man identified in these expressions? Is it spirit or body that goes hence, departs, puts off this tabernacle? Is it the body or spirit which is spoken of as " in the body," " absent from the body," clothed or unclothed with it? Would a materialist, of any kind, be at a loss to know whether he were in the body or out of the body, -at least according to his own theory that the body is all? I shall leave my reader to settle these questions with himself, and also another question still, as to whether it be ignorance only, or dishonesty, which says that man is everywhere identified in Scripture with his body, never with his spirit. Meanwhile, without meaning to weary him, I must direct' his attention to another proof; " Moses died and was buried by the Lord in a valley over against Bethpeor." None knew of his sepulcher, but we have the express statement of the word as to the fact: " Moses died and was buried." How came he to the Mount of Transfiguration with one who had never seen death-not raised, mark, for Jesus Himself was the first to open the graves, the First fruits, and First begotten from the dead, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence. How came Moses there, and how comes Scripture to speak of these two (in the eyes of some in the present day) strange associates, the dead man and the living one, in that simple way, " two men, which were Moses and Elias?" Blessed be God for this sight, for this association of the living and the dead, - for this converse, this communion of the unseen world-we may not fear to call it now the world of spirits,-which we have been made privy to. We know now what it is to depart and be with Christ, which is far better;-that it is not annihilation,-not unconsciousness;-that it is such a state that in comparison of this we might desire, like Peter, to build tabernacles and stay there where we might be participators in its blessedness.

Man is then, in the word, identified with his spirit. A disembodied spirit even is called a man, appears and holds converse with living men, and is seen " in glory."

It is objected, however, that this was a vision. And because the Lord said, Tell the vision to no man," as the disciples came down with Him from the Mount, they argue, we can make no use of it to establish a point of this kind. But the word " vision " used there (ὄραμα) is simply a " thing seen," no matter where or how. The Lord's words are, " Tell what you have seen to no man"-nothing more than this. And if you look into the narrative of the circumstances (Luke 9), it will be seen that the transfiguration was no vision in the sense they use the word. The disciples did not see it when they were asleep, but when they were awake. And more-the thing itself took place

before they saw it at all, while they were asleep, and could not see it; and only " when they were awake they saw His glory." Lastly, supposing even (what is not the case) the whole were a mere dream or vision, still the argument remains. For in it certainly the death of Jesus, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, was contemplated as a future thing. And,

therefore, the vision of Moses was either deceptive or it was that of a man " absent from the body "-after death, and before resurrection! Any way, we obtain what we want; but, in fact, the transfiguration was no visionary thing, as I have proved before; we cannot mistake that, if we have the least confidence in the language of the word.

Man is then identified with his spirit. A spirit absent from the body is come to assure us of the fact, that they who kill the body are not able to kill the soul, that it survives the body, and (in the case of a believer) abides in happy consciousness and personal communion with the Lord. But this leads us to a distinct part of our subject, and one which requires a fuller and more detailed examination.

Before we go on, however, to consider the Scriptures which speak of the soul in a state separate from the body, we must look briefly at some further objections which are here brought against such separate existence.

In the first place, there is the question as to the conditional character of immortality as found in the word. Men say it is held out always as conditional, in the way of hope or reward; and they argue, justly enough were the premises ascertained, that if it be the reward of faith, or conditional upon anything, it could not be that which every man possesses.

But Scripture never speaks of it as conditional. The passage brought forward sometimes to prove this is a mere blind; and men pretending to be versed in Greek should know it. Yet we do hear Rom. 2: 7 quoted as decisive: " To them that seek for glory and honor and immortality." This last word here is not a proper translation of the original word. It should be " incorruption" (αφθαρσία). Now this is only applied in the word to God, or to the portion of the saints in resurrection, except when figuratively used, as we use it when we talk of "incorruptible" integrity, and so forth. It is used just fifteen times in the New Testament. Twice of God, (Rom. 1:23) " The glory of the incorruptible God"; and (1 Tim. 1:17) " The King, eternal, immortal (or incorruptible), invisible." Once to our reward (1 Cor. 9:25)

" They do it for a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible." Five times of the resurrection-body to the believer (1 Cor. 15:42,50,52,54) " Sown in corruption, raised in incorruption," etc. Once to our inheritance (1 Peter 1:14) " An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled," etc. Once to the word of God (1 Peter 1:23) " Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God." Three times figuratively (Eph. 6:24) " Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Titus 2:7: " In doctrine showing uncorruptness." 1 Peter 3:4: " The hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible." And lastly, the word occurs in 2 Tim. 1:10: " Who has abolished death, and brought life and immortality (incorruptibility) to light by the Gospel."

Thus it never is applied to man, saint or sinner, as a whole, nor to his soul or spirit. The resurrection-state of incorruption - (the wicked are raised, but not raised incorruptible) - is, if you please, conditional. It belongs only to the child of God. Immortality of soul belongs to all men.

But it is still objected to this that " God only bath immortality," as 1 Tim. 6:16 says; and this surely excludes it emphatically from man. I answer, Yes; in the same sense in which it excludes it also from the angels of God. Are they immortal then, or are they not? This is just the reason why I never speak of man,-I would not of angels-as naturally immortal. " God only hath" it, as what belongs to Himself. Men, and angels too, have it not in themselves. They are not independent of Him. They subsist surely eternally, but only by Him " who upholdeth all things by the word of His power." When we speak of man being immortal, we only speak of God's revealed purpose about him. The text says nothing about what man is in God's purpose, but about what is natural to him-and surely it is natural to a creature to be dependent. And that for all things: life and everything else. But this is as true of the angels as of man. If it implies necessarily that a single individual among men will ever as a fact cease to exist, it implies that all men and angels will.

Considering these objections as disposed of, we meet with others in the shape of a great array of texts taken out of the Old Testament, and mainly from three books of it, viz., Job, Psalms, and Ecclesiastes; these prove to us, they say,-what death is. I quote, as the only fair way, the most forcible of them. 'Thus in Job 3:13,19, "For now should I have lain still and been quiet, I should have slept; then had I been at rest.... Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been, as infants which never saw the light." Again, chap. 10. 18, " O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me; I should have been as though I had not been." Again, chap. 20. 6-8, of the wicked, " Though his excellency mount up to the heavens... Yet he shall perish forever like his own dung; they that have seen him shall say, Where is he?" etc. So in the Psalms, 39. 13: " O spare me a little that I may recover my strength, before I go hence and be no more." And so again, Psa. 6:5, ",In death there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" And the answer to that, Isa. 38:18: " For the dead cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down- into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee." And yet once more, Psa. 115:17, " The dead praise not the Lord; neither any that go down into silence." Psa. 146:3,4, " His breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth; and in that very day his thoughts perish." Psa. 49:19,20, "They shall go to the generation of their fathers; they shall never see light; man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish." Finally, I quote one passage from Ecclesiastes, chap. 9. 5, 6, The living know that they shall die; but 'the dead know not anything; neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten, and their love and their hatred and their envy are now perished. Neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun."

These texts are confidently claimed as decisive of the matter. After quoting them one writer says: " This host of Scripture testimony is conclusive. It decisively settles the point against all philosophical speculation. It shows that death is a total eclipse of being-a complete obliteration of our conscious selves from God's universe, and thus establishes the doctrine of the resurrection upon the firm foundation of necessity; for - in this view a future life is only attainable by resurrection." (Twelve Lectures, Lect. 3., p. 43).

I will place one fact before my reader, and then leave him again to judge as to the perfect honesty of such statements. The fact is that passages lie intermingled with these quoted, which taken absolutely (as this person takes these) would do away the resurrection.

Take some parts of the former passages:-Eccles.; "Neither have they any more a reward" (i. e. the dead); "neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Of all the dead this is spoken. Again in Job 7:9, " As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more." So again, chap. 10. 18-21 (I quote the first part- for the sake of the connection), " Wherefore then hadst Thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been:" a part quoted with so much emphasis by these writers. Now read on-" I should have been carried from the womb to the grave. Are not my days few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little before I go WHENCE I SHALL NOT RETURN, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." And so he says again, chap. 16: 22, " When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return."

Now what do such writers as the one above quoted say to this? What do they say to the fact- that side by side with passages which they quote as conclusive as to there being no consciousness or separate being for the soul of man at death we find passages which, taken precisely in the same way, are just as conclusive against the truth of resurrection? The truth is, they say nothing, for they seem to be utterly unaware of them. Yet there they are, and how shall they be accounted for? Shall we say, and say it of the dead universally, with Ecclesiastes, " That there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever "? That the dead " have not any more a reward "? No portion forever in anything done under the sun "? or with Job, that " he that goeth down to the grave comes up no more "? That there is no resurrection therefore and no future reward? We might just as well say this, surely as that "the dead know not anything," etc., taking these as precise and absolute expressions.

But if you say that the doctrine of the resurrection is taught plainly in abundance of passages, I answer so is the immortality of the human soul. Both these things are true. But where is the consistency of retaining one, while we deny the other upon the warrant of expressions which, taken exactly in the same way, would equally deny either?

But still, what of these passages? They are popular expressions, similar to many in constant use among ourselves: true, if looked at from the stand point of him who utters them, but not meant to be carried farther. We say still, as to other things, "the sun rises" and " the sun goes down," though astronomy has persuaded all of us that it is the earth revolves around the sun, not the sun around the earth. So we speak of all the souls on board a ship perishing, etc. though not believers in annihilation. So too the inspired writers can speak of Moses dying and being buried, and yet show us afterward this same Moses, a disembodied spirit, having but put off his tabernacle, in converse with the Lord. So too of Enoch, it is said in the same way, " He was not." Could anything be clearer according to these men as to his annihilation? but no, "He was not, for God took him," and " He was translated that he should not see death."

Thus the question is answered. If any one still has doubt, let him read carefully the passages with their contexts; let him mark how that context invariably speaks of the world, of worldly prosperity, or the loss of it; how they are never the revelations of God, but the language and experiences of men, even where inspired men, and I surely believe his doubts will vanish, if only he be subject to a guidance never denied to men seeking it; but denied-mark that-by most of those who hold the

views I am speaking of,-the guidance-of the Spirit of God. And now there is one thing I would, remind my reader of. If death be extinction, ceasing 'to exist, the wicked no more truly perish than the child of God himself; and this these people themselves say: all lay down their being at death, whether saints or sinners, and in the strictest sense " are not" until the resurrection.

But what saith the Scripture? " Verily, verily, I say unto you"-mark, this is revelation, the absolute statement of One who had perfect knowledge, the Son of God Himself-" he that heareth My words and believeth on Him that sent Me bath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." These are important words.

It is singular enough that these very men contend zealously that " eternal life " means " eternal existence," and argue from this being the portion of the righteous, that others will not eternally exist. Now, according to their own showing, our Lord then here affirms of the believer that he has everlasting existence. And lest it should be said, as it has been said, this " has" means " will have," He answers that by saying that such a believer " is passed from death unto life." Words could not more positively affirm that this is a present thing. So the apostle John writes of the opposite state: " No murderer bath eternal life abiding in him." There is, remarkable force in this expression. The believer has eternal life abiding in him. And if the life he has be eternal, how can he pass ever out of being?

But " eternal life" is not simply eternal existence, It implies that, surely; but the wicked who never have eternal life will exist forever. Eternal life is what a man receives in regeneration, and by virtue of which he becomes a " child of God." Faith in Christ is the evidence, on our Lord's own testimony, of having passed from death to life. He has been new born-received a life from God: " That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." Physically, in the flesh, he was alive before; but without this life therefore, dead, in that sense, while he lived. But this life received from God is in its own nature eternal. In this way we see that eternal life is not simply eternal existence. It is a thing given of God to men while here; so that if they have it not, they are said not to have life at all. Yet they exist. And as here, so in the judgment. The wicked have not eternal life, but exist, and exist forever.

In fact, the whole idea of death held by materialists is completely contrary to Scripture. The Scriptural idea is separation, never extinction. " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." " Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Here the change in the buried seed is called both by our Lord and the apostle death. But is it extinction? Is the grain of wheat annihilated in order to its bringing forth fruit? How foolish were such a question Yet there is decay; there is corruption; and there is the separation of what decays from the living germ which springs up and brings forth fruit, How like the separation of the decaying body from the spirit, which is the Scriptural definition, we may say, of the death of man. How like, too, to that spiritual death in which the soul, separate from Him in whose favor alone is life, corrupts morally in " trespasses and sins." The analogy is perfect. And this is the Scripture use of that great mystery, death. But the buried seed exists. The soul dead in sins exists. And man separated from the body exists likewise. In any use of the word in Scripture the idea of the cessation of existence never enters.

The way is now fully prepared for us to look at the passages which speak of the soul or spirit in its disembodied state. A brief glance at these will end this hasty sketch of an all-important doctrine. I

have already spoken of the case of Moses on the Mount of Transfiguration. I turn now to other, and if it were possible, clearer instances.

The belief of the Pharisees, however it had come about in the face of the (as is imagined) plain statements to the contrary - all found in the Old Testament - is acknowledged by our adversaries to have been on this point the same as our own. This is, indeed, beyond question; but it is exceedingly important, too, in connection with one text which we now come to examine. Paul, in Acts 23:6, standing up before the Jewish council, identified himself doctrinally with the Pharisees, "Men and brethren," he said, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

That you may not imagine the resurrection was the only point of identity in the faith of the Apostle and of the Pharisees, the inspired historian goes on to give some further points. "For the Sadducees say there is no resurrection; neither angel, NOR SPIRIT; but the Pharisees confess both." These are two more points in which the Christian accorded with a large part of his adversaries. The Pharisees confessed-the very word implies it, for we do not speak of confessing what is false-the Pharisees confessed the truth as to these. In what way they held the doctrine of the spirit is (blear from what follows;

"If an angel or a spirit bath spoken to him," they said, referring to the voice of Jesus which Paul had heard on his Damascus journey where grace met him, "let us not fight against God." In fact, we know abundantly what was the doctrine of the Pharisees on this point, and with them Paul identifies himself.

Not only Paul; another did so, who is of much higher authority than even he. Our Lord's parable of the rich man and Lazarus is acknowledged to be based on Pharisaic sentiments. It is quite plain, too, that it speaks of conscious happiness or misery in the separate state. The only question is-and surely it cannot be a question for any one that knows and loves his Lord-whether He, the living Truth Himself, here sanctioned truth or error. The only thing I say about this is, that those who can doubt about it may and must for me. I care not to say one word to them.

A second time our Lord sanctioned a similar belief with a precise statement, whether true or not men must again pass judgment if they choose. The passage is in Luke 24:36-39: "'And as they thus spake, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith-unto them, Peace be unto you.' But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And He said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I Myself; handle Me and see, for a spirit' hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have!"

Our Lord's words are here as distinct as possible. Reading their thoughts that what they saw was only the spirit of their deceased Master, He assures them He is no mere spirit, because a "spirit hath not flesh and bones." Was He speaking of another spirit from what they thought? or what else Would the words be than deception if there were no such spirit?

Turning back again a little to the previous chapter, we find still another proof of our doctrine in the well-known words of our Savior to His dying companion, "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." All kinds of attempts have been made to make these words speak a language consistent with annihilation doctrine. It has been said that the connection should be, "I say to thee

to-day," instead of "to-day thou shalt be with Me," though anyone must see that this is unmeaning absurdity. Others say that "today" (σήμερον) means "in that day," i.e., the day of Christ's coming in His Kingdom, which is quite untrue, for σήμερον simply means "to-day" and nothing else. But the grand argument used is derived from our Lord's words to Mary after his resurrection (John 20), "Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to My Father; but go and tell My brethren I ascend unto My Father, and unto your Father, and to My God and your God." Whence they

argue that the spirit of Jesus could not have been in heaven with the thief before this. But evidently the words to Mary were spoken as the Risen One. He had not presented Himself before God with the spoils of death. It matters not where His spirit had been, for that would have been more as conquered of death than conqueror. Now only in resurrection could He take His place there for us, "leading captivity captive, and giving gifts unto men." The spirit of Jesus had been in Paradise because He said so. His words are incapable of another meaning, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." And as to where that is, the Apostle, speaking of his being caught up to the third heaven, turns round to us immediately, and calls that Paradise: "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), such a man caught up to the third heaven; and I knew such a man (whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable things, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

Turn we now to still another proof. We have had the faith of Paul, the doctrine of the Lord, and now we come to the faith of the early Church: a threefold cord which is not quickly broken. In Acts 12 we have the record of Herod's persecution. James having been slain, Peter is next taken and shut up in prison; but prayer having been made to God for him, an angel at midnight opens his prison doors. His reception at the house of Mary is thus related: "And when he considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying. And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, whose name was Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in; and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad;' but she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, 'It is his Angel.'"

We could not have more clearly set before us the faith of the early Church. I shall not comment upon it, for comment is needless. This use of the word angel, however, for 'the human Spirit, throws light upon another passage, sometimes considered an obscure one. It is found, Matth. 18. 10: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." That is to say, the little ones-the babes these men despise-for whom they say there is (in common with idiots, and some of the heathen) no resurrection-their spirits are, through the blood shed for them, even before resurrection, in converse with their God; and our Lord says of them expressly, "Take heed, despise them not."

I have done; it only remains to sum up briefly the doctrine of the Word.

We have seen that even the beast has a living soul, the Spirit of God thus teaching us to refer all the self-government, as we might call it, even of a beast, not to organization, not to the body, but to the soul.

Man has not only a living but an immortal soul, for they who kill the body are not able to kill it.

To this soul, or the spirit, are referred all passions, instincts, appetites, disposition-all moral individuality.

Man is identified with this soul or spirit wherever faith is speaking or spoken to. The man goes hence. that is, the Spirit departs to God.

Immortality is never in Scripture conditionally offered to man.

Eternal life is more than eternal existence. It is a thing abiding in the regenerate now. The unbeliever is even now in this sense dead; yet he exists.

Death is not, in Scripture, extinction; the seed dies and is not extinct; man dies, and his spirit goes to God.

Finally, we have looked at the state of the spirits departed. Twice the veil of the unseen world has been removed for our instruction. We have had the Lord's testimony, the Church's, Paul's, and all is perfect harmony with our view of Moses. Absent from the body, present with the Lord."

May He give us true wisdom and subjection to His Word. F. W. G.

The Table of the Lord

MANY ideas are current on this subject, and that on the part of those I truly love and value, and used by others with different intent, which I think unfounded, and I now send you these few lines on the subject. It is insisted that the table is the table of the Lord. No one, of course, doubts it; or that He whose table it is, is the Lord, has peculiar claim to this title, this distinctive title. But while the heart joyfully owns this name, it is not, cannot be, the highest and happiest aspect of the Lord's supper; not that which especially belongs to Christians in it. Of course were Christ not the Lord, not only the table, but Christianity would be gone. But " Lord " is not the name in which Christians have communion there, and that is their precious part in it. Communion with the Lord, is an ill-sorted term.

The term Lord is used as to the table, where it is used in contrast with evil, or as a place of dignity and judgment. The table of the Lord, in contrast with the table of devils; the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils. Hence it is added, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?. are we stronger than He?" Again as to judgment: " This is not to eat the Lord's supper: he shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." " Hence if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord." And so on.

But when the Apostle speaks of communion, he does not speak of the Lord. But "the cap of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ;. the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" And this is the more remarkable, because the moment he begins, in the same passage, to speak of authority, contrast with devils, and judgment of evil, he says always " the Lord "; but as to communion, not. 11

To Me to Live Is Christ

HM 1:21 It is on my heart to say a few words upon this passage; and, first, there is instruction to be gleaned from the contrast, which the context contains, between "to live" and "to die." If living is Christ and dying is gain, it would seem that both life and death have to do with the same party; as he says immediately afterward, "If I live in the flesh," if I "abide in the flesh," and then, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." In both cases, himself as living in the body, and himself as quitting the body, was the individual spoken of. There was a present experience which he had as an individual, and a future close at hand; and he had his own wishes and thoughts about it, and his own private judgment too. I should like to leave this scene here below-but loving Him into whose presence I should then enter, and knowing how His interests are concerned in the people among whom I am, I judge I had, for their sakes, better stay-and so I know I shall stay.

There are blessings in heaven in Christ, which belong to all the children of God alike; and there are blessings and privileges which now belong to every believer down here. The Father's love, which has placed the Lord Jesus at His own right hand, has placed us in Him there. "In that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me." And again, of every believer that is true, which the same verse states, "and I in you." Christ in God, and we in Him, and these things known to be so, characterize faith now. So all the shining of light into a heart is sealed by the Spirit in it, and He abides in us for evermore. Paul would not have allowed that any believer was separable from the Father's thoughts of Christ in heaven, first-born among many brethren, Head of His body the church, which is the complement of Him that filleth all in all. All the saints at Philippi had that true of them, and all had faith and the Spirit. But all could not, did not say (each one for himself)-to me, living is Christ, and dying is gain. They could say, Christ in God and we in Him up there; and He in us down here: God's appropriation of us to Himself. But Paul went on, and could and did say: Not only has God made the riches of the person and work of Christ now up there to attach through faith and the Spirit to me down here but it is all appropriated in my heart and mind and life, so that, to me, living is Christ.

Could the saints who were preaching Christ, even of envy and strife, of contention (not sincerely), supposing to add affliction to Paul's bonds, have said so much? (chap. 1.) Could the "all who seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's," who were not "like-minded" (with the Apostle) have said so? (chap. 2.) Could those who, loving not the cross of Christ, made Paul weep, who minded earthly things, have said so? (chap. 3.) No: their faith and spirit was the same as Paul's. The same Father, the same Christ, the same Heaven, the same position up there, the same calling down here: but if, in the range of God's eternity and Heaven, there was now but one blessing common and open to all believers-Paul, in the range of his own being in time, now and down here on earth, could present himself as a vessel filled with Christ. How is it now with us, with me, with you, reader.? Can we say, "To me to live is Christ, as well as to die is gain?"

The expression is a remarkable one. To me to live is Christ. Christ was a person. To me, not to live is joyous, or merely fruitful in labor, well worth while. But to me to live is Christ. The person of Christ is so filling the mind and heart and life of Paul that, if he speaks of himself, the adjective he uses as the predicate of I' - (Paul renewed) is Christ. As to me, living is Christ. Surely, He in the Father (and known to us to be there) and we knowing that we are in Him there, and that He is in us down here, ought to lead to and result in the absorption of Him, and the manifestation of Him by us. According to the ought and duty of the new nature which we have, this is quite plain. There are three things which maybe noticed here as to man in action. He has motives (right or wrong-consistent or inconsistent); he has an energy; and he has an end or ends in what he does. Paul drew his motives from Christ. Christ was his motive. That which influenced him to get into action, which was the motive cause to Paul, was Christ. His energy was Christ. The end which he sought was Christ: and (not merely was Christ in the glory the point to which his whole course and journey tended but) he had for himself, to-day, down here, a present end, and that was that Christ might be magnified in His body, whether it be by life or by death.

Nothing, perhaps, shows the present privilege of the Christian more than his competency, through grace, to separate himself from himself, and to judge, as in the presence of God, both himself and all that passes within and from himself. When he was dead in trespasses and sin, walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience-having his conversation...in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind-by nature a child of wrath even as others, he could not have done so. For the God of this world blinds the eyes of those which believe not. But now he can do so. This we see in 1 Cor. 11:28-31. He can examine himself, test his motives, his energy, and the end that he has before him,-judge himself. And if he does this instrumentally, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, he has also in Heaven One who knows how to wield the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:-quick (or living,) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, a discernor of the thoughts and of the intents of the heart. " Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." What the instinct seeks, what the mind is upon, all the connecting links, and all the hidden sap found in those links, all the thinkings of the mind, all the intentions of the heart are all open to Him. Solemn but blessed truth. Had it not been so, nor Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor Samuel, nor David, nor Job could have been saved. Jehovah knows the heart in all its depths, windings, and folds. The Lord Jesus knows his own heart and mind and life; knows what ours were, what they are and what He has undertaken to make them to be. No film on His eye, no veil over our hearts can hinder His reading us as we are, according to truth; and He never swerves in His purposes to make us that which He has apprehended us for.

MOTIVES.-That there is a motive in us for everything we do, I do not doubt. There being a motive, and our knowing that there is one, or what it is, are very different things. Poor inconsiderate wretch that man is, while in nature, knowing not his responsibility, or that the eye of God is upon him, reading all his bad motives and seeing the absence of all good motives-inconsiderate man, I say, goes on, led he knows not whither: yet motive he has, and motive which is noted on high, motive which oft his mind gets a glimpse of and is ashamed of.

Paul shows us what his motive was. What it was that set him, according to the new nature, in movement, and kept him therein. Motive, which while it filled his heart with the liveliest sense of holy liberty and practical freedom, gave also the light of a sound judgment, by means of which his mind could sit in judgment upon all things and enable him, steadily and firmly, to resist all the evil of the world, the flesh, and Satan; giving no place, cost what it might, to, evil. The old "I" was reckoned by him crucified, dead, and buried together with Christ. The new "I" (not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me) was able to keep him, Paul, in full occupation (as a divinely-made freeman of Heaven) with the Christ whom God had revealed to him as being in Heaven.

What privilege, freedom, and service are blended together in him in 2 Cor. 5:13-16. What privilege" we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God; or whether we be sober, it is for your cause." As though he had said: I praise not myself; though you may glorify God for what he has wrought in me. I have no time to think of myself--absorbedly occupied either with God in ecstasy, or soberly laboring for you (vers. 12, 13).

" For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again " (vers. 14, 15). Constraint is a strong word, Paul. Do you mean that you are led about captive, dragged against the current, led whither you would not? Yes and no-says Paul. Yes, as to my Saul-nature and its circumstances, if you will: no, as to my Paul-nature and its circumstances. But, of a truth, as to this constraint, there is, so far, no battle. It is the love of Christ, the love which He bears to me, as to one given to Him from before the foundation of the world; for whom he left divine glory in Heaven above and came down here,-became God manifest in the flesh, gave Himself (His love was stronger than death or than God's judgment against me);. as one to whom He has shown Himself,-He being gone on high; whom He loves and will love, even unto the end; one for whom He is about, a second time, to leave the Father's Throne and come and take to share His own Throne. The Eternal Lover of my soul, He draws me and I run after Him. Made willing in the day of His power, able to say, " I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine,"-I am drawn according to the new nature. No bondage

this, but the Heavenly and divine freedom of a son of God. But, then, if the love of CHRIST constrains on the one hand, (and who that ever tasted that, but what found that his heart was too narrow to contain the overflowing fullness of Christ's love to his people), it give joyous freedom and leads captive, as the magnet separates and draws out the needles whose heads are towards it from those whose points are towards it and the heads the other way; on the other hand, this is no unreasonable thing, "because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again " (ver. 14, 15.)

Instinct and love first, but sober conviction and calm judgment afterward. We were all dead in trespasses and sins, and He died under the penalty due to our sins: and, as here stated, he had an object in doing so, even the having of a people, now, who should live: and live (not unto themselves, but) unto Him which died for them. Paul's judgment was made up and settled; for himself, he meant to meet this object which Christ had in His mind when, seeing the moral death in

which man was, He revealed to Paul His own death, which set Paul free, that he might live to Christ. Deliverance from moral death and the judgment against it, which had been borne by another, in order to have him not any longer, practically the slave of Satan (by indulgence in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life) weighed upon Paul to cut him off from all that Saul had been, and to be devoted to every claim of Christ over him. Here it is not love and joy and privilege only, according to the new nature; but intelligence and judgment, and a firm purpose to stand against all that was of the old man,-all that, in our circumstances, Satan would use to entangle us with, and to go out as individuals meeting the mind of Christ, living to Him who died for us and rose again. Many only look at the constraint of love, Christ's love to us, as though that would do everything: not so Paul. The constraint of Christ's love was the ornament of his heart, the joy of his soul;-but, there was the battle too. The keeping under the body; the judging of flesh and spirit; clean separation from the world, and resisting of Satan too; enduring hardness as a good soldier of the Cross of Jesus Christ. Paul had faith, and had received the Spirit like us all; but Paul was, and stood down here, for Christ, even as Christ was up there on high for Paul. Paul was a lover of Christ and a servant of Christ, and would be so, even as Christ had shown Himself to be the lover of Paul and the One that served him, in scenes and circumstances in which none but He could serve. He has loved and served us: can we add, and we love and serve Him?

The second passage I would turn to is Rom. 14 It shows us the extent to which this motive of living to the Lord alone is owned by God and Paul, in every detail of our lives here below: and that we are bound to own it in others, and honor it in them, even where their knowledge and intelligence is defective. The spirit of life down here of a Christian is in seeing the Lord every where and doing everything as unto Him. The Lord will have his honor those who in conscience live to Him. One believes that he may eat all things.; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Both are right as to their actions. Only "let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand." So as to days, as well as meats. "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, THAT HE MIGHT BE LORD BOTH OF THE DEAD AND LIVING

(ver. 5-9). In righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost we have to serve Christ in all these things, in order to be well-pleasing to God. I have got to serve Christ amid all the weaknesses of those that are in His company with me. I must have faith, and have it for myself before God amid all the weaknesses of unintelligent Christians around me. But I must insist upon every one of them

doing what he does as unto the Lord; living as unto Him.

And this is enforced by Paul, in the fact stated by him, that each of us must stand at the judgment seat of Christ-bow and confess to Him-give account to God of why we acted as we have done. A

solemn and an important truth to induce us to look well to what the regulating motive of our actions down here is. Oh, how little do the Christians of one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five think even of these things! Surely they therein forget their own mercies,-mercies of the wilderness-pilgrimage, under the guidance and eye of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But if "to me to live is Christ," points me first to Him as my motive, it secondly points me to Himself Christ, likewise, for energy, the energy or power which a Christian wants to carry him right up against the current of all here below, and to enable him to stem the tide of difficulties from the world and self and Satan here below.

This we have shown to us in 2 Cor. chap. 12. and also in chap. 1. It is the principle of resurrection from death.

Paul got his first lesson ere he entered upon service. Caught up into the third heavens by a power not his own, the body made nothing of, so that, whether he was in it or out of it, he could not tell; he found himself in and amid all the circumstances of the glory of Him that had loved him. But the Lord knew His captive better than the captive knew the captor. And the Lord would use Paul as a vessel and channel by which to set forth, not the knowledge of the glory, but the present grace of the Lord Himself. Lest he should be puffed up a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan is sent to buffet him. The inconsiderateness of the piety of a good man appears. He will go straight to the end at once. "Take away this thorn. Take away this thorn. Take away this thorn." Such is his prayer. Instead of which the Lord says: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." The Lord, knew all the secret counsel of God-all that Paul was-all the need His own heart felt to have Paul dependent upon and consciously and willingly dependent upon the everlasting arms which were underneath. He would not go at once to the end. Death and resurrection were the principle He had owned and acted upon all through His own course; He would have Paul, also, willingly to appropriate death and resurrection as the principle on which he meant to walk too. Would you rather be strong in yourself, and strong because there are no difficulties in the way, or crippled and crumpled up in weakness but strong because He that has bought you with His own blood is perfecting His strength in your weakness? Surely anything that makes me see the need, I have, and makes me willing to profit from the daily grace of a risen and ascended Lord, who is obliged to cripple Paul, yet has the heart to put His own arm under the cripple's weakness ever after, is most precious. Paul can now speak out freely: he had no account to give of the glory, none of that which he heard when in it; but now he can speak out freely. The stream of the water of life flows through his own soul and fills his circumstances. What can Satan, what the thorn, what the buffeting, avail to silence a man who finds that the living Christ of God, though in heaven, is now graciously perfecting His strength in the weakness of His servant. The triumph fills His soul, and He gathers from all around occasion for triumphing. "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong." Such seems to me to have been the principle which the Lord taught Paul ere his service began; namely, that the power w^{as} God's in which he had to run; and that that power wrought in an unhuman way, a divine way-as in the Redeemer's own course-through death and resurrection. This was fourteen years before the first chapter of the epistle, in which he relates another thing-how, being in his work as apostle, when the question came out at Ephesus of whether idolatry could stand against the word of the gospel, he found

himself thrown into prison. Had he forgotten the principle taught him fourteen years ago?-that he should have despaired even of life, being pressed out of measure beyond strength.

Well, if he did forget, the Lord, who was, all the while, nearer to him than his weakness and than any of his circumstances-yea, was using them too to show that the work was His and not Paul's-acts on his soul. And then he can write: " But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." The expansive power of faith, too, is shown, and a past deliverance leads to a calculation for the present and for all future needs. " Who delivered us from so

great a death, and Both deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us." " All things work together for good to them that love God " (Rom. 8:28). And as to all circumstances - tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, the sword, - if they can reach us they can not reach Christ, to extinguish in His heart the love which He bears to us; nor hinder our saying, " Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ

Jesus our Lord" (ver. 37-39). What can change Him, or remove from His heart the love which God bears to us in Christ? And what can take away the knowledge of it from us?

Man's way is to- prove his own competency and self-sufficiency by at once towering up to the point he desires to attain to; this he cannot do, if he is walking with God. God will not give His glory to another. And if He takes up a poor sinner, to lead him through foes and over difficulties, He will have the poor sinner to know that it is " not by might nor by power; but by My spirit" that the end is to be gained. And note here, that there is a present purpose gained by the Lord perfecting His strength in weakness. He gets glory now. And the servant gets honor too, as being thus used by the Lord for the display of His grace. To the Christian this application to himself, by the Lord, of the principle of death and resurrection, in daily experience, is a most precious thing. The cross is to the Jew a stumbling block, to the philosopher foolishness. But unto them who are called, whether Jews or Greeks, Christ is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. No flesh shall glory in His presence. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord (1 Cor. 1).

There is nothing which more unsuspectingly lets self and worldliness into a godly soul than human energy. Paul set out with divine motives, and an object or end in his mind which were in perfect harmony with the energy which the Lord meant to be his, and the path that energy runs in. " He is a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel: for I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake." (Acts 9:15,16). Yet we find this special vessel breaking down. Whether the honor was too great for the vessel, or whether the service was too great for his measure of communion, he broke down: broke down too on the blessed side of over care for what his Master loved. It may be that he did not sufficiently keep before him the difference between obedience and fellowship, between serving his master and doing. But he would go up to Jerusalem; and would not be stopped by fear of bonds and imprisonment-was he not ready to die, also, at Jerusalem? And he went up, and shaving of heads, vows, appealing to the prejudices of the Pharisees against the Sadducees followed thereupon: things which were not according to the divine energy, and which had no savor of death and

resurrection in them. But if he had overstept himself, his divine master allowed bonds and imprisonment to roll in, that in the crippled state of His servant He might Himself be able to show his grace, and to cheer His servant therewith. " And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem,- so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11). Perhaps the Lord saw that the bonds and the captivity which followed were, the best preparative for the testimony before the kings and rulers before whom Paul is now to appear,-and the best testimony, too, to them, as to their position and state. I am persuaded that it was so with Peter in his falls, whether in the denial of the Lord, or the compromise of the gospel at Antioch. He loved the Lord.: O, how loyally! The end before him was in accordance with this motive power. But until he had judged the energy in which he ran, he could not judge the ways into which that energy would lead him, and did lead him. And when he came to his death, his own energy, plans, and doings were all to be set aside; and the Lord to have the honor of putting the crown of martyrdom upon His servant. " Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither" thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he. saith unto him, Follow me." (John 21:18,19). And Abraham in Egypt, and. in the matter of Hagar; and Isaac with his Rebecca; and Jacob at Jabbok; and David, and Job, etc., etc., in olden times; all had to learn the same lesson. False energy (not of faith) has not the Spirit,-and where we walk by sight, sense rules us, and our minds get hold of Plans and ways not of God. O how much of this lies at the root of the modern Christianity.

ENDS proposed by faith. THE end which God has proposed to faith now, is to meet the Lord at His second coming from the Throne, and then to be forever with Himself. This, as we may see, absorbed Paul's soul, in the 3rd chapter of the Philippians. But when it is so, he that hath this hope in him, those to whom He Himself is the hope, the mark of the prize of their high calling, necessarily purge themselves, even as He is pure. Thus a second end, as it were, becomes ours: we want to be found by Him without blame, as to our course down here, sanctified wholly in body, soul, and spirit. If we are to meet Him as our hope, we desire that we should be able to do so to the unhindered delight of Him who will say to those that are waiting and ready for Him: Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.

This end was earnestly sought by Paul; and we see it in Phil. 1:20, as the one blessed ambition of his soul for himself in this life. " I know, that this shall turn to my salvation.... According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death." It filled his soul-it was an expectation earnestly occupying him as well as longed for. What? First, negatively, in no one particular to be put to shame.

Secondly, positively, and in a tone of soul harmoniously according with the greatness of the end which he had in view; "even with all boldness, as at all times, so at that particular moment also," (what is all this labored speech leading up to?) "that Christ shall be magnified in my body." Yes he would, and he sought that all the fullness that is in Christ might be set off, openly presented in him in the body down here. Magnified is a strong word.

Christ magnified is a very strong expression. But that was what Paul's end was; and if that was gained, as he felt assured it was, whether it was by life or by death he cared not. For to me to live is Christ. What could God do more for us than He has done; placed us in Christ in Himself; and placed Christ's Spirit in us. Paul saw and he attained to more, even to this, to such a simple consistency with the faith given, and such a subjection to the spirit, that he could say, I am for Him down here, in the details of the wilderness life, as He is up there for me."

Oh! that Christians would lay this to heart and act upon it, and become letters of Christ, known and read of all men. I am persuaded that nothing but this will give the power of bearing much fruit. Christianity was not meant merely for the soul of individuals, but to purge the conscience and to cleanse the heart, so that the eye might become single, and that fruit might abound, and that our joy too might thus be full. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." (John 15:8-11).... "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).... "Ye have not

chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16.) Even as the blessed Lord had said: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:12-15) "But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father" (John 15:21-24). Everything around us, now, is in ruins and declension; but the Christian has his own principles, and the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ is in nowise changed. If ever there was a day when it was important for every professed follower of Christ to stand fast and to be true to his profession, I believe it is the present day. There is no answer to infidelity like the life of Christ displayed by the Christian. Nothing puts the madness of the infidel, and the folly of the superstitious, more to shame and silence than the humble, quiet, devoted walk of a thoroughgoing, heavenly-minded, divinely-taught Christian. It may be in the unlearned and poor and despised; but, like the scent of the lowly violet, it gives its perfume abroad, and both God and man take notice of it. Works, if only hypocritical doings, go for nothing; but works which are the genuine expression of living and walking with God in Christ, are of the same sort of value as the hands of a good clock. A good clock without hands is, for practical purposes, of no value; but the hands on the face tell the measure of the value of the works within, and tell the lapse of time. "We are His (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:10). Now is the time for works and for overcoming; to him at least who has an ear to hear (Rev. 2:3, and compare with chap. 22. ver. 11, 12).

Let the friends-brethren in Christ-who avow that they are not of this world, even, as Christ was not of it, study Matt. 6:19-34. It is a heart-searching portion but a most blessed one, too, as showing what the present practical comforts are which flow out from a single eye.. Let them seek and obtain that single eye, and they will find their portion, even now, in the wilderness to be large and abundant.

The Transforming Power of the Glory

WHAT is the practical effect of "looking on the glory of the Lord with unveiled face" (2 Cor. 3:18). Paul is here contrasting the ministration of death with the ministration of righteousness. Though the glory in the former consumed, because it only appeared with a claim on man who was unable to meet it (for Righteousness was not fully established); yet, Moses bore in his face marks of its transforming power. Because of man's condition, it was fearful in its bearing on him; yet, as we see in Moses, no one could be in it without partaking- of its excellency; Moses' face therefore bore distinct traces of it. Israel refused even to gaze on the effects of it on Moses' face. Man, when seeking to maintain his own righteousness before God shrinks from admiration of the transforming power of God; Israel, therefore, in asking Moses to place a veil on his face, only declared the moral distance of their own hearts from God. Hence the veil is transferred to their hearts.

But now, says Paul, there is a wonderful contrast. It is now the ministration of righteousness, and that from the same glory. So was it announced (in Luke 2) when the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds. The Son of God was come to establish righteousness from the same glory from which had come the claim of righteousness. And, therefore, if the glory had the power to produce such effects on the face of Moses, when man in his then condition could not look at it, how much more now, when it is a ministration of righteousness. Hence the "apostle declares that we use much boldness, and, looking on the Lord with unveiled face," are transformed according to the same image from glory to glory. It effects a moral transformation into its own likeness. Humbling though it be to admit, it, any association with that which is morally superior to us must have this effect on us. If we decline to inferior associations, we deprave our better tendencies; but if we are occupied with moral superiority, we always adopt rather than improve.. We adopt a new habit of action instead of only improving any existing one, and as the glory of God is unique and morally supreme, if we are conversant with it, we naturally and almost unconsciously adopt its characteristics and qualities, so that we are really in the process of transformation, and not merely of improvement.

I turn now to the traces of these effects, and how we may notice them. It is remarkable how differently we view the same things at different times. This may be even when we feel them most, but then we are in the spirit of our mind most above them. The same painful question occupied the mind of the Psalmist when outside the sanctuary and when inside; but it is evident, that he was a totally different man as to feeling, when in one and when in the other. The light of the glory had so transformed Stephen, that he was practically superior to the violence leveled against him, but he was all the more affected for those who perpetrated it; so that I should say, that the chief traces of the moral effect of the glory are a greater sensitiveness to the evil afflicting me, but a marked and sensible elevation above it.

Again, how can I distinguish "looking on the glory of the Lord" from any other spiritual exercise? If this be difficult, it is so, simply because the soul is so slow to enter into the counsel of God in His Grace to us, or to realize that counsel as a manifestation of His own heart, in the person of His

only begotten Son, from the very center of the glory. The Grace which has reached us, has its origin in the glory; it belongs to it, so to speak; and it is not answered, according to its native interest, until it connects us with the glory. If I understand the origin of this Grace and how I am bound up with it, I must understand its associations. Its origin is the center of the glory; its association is the Person of the glory; and when I find myself in this association, through the Grace of God manifested to me, I am "looking on the glory of the Lord." If the light made Paul blind (as a man), he never lost the remembrance of it in his soul; therefore, he called it "the mark."

The True Day of Atonement

EC 12:9-14 EC 13:1-9IN this brief passage, the Spirit of God has portrayed a scene of surpassing beauty and depth, comprising in a few words what the human pen (could it ever have handled it) would have taken pages to give expression to, and evidencing by every touch that the sketch is wholly divine. It is a scene of no human action or exploit; or even such as we find in other parts of Scripture where man is made an instrument in God's hand for His work.

What we have here presented to us, is a still deeper thing-that of souls already renewed, wrought on by God.

Thus, its interest is wholly moral and spiritual; it is the exercise of hearts acted on by the Spirit of God; a picture such as Scripture delights to delineate for us; and to represent the effect produced by such action in all its variety; be it that of joy, gladness, conviction, sorrow, or exercise as the case may be.

Here it is that of mourning and affliction, but affliction of a high order, because not produced by any fear of judgment or retribution; not impaired in its character by any personal anxiety; but in all the depth of that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance,"-that which the Holy Ghost produces, when it plows up the heart and conscience to an estimate of sin, in the light not only of holiness, but of love; when personal conviction produces sorrow of that truth and character, which though aware that all judgment is borne, melts the heart in the sense of what it has been toward love, goodness, perfection, which adores that love, that perfection, as in exercise towards itself, and while relieving it from all sense of condemnation, probes it in its deepest affections, and awakens its fullest adoration.

We know, or should know what this is in individual experience. We know that it is' the Lord's way to deal with our hearts about their sin and failure, in the most searching manner, after we are at home with Him, and all sense of judgment or retribution is removed. We know that the purification of the affections is not only a subsequent, but in one sense a deeper and more painful process than that of the conscience. More painful to the heart that loves; though less anxious and personal, because it grieves, not in fear of loss or forfeiture, but in the presence of Love, which "heaps coals of fire on its head."

In order to bear this process, the affections must be prepared by the conscience being previously set at rest; but when all is passed through, then' comes the power, the joy, the communion; the renewed bindings, and consecration of the heart to Christ, under a sense of what He is in His intrinsic worth, and what He is and has been to us amid all our sin.

All God's ways preserve such perfect harmony and consistency, that His education of the individual soul is but a miniature of His large dispensational plans. While the variety of His dealings with His people is boundless, the variety is only in means and adaptation; the aim, purpose, bearing and moral order is ever the same; so that be the circle large or small; be it an individual or a class, a company or a nation, the same lines can be traced throughout: the human heart is the

same, and God's purpose to bring it near to Himself, never changing.

Here then. is a scene of this character. We find a whole nation put into that crucible which God so constantly employs for individuals. It is not a work of conversion; that had all been gone through before. It is the probing and deepening of affections already renewed; the judging of sin in the light of a presence not unknown, but brought into closer proximity.

In view of such a scene, we naturally ask when and where does it take place? What is the subject of Who are the actors therein?-and the answer to each of these queries, greatly increases the interest of the whole.

As to the first inquiry, we learn by ver. 9, that it will take place when " all nations which come up against Jerusalem shall be destroyed, which event we know will be the winding up of the last week of judgment, when Christ shall come forth for the deliverance of His suffering people, according to the details of Isa. 63 and Rev. 19; so that this passage (ver. 9) at once carries us on beyond that era.

As to the second, we also learn that it takes place in Jerusalem, that center of Jewish association and blessing.

Thirdly-What gives rise to the mourning, is the sight of one who " was wounded in the house of His friends" (Rom. 13:6).

Fourth-The mourners consist of a body of people-a nation; every part, class, and moral element of which is expressed by four individuals, the history and calling of whom represent the different parts of the whole, as well as the implication of each in the perpetration of some great deed of blood, the remembrance of which awakens the feelings and emotions here described. And what is the character of these feelings? It is "bitterness," such as is felt for an "only one," a " first born," a fit expression for Him, who was at once the first, last, and center of the hearts of these convicted and sorrowing ones!... In a word, we have here, the whole Jewish nation,. already quickened and delivered, but acted on thus by the personal presence, and a nearer view of Christ, their once rejected Messiah, and thus brought to estimate in their hearts and affections, what was the depth of their sin in rejecting and crucifying Him..

It is generally thought, that the action here described, is one of conversion;-that of a heretofore unbelieving people, renewed on the personal appearance of Christ, as their Messiah. But that cannot be. For what is " the nation"-the earthly people, at least what is owned as such by God-but the " remnant," the " residue,"-" the third part brought through the fire"-the " shaking of the olive tree," " the new wine in the cluster?" And this remnant we find in the Revelation, sealed for preservation before the week opens; converted during the week, delivered at the close of it, so that what is here described, must be subsequent to the above events, and an additional outpouring of the ".Spirit of grace and supplication, on the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem." And still more, we find here the whole nation, not only Judah; but Israel also, uniting in the mourning. Now we know that Israel, the ten tribes will not have returned to the land, as described in Isa. 11:11-16, until after the Lord has appeared for the deliverance of Judah, until the 1290 days, which we read of in Dan. 12:11, have expired. The whole nation is here most completely represented by the four individual houses and their families, which are seen mourning apart. " The family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart,

and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei (or Simeon) apart, and their wives apart. All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." Here is an epitome of the nation in its moral standing-the king and the prophet, the priest and the people, all mourning individually, each of whom represents an element of the nation, and, taken together, comprise it in its civil, political, and ecclesiastical aspect. What other element could be found in the Jewish nation, besides the king and the people; the prophet and the priest? Each of these a representative of a component part of the whole; and each and all are brought before us here, "mourning apart" as God's way of teaching us that the whole redeemed nation, without any exception, will in that day be brought under this searching process.

But, still more-why, we may ask, are these four particular houses chosen as representatives of their class? Why is David chosen out of the kings, and Nathan out of the prophets, Simeon and Levi out of the tribes? Because the relation of the mourners here to the sin mourned for is not only national, but also personal. It is the case of personal conviction, and, therefore, it not only overrides in its individuality natural relationships for their families are mourning apart, and their wives apart; but four individuals are introduced as representatives, who, had direct connection with deeds of blood, which were typical of that great iniquity, the remembrance of which had called this scene into existence, even the murder of Christ.

David had steeped his hands in blood-guiltiness by the murder of Uriah. Nathan the prophet had been sent of God to convict him of his sin. Simeon and Levi were guilty of the treacherous massacre of the Shechemites, for which Jacob had pronounced sentence and judgment on them on his death-bed. Both these acts pointed to that great deed of blood which Israel, as a nation, perpetrated; and in which every-class-every individual shared in the sight of God. Mark! all these were not actually equal in guilt. Nathan's connection with David's sin was honorable; but he is here seen on a level with the rest to skew, that in the antitype all are on a par. The shaft of conviction has entered into every heart, and made the sin its own. The prophet is as guilty as the king--the reprover as the reprovèd--the priest as the people.

Simeon we may regard as representative of the latter, and so chosen on account of his guilty league with Levi. Truly were the priest and the people in league and co-operation in the murder of the Blessed One, and here Levi has a double connection with the moral, both on account of his history- and his calling; the former being stained with blood, and the latter representing the priesthood; and both taken together, indicating that the Levitical priesthood is wholly defiled.

Caiaphas had unconsciously expressed the same fact when he rent his garments (a thing strictly forbidden for the high priest to do) at the moment that he accused the Holy One of blasphemy. And here Levi, the root and stem of the priesthood,-and Levi, the murderer, the son of Jacob, is brought before us as expressing, through Divine' grace, the defilement of himself personally, and of his order in the presence of Him who had purged it away.

Thus, every element of the nation is brought under this searching process; the families apart, and their wives apart. All-all must pass through individual sifting while they behold in Him their Messiah, a living witness of their sin, as well as of that sin being borne by Him.

What a day of atonement will this be!-that day which the, tenth day of Tizri every year prefigured! On that day, year by year, from the time Israel was first established in the land, was every soul to

be afflicted under the penalty of being " cut off from his people." In the victims offered 'up on these occasions, the true Israelite saw the type of the one great sacrifice,, and it was a season both of rest and of affliction;" a sabbath, and a day of mourning. But here in the antitype, the restored Israelite sees not ceremonially, but in reality, his. Savior and Messiah. And not only so, but Him whom his own hands have pierced; and while it is a Sabbath too in the knowledge that those wounds had atoned for his guilt; it is also a day. of great mourning and bitterness as applied by Him who had covered it all.

Here then do 'we find Israel assembled to this solemn fast, as we read in Zeph. 3:19-" I will gather them that are sorrowful for the solemn assembly."

The feast of trumpets had ushered in the month; and now on this tenth day, the day of atonement, the nation is brought to humiliation in the presence of Christ, ere the full joy of the kingdom is established.

The mourning is said to be like that of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddo. Now, the only place in which we find this valley of Megiddo spoken of elsewhere in Scripture, is in 2 Chron. 35 as the spot in which Josiah the anointed of the Lord was slain, and from whence arose a great mourning; " for all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah, and Jeremiah lamented for Josiah; and all the singing men and singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel; and behold they are written in the Lamentations." It can hardly be doubted, that it is to this scene that the mourning which we have been considering in Zechariah is compared, and the fact of analogy being drawn between the two occasions, and their being linked together by the mention of the Valley of Megiddo, is additional. proof (were that, needed), that the exercise of heart here described is that of the remnant of a future day, whom Jeremiah and his mourning company foreshadowed when they lamented their slain king in the same spot-even Jerusalem.

But deeper still was the probe to penetrate; and that, guided by a hand unerring as none other but Christ's could be! He is with these convicted ones in their exercise; and He draws out their hearts to a deeper and fuller view of His sufferings. To the remnant of an earlier day He had, after His resurrection, and in order to make His death and resurrection, hitherto unapprehended fully - a reality to them, shown them His hands and His side, and said, " Behold my hands and. my feet, that it is I myself" And again, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." Here He is found in nearly 'similar circumstances, and with wholly similar purposes with regard to another remnant, (later, but in strict moral identity with the earlier one).; and His own grace acting in their hearts causes them to inquire, " What are these wounds in thine hands?" And He replies with touching grace-" Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." This was as though He said, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Though at the same time, while wishing them to estimate all His sufferings fully in the light of a revealed presence; not to distance them from Himself, but to bring them all the nearer. Like Joseph, who, after saying to his brethren, " Come near unto me, I pray you," says, " I am Joseph whom ye sold into Egypt." But "be not grieved and angry with yourselves." So here, in a deeper and far more perfect measure, the gracious Savior seeks not to distress or cast them from Him, while He shows Himself as wounded for their transgressions, and that by themselves " in the house of His friends;" but to bring them into a place of nearness, by giving them to know in their

measure the fellowship of His sufferings and the power of His resurrection.

This sixth verse of chap. 13. is in connection with the previous chapter, verses 1-5 being a digression consequent on the former, but still an interruption of the action of the scene, while ver. 7 goes on to show how all this came about (as it were). "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow." Here another aspect of Christ's death is set forth. Not only is He "wounded in the house of His friends," but He is smitten of God, and the testimony of being God's fellow is given to Him in answer to His deep humiliation. Moreover these mourners are the "third part brought through the fire" (ver. 9) of whom God shall say "It is my people," and they shall say "The Lord is my God."

And now let us return to the digression, ver. 1-5, closely connected as it is with the above scene and consequent on it. "In that day, there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

Here we have practical cleansing, for those whose faith in God has been already established. The day of atonement was one of cleansing of the people- the holy sanctuary-the tabernacle-the altar-priesthood-and all; as we read (Lev. 16:30) "to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord." in former times this had been type and ceremony; now, "in this day," it is actually fulfilled. This is the "cleansing of the sanctuary" which the angel spake of to Daniel, chap. 8. 14. How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation?" etc "And he said unto me - Unto 2,300 days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Thus the whole Jewish people are established in the right relation with God. The effect of this humiliation and this opened fountain is detailed in verses 2-5. All evil is put away; idolatry and false prophecy is not tolerated, even in the closest natural relationship; the very mother shall thrust through the son whom she has borne rather than allow God to be dishonored. Sin judged in the heart before God is easily dealt with in the walk.

Nothing now remained but the renewal of blessing and joy. This is expressed by the feast of tabernacles which immediately followed, and which figuratively extends throughout the whole of the millennium; the seven days and the eighth, expressing the perfection (comparative perfection) of that blessed period. It is not entered on in the Scripture before us, except implied in the established and enjoyed relationship of the people with God (ver. 9), and we only mention_ it in its moral connection with the day of atonement, which is the grand subject this Scripture treats of; and that, not in the aspect of its place in the order of events, but the state of the nation's heart., and its exercises at this significant time. It is in God's hand and under His dealings preparatory to the full establishment of the glory in their midst. In a word, it is not position we have here, but condition, and the consequences flowing there from. Israel is assumed to be a gathered assembly before God, and as such undergoes this process. The Judah part of it had gone through deep and varied exercises before, throughout the week. She had morally separated herself from the condition of things around her, - had been assailed by persecution, had fled and been sheltered from it, and in the end delivered by the coming of her Lord. The Israel portion, the 120,000 lost ones, who were also sealed (Rev. 7), had been restored to the land after the deliverance of Judah, and had taken their place, and kept the passover as God's people; and here they are all together-the 144,000-the nucleus of the earthly people. But more than this was needed for the exercise of their souls. They must learn more deeply the reality of the death of Christ. They had not passed through

the furnace of martyrdom as had the other portion of the remnant now in heavenly glory, they must feel their sin in its reality; and, even as an earthly people be put into the crucible. Their experience was very much like that of the two disciples whom we read of in Luke 24, who " trusted in the one who should redeem Israel;" and still more, who had known Him as deliverer and redeemer, but had not by any means entered into the depth of His death and resurrection.

THEREFORE-this process! All Israel, without any distinction of large or small measure, is brought to a level of humiliation before God on this day of atonement; - a day dispensationally necessary in the ordinances of God, and morally necessary as to His ways and purpose with the hearts of His people. Truly we may say that this brief portion contains a " body of divinity," and is a blessed picture of His unchanging dealings with all His own! The moral order is identical; quickening, deliverance, humiliation, practical cleansing, communion, and joy; and happy is the soul whether it be that of an individual or a nation who experimentally passes from the day of atonement to the feast of tabernacles.

Christ. bath once suffered for sins, the just [one] for the unjust,-that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18).

The vicarious sufferings of Christ, even those which He endured as our substitute, are here referred to. The just One bore the wrath due to the many unjust. For God made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

These sufferings were concentrated and confined to the Cross. And yet it was not that which He endured as being nailed to the tree (by His own people's request, as well as by the wicked consent of the heathen ruler), nor the legal curse connected with the Cross,(as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree), which give that which was distinctively THE suffering which was exclusively His. The wrath of God, when God hid His face from Him, had a depth and a bitterness in it, which none but Himself could have borne up under.

" My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me 1"- " be not thou far from me, O Lord.: O my strength, haste thee to help me" (Psa. 22:1-19).

"Innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities [those of others which He had made His own, and the wrath due to which He was then bearing] have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me" (Psa. 40:12).

These, and such like portions, give us the just and divinely-perfect expression of what that anguish was which He found in the cup of wrath, when the wrath due to us was borne by Him.

It is well to remember, how all the life we have as Christians came to us from the rock smitten once, and but once. He gave His life a ransom for us.

He who was separate from sin was made the bearer of the wrath due to us sinners, that we might be graced in Him according to the righteousness of God.

Truth for This Day

WE are forewarned, that in " these last days perilous times shall come," in order that we may be prepared to meet them when they do come' nay, more - that we may be on. the watch, as being fully alive to the Spirit and character of' them. If we do not apprehend the nature of the times, how can we be ready to meet them? And if we are not spiritually sensitive to observe, how can we apprehend? May it not be said of us as of the Jewish teachers (and this was the knell of their incompetency and approaching doom)- " How is it that ye cannot discern these times?" The boast of the scoffer is, that all things remain as they were. There is not spiritual sense to feel the deep and wide-spread devastation of all Christian organization; and consequently, there is among Christians at large, a feebleness in proportion to their ignorance, as to what truth is specially needed for this day; and what is worse, an indifference in seeking to know it. The exigency not being felt, there are but few men that " have understanding of. the times to know what Israel ought to do." My Brethren! these things ought not so to be!

The question, " What is the truth for this day?" was lately put to me by a true-hearted, earnest servant of Christ; and the more I have thought of the subject, the. more deeply important it has appeared to me; and therefore, through the Lord's help, I shall endeavor to trace through Scripture how times and difficulty resembling the present, have been encountered by the true servants of God in their day, and whose example affords us precept and principle, as well as authority from the Divine instruction imparted to them at the time.

First-I must ask my reader to consider the influences now at work, attempting to dissolve and emasculate every principle of Christianity. I reduce them into two. The one is the exaltation of the mind of man, as assuming to contain in itself (per se) the light of revelation, and as able by skilful attention to advance so high as to derive from revelation only a secondary or probable benefit;-the other (which at first appears unaccountable, if we had not the stubborn evidence of facts to assure our wavering judgment) is, that the greater the mental development and progress, the greater the passion for a formal religiousness-one which exacts both a bodily and a sentimental devoteeism. Thus, like two confluent streams, increasing as they go onward, is the progress of mind dispensing with revelation, and extreme religious devoteeism flattering and falsifying the conscience. The mind being made its own oracle, and the conscience its own altar; " both mind and conscience are defiled" and Godless!

The question then arises, How are we, as witnesses for God, to seek to counteract and neutralize the evil thus at work? For whatever meets the existing evil would be the "truth for the day." We are expressly told in 2 Tim. 3, where the last and perilous times are especially dwelt on; that the " Holy Scriptures are: able to make us wise unto salvation." Now, " Salvation" I consider to mean deliverance from everything that can damage or hurt me; and to be by no means confined to the deliverance of my soul from judgment.. The very fact of the Spirit casting the soul on the help of the Scriptures at such a juncture, of itself shows that He knew that when their authority and doctrine would be most assailed, then the true heart would find them in a remarkable way a

protection and a guide to safety. Having assumed thus, that in the Holy Scriptures is to be found all that can deliver us morally from the evil and difficulty with which we are surrounded, let us carefully travel through them and note how the servants of God were led and taught to check and frustrate every artifice of the enemy; for he is the same from the beginning, and we have the advantage of studying the way and manner by which he was rebutted in all the great conflicts before our times; and this knowledge will, through' grace, contribute to our efficiency in repelling him in this, our own day.

In the very first temptation, when Satan beguiled Eve through his subtlety, we get the main traits which mark every one of his great assaults on man. Here Satan came in the form of " the subtlest beast of the field which the Lord God had made "-in the form of a serpent. Now the verb, " to use enchantments," is a cognate of the word for serpent, both being spelled alike, without points, (■■■■) to which I may allude presently. I only adduce it now to skew that Satan assumed the serpent form with the same intent that he would use enchantments-in order to deceive-and hence the Apostle comments on this deed, as " the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety," and Eve says herself, "the Serpent beguiled me." We need no more than this, to establish that the first great aim of Satan is, to conceal from man the power which is exerting its influence over his mind and conscience. And this is a most important discovery for me to make. Evil likes to accomplish its malicious designs without its origin being discovered; whereas good, like everything divine, is always more confirmed by being traced to its origin. We may conclude, then, that Satan will always deceive man when he seeks to make his prey of him; and, therefore, if I cannot see distinctly the origin of the influence brought to bear on me, i.e., from whom it proceeds, I have need to beware and tread cautiously, lest I fall into the snare of the devil. Let us note this well. Satan's first appearance in an assault is with deception and subtlety; the next (and from this, if I have spiritual sense I may discover my danger) is, that he always proposes to me something which will magnify myself; it matters not whether it be so morally or naturally, he seeks, in either case, to make self my object, and will use God's name to lend a weight to his lie. In the case of Eve; he sought to make her disobey. God by first asserting a lie, and then presenting the gain that would arise to her from acceding to his counsel; which is backed up by reference to God. Even though it be an evil insinuation, yet the appeal to God, in its. very hardihood, often reaches the simple and inexperienced with the force of truth. Who, it might be said, would assert so openly, in the face of heaven, if he had not truth on his side? But this dogmatic effrontery is, in reality, diabolical profanity. Now, if I am spiritual, I immediately suspect any specious counsel addressed to me exclusively or primarily with reference to my own progress or advantage. The gospel, I may be told, presents to me pre-eminently my own advantage. True, -but does it not connect me with God? And is it not in the setting forth therein of His grace and His glory that I find a place of everlasting nearness to Him? " Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord"-a message from the glory of God! Satan would occupy me about my own advantage, and my own ability too, to secure it. Having first deceived me as to the real source of the influence which addresses me, and having obtained a hearing, he presents to me how I may advance myself, and that in a line known to God; all scruple as to Divine restrictions being overborne in the God - known assurances of positive gain, and man's own ability to attain and acquire it. When man yields thus to Satan, the same thoughts in principle pass through his mind as through Eve's; there is a scrutiny and a conclusion, that great personal and self-elevating advantages will arise from the Tempter's propositions. And then the fatal course is entered on.

Adam and Eve are naked! They see too much! So much for the advancement they had derived from listening to Satan! They now see what they cannot remedy. God's grace is always to keep before the soul of His people the remedy equal to the need. Adam, in having recourse to fig-leaves, makes a miserable effort, considering his extensive natural information to remedy his need; and in skulking behind the trees of the garden presents a still more melancholy exhibition of resourcelessness and inadequacy to meet his case when he had to do with God.

But now God comes on the scene; and it is well and blessed for us to note how He acts and counteracts the malice of Satan. He does four things. He first demands from Adam-Had he disregarded His word? for that was Satan's great object, and is therefore the first point to be investigated; and on this demand Adam is convicted. 2ndly, God pronounces the sentence on man because of his sin; appointing him to toil and sorrow in an earth accursed of God. 3rdly, He feeds and buoys up the soul of man by His prophetic word and promise, which engages his soul with the true remedy for his misery; and, lastly, He clothes him with His own hand in a style which, by its contrast with man's previous and incompetent attempt, must have humbled and astonished him.

Now I think we have, in these four displays of the Divine mind, the qualities of power in the Holy Ghost, by which He delivers His people from the wiles of Satan. 1st, I am measured by the word and convicted. 2ndly, My position, as a judicially suffering sinner on an accursed earth is impressed on me. 3rdly, My soul is engaged with the one Who should bruise the serpents head, Jesus Christ come in the flesh, and His perfect work, with which the prophetic word connects me; and, lastly, I find myself clothed through His grace; i.e., my position relieved of its shame by the very hand of God.

I trust, ere I conclude this paper, to be able to spew how, in the fall of man, was displayed, not only the varied lines, of Satan's power brought to bear on man in that fatal hour, but also the distinctive and blessed lines of God's grace in effectually restoring man out of the force and current of Satan's influence; but I now pass on to other Scriptures which present to us the power of Satan in collision with the power of God. Let us turn to Gen. 41, where Joseph is seen as for God, in contrast to the magicians of Egypt. Joseph is called from prison to interpret Pharaoh's dream after the failure and proved inability of all the wise men of Egypt. God, through Joseph, testifies to the world that man is wholly dependent on Him for light; all human skill and resources having proved inadequate and incompetent. Now Joseph was a servant who had learned to trust God and His word. Prophecies respecting himself had been imparted

to him through dreams, which possibly he did not understand, until they were fulfilled; but who can doubt that his soul clung to these communications of God, when every circumstance and- ordering of Providence seemed entirely to ignore and deprecate his faith therein. Thus is it ever God's way to attach the souls of His people to Himself by the communication of purposes, of which they often know no more than that they have not as yet occurred; but if they believe in Him, His communication remains as the refuge of faith. And here is the marked distinction between the man of God and the man of nature in, times of difficulty. When the difficulty supervenes, the servant waits -on God's revelation, watching the unfoldings of His counsels; while man, depending on his own resources, summons to his succor every aid natural and supernatural; and this necessarily affords Satan the desired opportunity, and makes man the ready prey of his machinations.

I now pass on to the conflict between Moses and the magicians, recorded in Ex. 7, and as this is specially referred to by St. Paul (1 Tim. 3:8), as characteristic of the "last and perilous times," we may expect to find in it instruction peculiarly suited to ourselves. The purpose of God, namely, to deliver His people out of the land of Egypt, had been communicated to Moses. Armed with the divine revelation, with faith in God and dependence on His Word, he must boldly meet all assaults. As he proceeds, he finds that he defeats them; and this is the greatest discovery, as well as the greatest cheer and sustainment in the walk of faith. It is only as I walk in faith that I find that I can conquer; and thus I am encouraged to advance in the path on which I have entered. As long as I am outside the path of faith, I shall be looking for encouragement to enter it; and while I am thus occupied, I am not only outside, but without the encouragement; but when inside, I have the encouragement, not to induce me to enter it, but because I am there, to stimulate me to advance onward. How important all this for our souls in this day of difficulty! The mind of God-His Word-has been communicated to me; and to this I adhere by faith. Nay,

the more it is assailed and depreciated, as either insufficient or secondary.(as it is in this day-,how widely I), the more faith cleaves to it as the only guide; for the darker the passage, the more will the prudent attend to his lamp; and, as I do, I shall prove its sufficiency. One who asks me to depend entirely on him in my extremity, and offers to bear the whole responsibility of myself and my position, must know that he is able to bear it, for, if not, he would not only deceive me, but expose his own impotence, if I accepted his offer. Moses knew that God was such an one to him, and he confronts Pharaoh and the magicians, depending solely on the strength of His Word. Mark! it was not any success of his own before them that gave him confidence and boldness, for he had no success until after he had confronted them; he challenges them, in the intrepidity of faith, relying on God's Word, and his success over the serpent or dragon is then manifested (chap. 7. 12). The object of the magicians (Jannes and Jambres, the sorcerers of the New Testament) was to neutralize and invalidate the power under which Moses acted. It was purely. Satanic; but not more so than those in the last days, to whom the Apostle compares them; "those who resist the truth; men of corrupt minds," etc., etc. How fearful the conflict, if we reflect on it for a moment, that Satan should use man in battle array against God! It is when man finds that natural agency is insufficient for a difficulty, that he has recourse to supernatural; and, God's Word and counsel being set aside, nothing remains for him but to invoke and accept the aid of Satan. The Jannes and Jambres of that day would resist and refute the testimony of God, as maintained by His servant,. Moses, and their mode of resistance was the effort to show, that their power, though avowedly derived from another source, was as great, and that they were able to contravene the power of God. What sustains the servant of God at such a juncture? Not his successes, surely; but, knowing in himself that he has learned the mind of -God, he is assured that his safety and victory lie in persisting in the path of faith; in "continuing in the things that he had learned and been assured of; knowing of whom he had learned them." After this

manner did Moses baffle the enemy; and this is the only simple and blessed rule for the servant of God, unto the end of time. The magicians, who had imitated him up to a certain point, are proved to be totally powerless as to creating life. They cannot produce a living thing from the dust of the earth; and this being done by Moses and Aaron, who were thus the channels of the power of God (chap. 8. 17, 18), the question between God and Satan was determined; the latter can no longer attempt rivalry. And this great victory was all through the Lord upholding His own Word in the

mouth of His servant.

I now proceed to 1 Sam. 28, as I think we may glean some valuable instruction on our subject, in that solemn and notable account of Saul having recourse to Satanic power when he had lost the sense of the power of God. I call attention to the passage, chiefly in order to note Saul's state of mind when he thus applied to supernatural power for aid. At one time, in his zeal (pharisaic zeal, no doubt), he had "suffered not a witch to live." When he assumed to be God's king, and ruling under divine power, he righteously and vigorously refused the instruments of another power any quarter. Such a being was strictly prohibited by the law (Lev. 20:6); and Saul, before he had lost all conscience, was known as the relentless exterminator of them; but when God had deserted him, and would make no communication to him, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophet, then he has recourse to what he formerly denounced and withstood; and we learn from his fall how a man who had once thought and acted so differently, may act when under the pressure of difficulty, and seeing. No other way of escape. It is to me one of the most solemn and admonitory examples of how a soul, having departed from God, instead of seeking restoration through repentance and confession, flings himself, a suppliant for aid, at the feet of God's enemy, reckless where he goes, so that he can procure any light through the deep gloom and pressure by which he is overwhelmed. And is there not the same spirit in man now? Supposing one brought up in the doctrines of Christianity, and for a time following them, believing that a present advantage was secured from them; but, if such a one resisted the claim of truth on his conscience, after having for a time admitted its cogency, what would be more natural, when he found himself in growing inextricable darkness and difficulty, than that he should throw himself into the arms of any who would shed light on his path and future? I doubt not that there are many who have turned to Satan after this manner; and I believe that, as God, in His inscrutable wisdom, allowed Samuel to appear, in order that Saul from his mouth should hear his doom, so that many an apostate may hear his condemnation from some once honored, but now forgotten, servant of God.

As I desire to point out the analogy between the power and animus of Satan in those times and these, always the same, though less tangible and distinguishable now, we may examine, for a moment, what was the object and occupation of what were called "familiar spirits." The word in the Hebrew gives us no clue to its origin, but that in the Septuagint is well translated by our English word, "ventriloquist." How they acted or gave forth their counsel we know not, but we have the same word in Job 32:19, translated "like bottles," "ready to burst like new bottles." Now, the bottles of those days being made of leather, were necessarily greatly distended by new wine before they burst, and this incidentally lets us see that these persons described by the same Hebrew word, presented an imposing air, and were those from whom we should expect "great swelling words of vanity." Moreover, their vocation was to lead away souls under their influence; and, in order to effect this, they worked on the credulity of man by some sign or wonder, interpreting dreams, foretelling events, etc. The fact of men being susceptible to such influence, plainly proves that there is in him a felt need of a supernatural subsidy; that is, that he is not, and cannot be, a totally independent individual, and if he be not supported by the power of God, he must necessarily, from inherent feebleness, cast himself into that current which seduces him by its pretensions; a current now flowing in increased and terrible force. A very awful conclusion to arrive at; but one which the whole history of Scripture, and especially those parts which we have been considering, proves to be just. And how was it, let us ask ourselves, that man was then seduced? Was it not then as now,

through the mind? These false prophets addressed the senses, and thus reached men's minds, and having swayed them, led their votaries captive. See how Ahab was deceived by them. And the plot is only disclosed by the prophet of God. Well may it be said of man, who has yielded his mind and will to such an influence, " He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" But the interesting and important question for us to consider is, How are we to be preserved from this seducing element and influence? Now, it is to be noted with fervent thankfulness that whenever the Spirit of God exposes an evil, He directs the people of God to that line of conduct and engagement of mind which would preserve them from its influence. We find this specially as to the evil we are considering, for in Deut. 13, where Israel is expressly warned of the purpose of these spirits being to "turn them away from the Lord their God," the true preservative course is also set forth: " Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him. ' In what strict harmony is such a passage as this with the words of the Lord Himself: " If any man shall do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Such a soul shall be confirmed in the truth, and know the power of God, as it walks according to it. It will be both established in mind and preserved in practice. In like manner; we find in Isa. 8, where the rejection of Christ is foretold, and the distress on earth consequent thereon, when the adversary would suggest to his disciples to " seek unto them that have familiar spirits "; the Spirit of God retorts, " Should not a people seek unto their God?" The distress may be paramount; but that ought only to incite us to seek the Lord, and the Lord only, with greater earnestness, and to wait on Him. The practice, or even the inclination, to seek aid from any quarter, except God, must necessarily expose the soul to the deadly machinations of Satan, which are always presented in: whatever form they are likely to be most successful, whether to Israel as " familiar spirits," or in all the subtle forms which he takes in Christendom, and hence the bare inclination should be feared and earnestly deprecated, for where such inclination is yielded to, in the smallest point, there is always a liability to be led away by the deceivableness of unrighteousness.

And now, ere we pass from the Old Testament record, let us turn to Dan. 2 There we find one who had been invested with supreme power over men troubled in spirit, because of a dream from God which he cannot recall; nor can all the astrologers and wise men of Babylon give him the required aid. What a picture! Here was a man to whom the God of Heaven had given a kingdom, power; strength, and glory, and c' wherever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of Heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee 'ruler over them all," not only troubled, but resourceless, at his wit's end; and, finding all the supernatural aid to which he had resorted incompetent, he being very furious, commanded all the wise men to be destroyed, as they were unable to supply him with what he demanded, his troubled soul tramples all their pretensions under foot. What a warning to us of the insufficiency, nay of the mocking fruitlessness of man's power, and of all other resources within the reach of man, when the question is to know or learn the purposes of God! One can hardly conceive anything more humiliating than the state of Nebuchadnezzar at this moment. What is the use of extensive power and resources, if they will not reach to the very point where I want them most? What a commentary on the poverty of all power, immense and unlimited as his was; or of all means of acquiring knowledge within the reach of man! Can any man expect to have more at his command than had Nebuchadnezzar; and now see to what a state he is reduced, when that which he requires and seeks is even the least part of the

mind of God. God sent the dream, and withheld from the king the remembrance of it, on purpose to testify to this great universal autocrat, that all his power, and all the wisdom at his command, was less than nothing, in regard to aught that had to do with God, and that a eunuch in his palace who knew God's mind was greater than he. How blessed to see how such a knowledge sets the possessor of it in easy superiority to every human eminence, ability, or resource. This was the testimony here. This was the great truth needed for the day of Nebuchadnezzar, and of Daniel; and if, in the time of the noviciate of Gentile power, the head of gold passed through this deep humiliating conviction of resourcelessness, and found no refuge or relief, but in the counsel of God, from the lips of God's servant, how much more (now that the image is well nigh completed, and preparing for its doom) does it become us, who are in the fourth empire (the feet of iron and clay where the assumption of man has increased a hundred-fold), to estimate and proclaim all human power, ability, resource or learning, as not to be accounted of, yea as dust in the balance, in comparison to the word of God now fully revealed. The Supremacy and Omnipotency of God's word is our testimony even as it was Daniel's; and the more dark and trying the moment becomes, the more may the practical distress of Nebuchadnezzar and his only quarter for relief, warn and indicate to us, where our succor and safety can alone be found.

We now pass on to Matt. 2, where we shall find in type another instance of the insufficiency and incompetency of human wisdom or scientific discovery, however well directed, for the interpretation of any of God's ways. The Magi, having seen the Star in the East, conclude that the king of the Jews is born, and come up to Jerusalem to worship Him. Now this star I regard as the creational testimony, valuable as far as it went; 'and it is well and happy for the wise men to have noticed and attended to it. But beyond a certain point it could not conduct them. Arrived at Jerusalem, they are entirely at sea, as to where to turn for the object of their search; nor could they have proceeded further, had they not learned from the Divine Record, where the new-born King was to be found. True, human wisdom might have led them to notice the star, which, as the testimony for God in creation, might have raised their expectations as to a glorious one of whom creation itself stood in need; but neither would have led them to Bethlehem, which then contained, in the person of the lowly Babe, all that God was for man, and all that man needed in his relation to God, unless they had heeded the word, from which was announced to them the birth-place of the expected King. The very best motives of mere human wisdom, the most attentive observance of the signs of nature will, when man reaches that point, where God's counsel can alone direct him, confuse rather than guide; for all its information ends in nothing as to the real point which he wants to know. The Magi might have been wandering forever through Palestine, had not the actual place been communicated to them from Scripture; and, what is more, they, with all their wisdom would have been taken in Herod's trap, for he intended to make use of their information, in order to kill Christ, but for the intervention of God.; all this remarkably confirming what I have advanced, that man's wisdom, however true or well disposed, is ever inadequate for any difficulty which has relation to God, and that the creational testimony; however it may set its seal to the word; for after the Magi had accepted the word as their "guide, the Star, we read, came and stood over where the young child was," it is, nevertheless, apart from the Divine word, of no practical use to man.

I now pass rapidly on through several passages in the Acts, which, serve the subject of our inquiry, and show how the power of Satan in its different forms was met and repelled by the Apostles in the power of the Holy Ghost. In Acts 8, Simon is an example of the natural character and ambition of

men who seek to be reputed for their Wisdom and acquirements, full of their own glory and distinction. Peter meets his advances with the sternest opposition, and pronounces the conclusion which we may reiterate on all such-" thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

Again in chap. 8. 6, we have Elymas the sorcerer who withstood Paul and Barnabas, seeking to turn the Roman deputy from the faith. This man, a Jewish sorcerer, I consider as a type of the evil to which the Gentile is exposed; and Saul, here named Paul as indicating his Gentile connection (for Paul is Latin and Saul Hebrew), encounters this form of Satanic evil, by denouncing its exponent as " full of, all subtlety and mischief, child of the devil, enemy of all righteousness, ceasing not to pervert the right ways of the Lord," and passing the sentence of blindness on him. Again in chap. 16. 16, &c., we find a spirit of divination actually bearing testimony to the truth in proclaiming Paul and Silas " servants of the Most. High God, which show unto us the way of salvation." Now this case, and the way it is met by the Apostle, shows us that, in order to judge' people as God judges them, we must see them as He sees them. If Paul had looked. at, this damsel with the spirit of divination, with a natural mind, how justly he might have argued, that she would be of great use to the truth, and would serve his purpose. What could there be found objectionable in her-words? But no I -He looked on her with the eye of God, and discerned that the enemy was there; and therefore he exorcised the unclean spirit, though this exposed himself and his work, to all the rage and violence of him whose malice we must endure, if we refuse to accept his countenance. All the rancor and violence, however, only brought him 3 contact with the soul that he was sent to Philippi to bless. And how triumphantly does the end justify him in refusing the testimony of another spirit, however commendable its terms; 3 that refuses Satan's aid will expose himself to Satan's enmity; but "he that is for us, is greater than he that is against, us." And, in the long run, we shall be more than conquerors, as Paul was in the self-same Philippi.

We now pass to the Epistle to Timothy, which is the real pivot of our subject, and that on which I desire that all that I have sought to glean from other Scripture may be brought to bear; for there, the " latter days " and " the last days" are described; and we shall find that, though Satan may have changed his garb, he has not changed his character; and, moreover, that the weapons of our warfare are those which the true servant has ever used in the day of difficulty. In the 1st Epistle, chap. 4., the servant of God is informed, that in the "latter times," or times preceding those which we shall consider in the 2nd Epistle, there would be some who would apostatize from the faith, " giving their mind to deceiving spirits and teachings of demons" (see New Translation). From this intimation we learn, that it is professing Christians who yield themselves to these strange and evil influences; so that we are to look for the verification of this prophecy among those who seek to be leaders and appointed teachers of Christianity. Thus, previous to the " last days" of 2 Tim. 3, the door of the MIND of the teachers and leaders has been opened to " deceiving spirits and teachings of demons." And all this with a great ostentation of devotionism which wins the reverence and admiration of the mass - the consummation desired. We sometimes may not be able to detect a man's aim, when he is only working it out; but when he has attained it, we may review and mark the many unsuspected modes and means by which he has effected it. So, now, we see to very little purpose, if we have not recognized in many glaring examples the fulfillment of this prophecy.

And now, let us gather up all we have learned from these Scriptures on 2 Tim. 3, and see there what will be the most evil or final state of corruption among the teachers in the House of God; and also, how the servant of God can be guarded from it, and be a witness against it. I think we are

given three great characteristics of the corrupt teachers in the "last days"; and I don't suppose that one of these marks without the other two, would correctly define or describe the evil. One is Selfishness- uncontrolled Self. Disobedience to parents only betrays' that all the fences of restraint and subjection are broken down, as far as individual personal rule goes; for there is nothing here said of political rule or patriotic loyalty. It is simply the rein given to man's own mind and will in his private individual capacity as a man. He assumes to be personally independent. The next characteristic is, having the form of piety; that is, that while they free them Selves from every restraint, they assume the appearance of being-devotional to God as pietists. The next characteristic is that they use every effort and art to obtain followers, and, like Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses, they withstand the truth, using all the occult supplies of magician's skill and Satanic aid;-with what object? To stifle and check the testimony and establishment of the Truth. And mark these persons are not Infidels;- not even open opposers. No I but leaders in the House of God!- very awful and alarming is this. How then is the servant of God preserved from, and constituted a witness against, these? On this point we have ample instruction. First, he is supposed to have " fully known Paul's doctrine"-conduct, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions and afflictions a word;

on that line - the line of the apostle Paul, he is supposed to be., But how he is to be maintained on that line is the great question. The answer, is that the "sacred writings are able to make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Now, in this sentence; there are two subjects presented and connected; namely - the sacred writings and the person of Jesus Christ; and we may rest assured, that these two cannot be separated: if we would be preserved from the deadly influences now rife in the world and the Church. The sacred writings which we have just examined; establish our souls in the succor and safety which will ever be accorded to one dependent on. the word of God, of which we have the brightest example in our Lord. Jesus Christ, who met the Tempter and Seducer with the words-" Man must not live by bread alone; -but by every word. that cometh out of the mouth of the Lord cloth man live." That which Israel was learning for forty years is the opening expression of the life and conduct of the last Adam-the Lord from heaven our life. What do we know,-what could we know without the word, of God? Let us remember how evil spirits, serpents, magicians, wise men, kings, peoples, have been baffled and nonplussed, while a Daniel has stood alone, unperturbed before a terror-stricken monarch, in his fury and perplexity condemning to death all the wise men of his kingdom I Oh! how the soul learns

the strength and safety that there is in the word of God in the hour of difficulty. The more the worth of God's mind is known, the less will man value or depend on any human wisdom. The one who knows the light of the sun, must always prefer it to any artificial light; and, this is but a faint simile of the great moral truth that the greater and the divine not only eclipses, but actually causes the weaker and the human to decline while it takes its place. If the word of God, the better it be known, preserves me from the snare of intellectual progress; so, on the other hand, does the person of Jesus Christ held by faith in my. soul, preserve me from the formal pietism so attractive to souls, who, like the Athenians, are informed enough to feel that they don't know God, and therefore, they necessarily, on account of their enlarged human information, become superstitious; for superstition is nothing more than a striving, because of a dim intelligence, to propitiate God without knowing how. The person of Jesus Christ raised from the dead, after bearing the judgment of my sins, and now in heaven on the right hand of God-my life; and loving me with the love of God, in

which He has declared the Father, must be a rest, an ark, a sanctuary for my soul, satisfying it by all the endearing testimonies of His ever faithful and watchful, love, enabling it, though with but a "little strength," to keep His word, and not to deny His name, as the "hour of temptation" approaches, and even now surrounds us with its dire influences. Such I believe to be the "truth for this day."

I may remark, in closing, that these two subjects, the Word and the Person, are pressed on us in 1 John 4, but in a more 'positive line. If the testimony of any Spirit now is not Jesus Christ come in the flesh, it is not of God. What a simple rule! And yet how few teachers could say that this 'is the simple and singular subject of their testimony. In the same chapter we also find, that not only is this line of testimony disregarded; but the Apostles, who were the organs of the Word of God, and therefore essentially stood for it, are refused to be heard.

Such is man, whose doom is now hastening! And such is God, who has forborne with him through all the ages that we have been briefly tracing.

Let our souls praise and bless our God, that He would have us day by day to abide more strictly by His word. May we do so more and more, and rejoice in Christ Jesus worshippingly. Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith.

Until the Morning Breaketh

(Slightly altered)

Until the morning breaketh,
Until the shadows flee,
Until the earth awaketh
Her absent King to see--
I'll get me to my mountain,
To commune with my Lord;
I'll drink the living fountain,
And feed upon His Word.
I'll 'bide with Jesus yonder,
Upon His Throne of Light,
And on His grace I'll ponder,
With rapturous delight.
Then, from my starry Tower,
I'll issue forth, to tell
The HEAVENLY Grace and Power
Of Christ, Emanuel.
I'll bear to men the story
Of pard'ning Love and Grace,
And far proclaim the glory
Which shines in Jesu's face.
And thus-until the singing
Of Heav'nly hosts on high
Announce my Savior bringing
Eternal glory nigh,
Telling of full Redemption,

And every foe o'erthrown,
And Satan's condemnation,
And God supreme alone-
I'll never cease to enter
Within the courts above,
And, from that mighty center,
Go forth to tell of Love-
Of Love that never faileth-
Of Grace that's alway free-
Of Might which now prevaieth-
Of Jesu's Victory!
Thus, in my Savior's presence
Abiding day by day,
I'll labor in His absence
Till shadows flee away!
Anonymous.

Who Is a Witness?

EVERY conscientious Christian desires to be a witness for his Lord; but no one can be a true witness, unless he understand the nature of the Divine interests in which he. is placed;- what they are intrinsically in the mind of God;- and how they are compromised and misrepresented among men. I must know, so to speak, not only the Divine idea of the Church, and the constitution of it; but I must also mark how and where it has fallen; or I cannot be an intelligent witness, apprehending the instruction given in Scripture to guide and sustain me at such a time. How can I appreciate instruction offered to me when the Church is in a low state, if I understand not its low state? and how can I discern its low state, unless I know what it should be if it had continued faithful to the mind of God? T must, therefore, first understand what the Church was when in order; and then, observing the present contrast, study and acquire the principles and conduct which becomes me as Christ's witness in such circumstances.

The Church in order was composed:-First, of 'members gathered out of the world unto the rejected Lord, on whom they believed unto salvation. " The Lord added unto the Church such as should be saved".. (Acts 2:47).

Secondly, they neither had nor sought any rule of government but the Spirit's, owning Christ their Lord (See Acts 13:2)..

Thirdly, they excommunicated from among themselves every one "called a brother " whose evil was open and willful (1 Cor. 5).

Fourthly, they sought and received edification through the gifts of the Spirit, conferred individually (1 Cor. 12 and 14.)..

Fifthly, they assembled around the Lord's table expressing their link in spirit with Him through His death, and presenting their true place and character in the world (Acts 2:42, 1 Cor. 11:26).

Sixthly, they were awaiting the return of their Lord from Heaven (1 Thess. 1); they by faith sitting there together with Him (Eph. 2)

Now, the Church's decline on the other hand is marked by several traits. First of all, it has lost the true idea of being the habitation of God through the Spirit. The presence and direct rule of the Lord is un-thought of, and there is no apprehension that a Saint's place now is sitting together with Christ in Heaven. Its true position with the Lord and for God is either un-, known or ignored. Then the want of care for one -another which crept in-the purity of the assembly-began to be disregarded, and each, to consider only for himself; and from this the responsibility of one to another as members of the same body, became practically forgotten (1 Cor. 11:19-22.).

Another trait of decline is their turning aside from grace unto law (Gal. 3.)

Another, losing sight of the Lord's return, leaving their first love (Rev. 2:4.)

Another, the admittance of many to communion without any careful scrutiny as to the ground of their adhesion, and thus the assembly, ere long became "a great house," because wood, hay and stubble were introduced into the building (2 Peter 2:4, 2 Tim. 2:20).

And lastly, they abandoned spiritual ground and assumed natural ground in principle, as Core. They assumed to order themselves without the intervention of the Spirit of God (Jude, 3 John). Can any honest soul survey the present state of the Church, and not admit how these germs of evil, noticeable in the Apostles' days, have sprung up and borne full grown fruit; and, that the Church now, instead of being the pillar and the ground of truth, is a "great house" wherein there, are vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor. The more I contrast the present state of the House of God on earth with its original and normal state, and the designs of God therein, the more must I seek and endeavor to be as His mind instructs me, emerging out of confusion and walking according to His mind. The first question is -Is it according to the mind of God, that in the present ruin of the Church there should be any testimony of His mind and purpose in the Church:- and secondly, if He enjoins that there should be, what is the character and what the duties of the witness? Now, it is plain to any student of the Scripture, that so long as any circle or dispensation of God is not set aside by Him, so long is it the first duty of His people, to own and support it; nay-the truer the heart of the disciple is to Him the more will he cling to and maintain the name of God in connection with that circle of interest with which he is engaged. How else could it be? If God have any distinct circle of interest into which He has called me; shall not I, according to my devotion to Him, own and support that circle of interest as He may enable me? Does it not both test, and distinguish the faithfulness of a servant, the extent and ability by which, he supports and vindicates the purpose of God, when hope is almost gone.... At the last extremity, Daniel, though the lions' den loomed before his own soul, yet as he prayed, his windows were opened toward Jerusalem; the spot of God's interest on the earth. Now, as it is plain and natural, that the true servant of God could never be the less faithful amid abounding unfaithfulness, but, on the contrary, more devoted to do what few others might care to do; pressed in his spirit to maintain the mind and intention of God in the circle in which he is called, because he sees it to be little, or no where done; not that he is better than others, but in conscience and heart he feels called on to spend, and be spent, and the more so because of the wide spreading failure.

. Let us look through Scripture, and gather up instruction as to the manner and action of God's servants at the declension of every dispensation.

Enoch, I may say, was the first witness in decline. By faith he was translated, and he walked with God three hundred years. The principle of true testimony is seen in him. He walked with God above the abounding ungodliness. He was the more singular as a witness, because the opposition was rather irreverence and hard speeches of professors; but, this is just what marks the true witness when the declension is greatest. I must be transcendently devoted to my master's cause and interests.

Noah was a witness in decline; building an ark, and preaching righteousness in face of 'a world opposing 'world, carrying out God's purpose and mind in the most remarkable Manner when left alone, and men universally had no fear of God before their eyes.

Abraham was a witness; alone and singularly leaving all his natural associations in order to be for God according to His mind on earth. The failure of man on the earth was patent; therefore

Abraham is called to 'walk apart from his natural associations, and follow God on the earth, and the more simply he did so, however great the opposition, the more distinct and assured was his own blessing; and the more truly did he maintain the 'mind of God on earth. When did the Patriarchs suffer and lose true blessing, but when they wandered from the 'path of separation and testimony to. which. they were called? and they always were restored to their blessings when they resumed their place as witnesses. When was Joseph the boldest witness? Was it not when encircled by ignorant and unbelieving Egyptians;-and then, too, 'was he, in the most manifest way, helped of God, and for God.

Moses in Egypt was a witness when he confronted every opposition offered to God, whether it was Pharaoh, or Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. 3:8.), and as the difficulty increased, he was on God's side, and rose up superior to it. The greater the difficulty and the danger, the better did this true witness stand forth for God and 'vindicate His name and purpose. Then again in the wilderness in the midst of his own people, he acts single-handed for God in the face of the people when they had transgressed; standing at the gate of the camp and exhorting every one who was on the Lord's side to rally round him, and consecrate himself " to the Lord, every man upon his son and upon his brother, that he may

bestow upon you a blessing this day;" and afterward pitching the tabernacle without the camp that every one who sought the Lord might resort to it.

Caleb was a witness when he endeavored to still the murmuring multitude of Israel, assuring them that if the Lord delighted in them, He would bring them into the land and give it to them (Num. 13).

Joshua was a witness when he warned, exhorted and declared before the assembled Israel; that as for him and his house he would serve the Lord (Josh. 24:15).

Each of the Judges in their day and generation was a witness standing forth alone and single-handed to restore God's people to their proper moral position as the Lord's inheritance. The witness was the more distinct and remarkable according to the extent and greatness of the embarrassments in his way. To be a witness in the true sense of the word, he must stand forth superior to every shade of corrupt influence and antagonism. We see this in a very marked way in Daniel; and in Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego. The truth of God was denied, and they stood forth to maintain and vindicate it. No amount of difficulty or Of adverse 'power deterred them; they shrank not from their responsibility, and were signally successful.

Ezra was a witness, not only leading back the captivity to Jerusalem and building, the temple though encountering therein every difficulty; but so entering into the mind of God that he encountered his own people in their tenderest point, in order to deliver them from every association unworthy of God's people (Ezra 9: 10.). It is among his own that the fidelity of the witness is best seen, because there it is most tested. I may very boldly and unflinchingly testify against an open enemy, but to oppose my own; and wound them in their peculiar sensitiveness must be, in a good man, the greatest test and 'proof of his fidelity,-yet, a true witness will meet one as firmly as the other, because it is for God he is acting and not for man.

Nehemiah was a witness. See how he feels for the condition of Jerusalem! Undaunted by the apparent wreck of God's interests on earth, broken up and piece-meal as they may be, the true witness nevertheless connects himself with them, reckoning on the power of God to maintain his

own interests so long as he is pleased to confine them to any particular circle. How Nehemiah pines to do the work! How he surveys the ruins and much rubbish by night, and yet how he builds, prays and suffers! A witness is essentially a martyr (the same word for both in Greek) because death alone can check his career or divert him from his course.

Mordecai was a witness. He imperiled his own life and the lives of all his people because he would not do homage to Haman the Agagite. Cost him what it would he would not forget God's fiat on Amalek, but maintain it at the risk of everything personal and natural. In how small a thing apparently can one be a true witness, and being such, can accomplish such wondrous results. It is when the most disguised inroad is made on the purpose and will of God that the witness necessarily makes his greatest stand, and therefore he always shapes his course according to the nature of the opposition leveled against the truth of God, so that if I know the nature and intent of the opposition I know the direction in which the witness will work, and vice versa.

Elijah was a witness when he confronted all the prophets of Baal and vindicated the name and power of God before all Israel.

Micaiah was a witness when, regardless of personal suffering, he announced the fate of the king of Israel according to the word of God, and demonstrated to the king how he had been deceived. Elisha was a witness when by the word of the Lord he maintained the relief there would be from the famine in Samaria, though the first man in the realm denied the possibility of it. The prophets were witnesses. What a place Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, and Habakkuk occupied in Israel! They stood singly for God and braved continually the enmity and reproach of their own people; declaring, on the one hand, the sin of the people, and on the other, the heart of Him against whom they sinned. I do not stay to adduce particular instances of their testimony, for the whole books of their prophecy are such. Haggai and Zechariah were witnesses, testifying for God to the returned remnant either in encouragement or warning according to their need.

John Baptist was a witness. He came in the way of righteousness, and he maintained it against Herod the King; and his life paid the forfeit. It is not in one bold general line that the chief virtue of the witness is seen; it is in standing forth and giving issue with any principle, power or element which undermines or subverts the purpose and counsel of God at any given time. Our Lord was the faithful and true witness. He saw and confronted every departure from God, even the most subtle. His whole life from the manger to the cross was characterized by this. Whenever God is most successfully misrepresented, and by the most acceptable authority, there He stands alone to dispel and break up the false coverings that enshrouded it, and to disclose the simple and clear mind of God. Whether it be Satan in the wilderness, or in the midst of the Synagogue on the Sabbath day; Whether it be before the assembled court of the Jewish Sanhedrim; or alone with the desolate thief on the Cross, where Satan exulted in His death-in every instance He stood faithful the more manifestly for God, as God was most covertly misrepresented; and His truth therefore the more compromised.

The Lord tells His disciples "ye are my witnesses," and we mark this in them; that where the truth of God is misunderstood or compromised they present an unflinching front to vindicate it and justify God. While the Church as a vessel of testimony or any dispensation was in freshness and power, there was a more defined and palpable line for the witness; the opposition was more open and discernible; but as the Church became corrupted and disorganized from within, the duty and

service of the witness was not only more onerous, but his ability and competency to be a witness was the more severely tested. Unless he could grapple with the insidious and covert workings of Satan, now no longer an open enemy, but transformed into an angel of light, through the members of, the assembly, he was plainly unequal to the task of a witness in that state of things. Now this is the cause of all the unfitness and inadequacy

which we mark in this day in so many earnest souls who desire to be witnesses. They do not see where the most deadly evil is working; for the deadliest evil is the one which feeds on the soul without detection; and so emasculates the truth of God, that in the end it is left with the pretense of truth which is worse than open evil.

It is plain, then, that the more fallen and disorganized the Church is, the more peculiar and trying must be the course of the witness. His one simple duty is to resist every inroad against the truth and counsel of God, and the more insidious and covered the attempt is, the more distinctly and openly to denounce and expose it. To be a witness of this order, the Apostle Paul instructs Timothy in his second epistle to him. In that epistle we find that the 'great point pressed on Timothy is clear and positive separation from profane and vain babblings.. Previously he had been exhorted to hold fast the form of sound words; and again; "rightly to divide the word of truth," thus intimating that his great and constant work would be to separate the precious from the vile in doctrine. What a state of things for a servant of God! His chief and most difficult enemies from within, corrupting and misrepresenting the truth of God which they professed to maintain. What a place of trial and proof! In such a state of things, the witness must purge himself from the vessels to dishonor; he must preserve as distinct a separation between himself and them, as a man washed has between that washed off and himself. The word of these babblers spreads as a gangrene; it is not merely leaven, it destroys vitality, it "overthrows the faith of some." The witness is required to separate in the most marked way from them. His separation marks his faithfulness. It is the distinctness of his separation that proves him a witness. When things had come to this, he has no other way to prove himself as true to his mission but by separation, and the more unequivocal it is, the better witness he will be. A witness thinks not of trials and difficulties; he braves all, for he is on God's side; and he thinks not of them, however timid his nature, because he knows he is on God's side; he only thinks what is his appointed course, and on that, according to his faithfulness, he proceeds: Here we see that when profane and vain babbling is suffered in the assembly, the witness has no option but to clear himself as clear as washing could do of any connection or association with any such. The word "purge" implies the most stringent and practical separation. Leaven we find dealt with in another way (1 Cor. 5), but here, where the truth is compromised by teachers in the assembly, the witness is called not merely to denounce and repel such profanities, but in the most marked manner, and in his own person, to draw the line of separation between himself and them; and, having done so, to seek association with them who call on the Lord in a like spirit, as I understand "pure heart;" and he was not, so to speak, qualified for this "pure" company unless he had in this absolute manner purged himself. One little comprehends how essential and imperative it is on the witness to be valiant for the truth; and even when some in heart desire it, how often do we find that they are entirely unable to bear against the evil, and simply because they have not rigidly adhered to God's counsel in this epistle. They controvert and disallow, but they do not "purge;" and, consequently, they are not witnesses in such times. In general, we are more distressed by immorality of conduct than by false teaching;

but this only proves our lack of spiritual sense. It is very evident that the Church at first had no list of those who should be excluded from the Lord's table; but when the spiritual sense was enfeebled the Apostle gave them a list, though not including in it murderers, heretics, or the more heinous crimes, on the presumption that their spiritual sense was not yet so low as that; but now, when profane and vain babblings are suffered in the assembly; the Apostle- enjoins Timothy to purge himself from them; he cannot be a witness if he does not, nor is any one a witness who does not. Has God revealed His word and mind, and in such a way and at such a cost, even by His own Son; and can I, as a witness, suffer any compromise or misrepresentation of it? True,. I ought to be gentle, and to " instruct those that oppose themselves," but these must be persons who will listen. The devil was a liar from the beginning, and he used every artifice to mar and spoil the truth, and therefore the witness, at such a time as is here described, has a double work, subserving. to the one end; one rightly to divide the word of truth, and the other to distance himself as positively and as openly as possible from every vain and profane babbler. And not only this, hut a witness for these days must. " turn away ' from them who are described as walking after their own lust, while having the form of godliness but denying the power of it. Now, of these, a worse class arise, who, like Jannes and Jambres, withstand the truth. They are still worse than the babblers, the witness knows them, but abides in the Apostles' doctrine, and holds to the Scriptures as his authority. Nothing must discourage him in these disastrous times; the appearing of the Lord and his kingdom must stimulate and sustain him in proclaiming the word; ever urgent, convicting, rebuking, encouraging with all patience and doctrine. And when the time comes when they who now hear him will no longer hearken to sound doctrine, the witness is only to go on: And be sober, " exempted from false influences " in all things, bearing evils, doing the work of an evangelist; that is to say, as it appears to me; do everything from the very beginning, as it were, commencing anew, reverting to the foundation, and working from it. We are also instructed how a witness, even a woman, should act with reference to an unsound Teacher (2 John), not only not to receive him, but not to greet him. Surely,- when one considers the place of exclusiveness which this word demands, we must feel how few real godly witnesses there are in this day. As a rule, is there any of this decided animadversion of unsound teaching in this day? Whoever does not practice it, is not a witness, for he does not meet the exigency.

In Jude, also, we are instructed that the witness's singular and distinct work is to " contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Now, the very fact of such an injunction as this being needed, discloses the state of the Church. It is not (mark I) the faith as it is held, but, as it was once delivered, and it is not in an easy compromising way, but in an energetic decided way that he is " earnestly to contend for it.

The " Beloved" are called on here to maintain spiritual ground; and thus as a matter of course, to be outside 'natural ground. Now spiritual ground in such a day as is here described, involves the necessity. of scrutiny and patience with godly fear. Some are to be treated more leniently than others. " Of some have compassion, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." That is, they are to be rescued if possible, but with marked recognition and denunciation of their present place and standing. A true witness not only accords with and heartily accepts all this, stringent and trying as it must be to his natural mind, but, he hails the instructions as to what should be his course of action for meeting the interests of his Lord in an evil day; and never feels himself true to Him unless vindicating His name

and truth on earth. How, in the face of these Scriptures, any one can defend anything bordering on indifferentism or neutrality is unaccountable? Any one who does so is plainly not a witness; and, therefore, I can only say, the Lord teach us and stir up our hearts to be for Him as His witnesses, while he leaves us here.

One word more. From Rev. 2 and 3., it is evident that to be a witness, in the state of things described there you must be an overcomer (mown). And, this is self. evident; for, how could I be a witness for God against surrounding evil, unless I had overcome it? The blessings are for the overcomers; and the witness at such a time is one who testifies against the prevailing corruption, and is, therefore, characterized by the angel or messenger: This the whole assembly ought to be; but whoever is so, is one who, knowing the mind of the Lord, proclaims it and presses it on the conscience of his hearers. Calling on the saints to be overcomers, he presents the truth from which they have swerved, and which, if owned, would deliver them from the surrounding evil. He acts as the Lord's messenger, and, therefore, in keeping with His mind. And this puts him in the position of a pioneer, as well as a teacher, for the message which he delivers is to rally the overcomers, and to show them the way to take. And in order to. deliver the message he must be on the vantage- ground himself: a victor himself and one able to remove difficulties for those who would be victors, to shed the light of the truth on the: scene in which they are, and thus practically to spew: them their way out of it. Thus the witness must not tamper or parley with anything which could obstruct the full free deliverance of the Saints. He must repel all indifferentism to the truth or concession to error; because the whole value of his service lies in the power and distinctness- with which he maintains the truth, which alone can emancipate. He has one simple thought and work, and that 'is, to deliver simply and unflatteringly his Lord's message. If it be not his Lord's message, it is not fit for the time, and, therefore, not worth anything, for it is only his own; but, if it be, the care of the witness is to guard it, and to press it on souls. It is the truth-the Lord's mind His message for the moment, which is his chief thought and care. The effects produced by this testimony he% may watch, and they necessarily interest him, but only in. proportion to their being genuine effects of the truth, for which he is responsible: To win adherents is not his aim; far less to compromise in order that he may; his business is with the truth. To it he stands, rejoicing in all who rally round and espouse it, not. for his own sake, or even for their sakes, save as secondary, but because the truth the mind of His Lord, is resumed and maintained. 'He can never lose sight of the specialty of his service as a witness, and no consideration of effects must turn him aside from his post. Of course he consorts with, and finds help from the receivers of it, but the tie between them and him is the truth, and no lower interest. This is ever the duty and calling a witness, and the greater the decline the more so, because there is all the more difficulty to maintain the truth without mixture; and to maintain it thus is what every witness for God in every dispensation is called to.

The Lord give us to understand how high and blessed it is to be His witnesses here in the evil day; and to estimate how great is the privilege to be entrusted with His mind and truth. May we spew daily that this is our great care and nothing short of it; not to gain adherents. Happy and 'encouraged we are by every true one with whom we can consort; he who walks in truth helps the other; but not seeking anything but the truth of which we testify; and which will in proportion as it acts on souls, unite them on the Lord's side, for He is Himself the only perfect expression of the truth, to whom be glory forever.: Amen.

FRAGMENTS.

" A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a fool's at his left" (Eccl. 10:2). In Psa. 16:8, we read - " I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.", if, then, He be at my right hand, where must my heart be if I am wise? The fool's heart being at his left. hand is that it is set upon other objects, not upon the Lord.

" Surely a serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babbler is no better"? (Eccl. 10:11). A serpent bites because it is a serpent: it wants an opportunity rather than a provocation; it is its nature. So, whatever may be a babbler's pretext,-however pressing he may urge the reason to be, Why he " ought" to speak his mind, or "discharge his conscience," with 'respect to others' failings, he babbles because he is a babbler. "God is not mocked," and knows how to distinguish between the exercise of a Christian grace, and the indulgence of a carnal propensity, if I do not.

" The labor of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how'to go to the city" (Eccl. 10:15).

It is written (Prov. 1. 7), "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge"; and we may surely say, that he who is actuated thereby will find in; Christ all that his conscience or his heart

can crave after. He is the "city of refuge," where the soul finds not only shelter from the avenger of blood, but a settled and abiding habitation of security, sustenance, and rest. " Fools despise wisdom and instruction," seeking for these things else. where, but their labor can only weary and disappoint.

In us, the power of hope consists in Him being our hope;. In the hope in us being - First. The sympathy of His hope (1 Thess. 1-3, and Rev. 22:20); Secondly. In the sight of God and our Father. The joy of hope in us is (John) that He is so occupied with the Father's thoughts and purposes that He must come again for us the children.

The World

THE term " world " occurs in Matthew's Gospel nine times; in Mark's three; in Luke's three; and in John's seventy-eight times.

In chapter 27. alone, it occurs nineteen times. This chapter presents us with Jesus Christ, when in principle the world had rejected Him, and was about to crucify Him,-His eyes lifted up to Heaven, and His soul pouring out to His Father His thoughts and feelings in prayer concerning His own whom He was about to leave. He had come unto Jerusalem, to the people who were to be His nation; but they received Him not; but as many as received Him, to them gave he power to become sons of God. Israel was about to crucify Him-these believing sons of God were for heaven and not for earth, and connection with God's eternity was to be their mark even in time. Let me just trace out these three subjects so far as this chapter presents them. " Jesus lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said:-

THE LORD.

Ver. 1. "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

The Son of the Father, knowing all the times and counsels of God, asked to be glorified by the Father, that He, the Son, might glorify Him. Serving as " the sent one to Israel," they would not have Him; He was then free to take up another service, and remove from earth to heaven to set forth the glory of the Father.

2. " As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."

The power was His; yet as Messiah, the sphere of its exercise was limited to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But there were some given to Him-unto -ETERNAL LIFE; this eternal life He would communicate to them. What this was He knew right well; not the knowledge of Moses or of things down here; but-

3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5. " And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee."

The Father, He knew; and knew that none could present Him to man save Himself, Jesus Christ the Sent one; He knew, too, how he had made manifest the moral glory of the Father upon 'earth; He was it; His work was done, He would return thither whence he came, even to the eternal, divine glory.

THE WORLD.

But note, here, that at the close of 10: 5 He brings in the world: "the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." He had in his days of humiliation been faithful to God and to Israel, God's people for the earth, whose portion was to be in this world. But to Him there was a " before the world was" too.

6. " I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me. out of the world."

HIS DISCIPLES.

In' the power of the glory which was His in person' with the Father before the world was, He had when in! the world ' (Himself the despised by Israel) thought of men given to Him by the Father out of the world: of them he could say,

" Thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word."

The gift of the Father to the Son, from among the

"Men Of the World-the Father's own and His gift to the Son; keepers of the word. And not only so, but-

7. " Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee."

So far did their knowledge go as to things. As to Himself it went further:

8. "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

In the ninth verse the (to Israel awful, yet to us blessed) truth comes out: " I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me."

They that slave to Him had a place in His heart; they honored His Father. "I pray for them," and this because He had taken them up at the Father's hand: " them that thou hast given me." To His eye there was an inestimable preciousness about them:-" For they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."

The savor of His Father's love upon them, the consciousness through them, that there was perfect community between Him and the Father, that the display of His glory was at stake in them I What blessed privilege. But then came the expression:-

11. " And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none; of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves" (12, 13).

In these verses we have, 1st, our position marked for us: " in the world"; and, 2nd, what our alone preservation, while here, can be; the Holy Father keeping us, and the instrumental means of its being so, our knowledge of the Father and of the glory peculiar to Him; 3rd, the gracious love of the Son of God in speaking these things, that His own joy might be fulfilled in us. He had had the joy of known fellowship with the Father, amid all the sorrows of His humiliation.

Then (ver. 14) comes responsibility, and the conflict, and. consequent thereon, the joy of the knowledge of their origin. "I have given them thy word, and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Then as girding up the loins to patience, and strengthening the soul against the notion of escape from the furnace;

15. " I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Their origin is again adverted to, and honored as being associated with (not with creature things, but) with Himself, the Son of God, the Truth, the Word. Their mission into the world, recalling His own mission by the Father, follows.

16. " They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." (17 and 18).

Next we have (in ver. 19) the grand means of the making good, now openly, of this entire separation to the Father of sons down here in this world. Himself, the Son, would sit down as Son of man upon the Father's throne, and His people down here should know Him in the Father and themselves in Him, and His spirit in them.

19." And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." And this was not only for them then present, but for all that should believe through their word

20. " Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." The contrasts between the world and these sons of God which follow are of a different kind from those noted before; 1st, such a manifested union, in life, by the spirit all-pervading was to be theirs, that the world should believe in the Son's mission-by the Father. This was fulfilled, perhaps, in one sense, at Pentecost; another and a fuller accomplishment may yet be hoped for hereafter.

21. " That they all may be one, as thou, Father,

art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Then follows the blessed outshining of more of the Son of God's heart toward these adopted sons of God. How He understands and acts out the blessed truth, " God giveth liberally."

22, And the glory which thou gavest me I have

given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; in them, and thou in me, that they, may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." (v. 23).

He that gave Himself, how should He keep back the sharing of His glory from these sons? The expectation of this realized, manifested fellowship leads to unity; and when the glory is come, then we shall realize the full revelation in Him of the Father, and His glory outshining will perfect the fellowship of those among whom it shines; and then the world shall own both the mission: the Son and the Divine heavenly love bestowed on those who left the world to follow Him.

The last three verses put the contrast between these sons by adoption and the world, if possible, even more markedly still. 1st, He has a will, as Son, delighting in the Father's love and gifts to Him, and that will is that these should be let into the presence chamber; should behold His glory as

given to Him as the one loved before the foundation of the world; 2ndly, He appeals to the righteous dealings of His Father as to these that have known and owned Him as the sent one; 3rdly, To them the Father's name and character (which was his joy) had been set forth, and should be set forth. All the Father's love to Him should rest on them, and Himself be in them.

" Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me; and I have declared unto them thy name; and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

I desire to put it home to my own soul, and to the soul of him that reads, whether these things are so as to our own selves; and whether our outward life and ways bear witness to a present and entire separation between us and the present evil world, through our owning, by faith, that we belong to an earth-rejected, but God-honored Lord.

ASSOCIATED WITH CHRIST.

A FRAGMENT.

WHAT wondrous terms does the Holy Ghost apply to the Believer in Scripture! to the Believer since the day of Pentecost!

1. Co-plant in His death and life (Rom. 6:6).
2. Co-heir with Him of suffering and glory (Rom. 8:17).
3. Conformed to Him in humiliation (Phil. 3:10) and in glory (Rom. 8:17; Phil. 3:20).
4. Crucified together with (Rom. 6:6).
5. Dead together with (2 Tim. 2:11).
6. Buried together with (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
7. Quickened together with (Eph. 2:3; Col. 2:13).
8. Made alive together with (Rom. 6:8; 2 Tim. 2:11).
9. Raised up together with (Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12;1).
10. Seated together with. (Eph. 2:6).
11. Co-workers (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor. 6:1).
12. Fellowcitizens with (of. Eph. 2:19, and Phil. 3:20).
13. One body with (Eph. 1:22,23, and 3. 6).
14. Partakers of the promises with (Eph. 3:6).
15. All of them compacted (Eph. 4:16) or knit together (Col. 2:2,19).
16. Fitly framed together (Eph. 2:21, and 4: 16). in the body of which He is head.

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