

THE EVANGELIST VOLUME 3 1869

by H.H. Snell

A collection of articles and writings by H.H. Snell from The Evangelist Volume 3 1869, covering various biblical topics and Christian teaching.

88 Chapters

Table of Contents

0. The Evangelist Volume 3 1869
1. "You Have Lost Your Horse."
2. I've Been a Rare Fool!
3. Why Are You Troubled?
4. No. 1
5. Friendship and Love
6. Chap. 24:42-51
7. 1. "The Parable of the Servants
8. Scripture Queries and Answers
9. The Mansion House and the Vault
10. God's Cleansing
11. The Saviour's Joy
12. "Out of the World."
13. Confess Christ
14. No. 2
15. Chap. 8:1-12
16. How Can I Approach God?
17. Rom. 3:21-26
18. What Is Man?
19. 1
20. 2
21. 3
22. 4
23. 5
24. 6
25. 7
26. 8
27. 9
28. 10
29. 11
30. 12
31. 13
32. 14
33. 15
34. 16
35. An Extract
36. How Another Fijian Convert Died
37. Chap. 8:13-27
38. Faith and Hope

39. The Law
40. Have You Peace With God?
41. Luke 4:14-22
42. No More Remembrance of Sins
43. "Ah, You Get That in Resurrection!"
44. Song of the Christian Pilgrim
45. Peace
46. Extract from an Address
47. Repentance
48. Oh, That I Were a Christian!
49. Reasons Why Many Have Not Peace with God
50. The Epistle to the Colossians
51. Chap. 9
52. "One Thing I Do."
53. What Do You Believe?
54. Heb. 11:7
55. (An Extract.)
56. Do You "Preach Christ Crucified?"
57. Homely Conversations
58. Ex. 12
59. "Ho! Every One That Thirsteth."
60. The Ten Virgins. Chapter 25:1-13
61. Thoughts on the Names in 1 Chronicles 1-4
62. "As He Is, so Are We in This World."
63. The World
64. "What the Law Could Not Do."
65. The Ten Virgins
66. Union With Christ
67. Thorns
68. Chapter 10
69. "Whiter Than Snow."
70. True Worshippers: Who Are They?
71. Remarks on Matt. 24, 25
72. Choosing and Refusing
73. Not of an Address
74. "I Believed You Wished to See Me."
75. Remarks on Matt. 24; 25
76. The Talents
77. Whosoever
78. Indifference
79. What Is Your Treasure?
80. Separation; or the World, What Is It?

- 81.** A Thought on the Lord's Supper
- 82.** Luke 5:27-28
- 83.** Where Will You Spend Eternity?
- 84.** Beware of Men
- 85.** A Few Thoughts on Psalms 32 and 33
- 86.** Notes on an Address
- 87.** Behold, He Comes!

The Evangelist Volume 3 1869

“You Have Lost Your Horse.”

THE other evening I met, at a friend's house, a relative of the family, whose appearance and manners at once arrested my attention. He was young and looked intelligent, but there was an air of restlessness, if not of absolute uneasiness about him, which could not be concealed by the flippancy of his manner; and, as I gazed on his thin worn face, my heart felt insensibly drawn toward him. He was evidently unhappy, and his desperate efforts to be, what is termed, “jolly,” proved ineffectual to remove the dark cloud that hung over his soul.

After several feeble efforts to get up a lively conversation, he sank back into silence, and his face gradually assumed a dull moody expression.

It was then that I spoke to him about the love of God to the poor sinner, as shown in the gift of His only begotten Son, and, as I dwelt upon the grace which brings a present and perfect salvation so close to the dying grasp of a lost, ruined world, he fixed his large eyes steadily upon me, but said not a word. I went on describing the wondrous love of Jesus in laying down His life for His enemies, and began to point out the solemn necessity that there was for the Cross, as the only way of escape from eternal damnation.

“Oh!” he said, suddenly interrupting me, “I know all about that. But look here, ■ I've lost Him.” “What do you mean?” I said, rather startled at the abruptness and earnestness of his tone.

“About twelve months ago, I was converted and was very happy; but in course of time I got mixed up with the world, and somehow or other my joy went, and I lost Christ.”

“But if ever you received Christ, you received Him forever.” Christ Himself said: ■

“‘He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.’ (John 6:47.) And we learn from another scripture that He is our life; and again, ‘He that hath the Son hath life.’ (1 John 5:12.)

“Now if Christ is the life we get on belief, and that life is everlasting, how can we lose it? If it were possible to do so, we could never say at any one time that it was ours forever; and yet we read, ‘These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know “that ye have eternal life.”’ (1 John 5:13.)

“But suppose I turn my back upon Christ, and don't value Him ■ don't enjoy Him as I ought?”

“God never takes away His eternal gift because its receiver fails to value Him as he ought, although most assuredly it grieves Him to see His gift slighted.”

“Do you say so?”

“Indeed I do. Are you fond of a horse?” “Yes.”

“Suppose I made you a present of one. What would you give me for it in exchange?”

“I should not need to give you anything for it, if you made me a present of it. It would be mine for nothing.”

That is precisely the way God deals with the sinner. He offers him Christ for nothing. ‘The gift of God is eternal life.’ (Rom. 6:23.) But what would you do with your horse when you had him?”

“I would have him out every day.”

“That would be a proof that you valued the gift. But suppose you got weary of your horse, and, leaving him in the stable one fine morning, you went out for a walk. A friend meets you and immediately says: ■ ‘YOU HAVE LOST YOUR HORSE.’ Would you not at once say, ‘You are mistaken. The horse is safe in my stable at home.’ But suppose he replied, ‘Oh, that can’t be, you must have lost him, because you are not enjoying him■you haven’t him out.’ Would you not tell your friend that it was one thing to be sure of your possession and another thing to enjoy it. ‘My horse,’ you would say, ‘is as much mine when I am walking without him as when I am riding him. Of course, the friend who gave him to me, would greatly prefer my appreciating his gift by enjoying it, but he gave me the horse unconditionally. He never said, He is yours on condition that you ride him, and the moment that you cease to do so, I will take him away from you.’”

“Now God gives Christ, not as a bribe for something to do, or as a reward for something done. He gives Him unconditionally. You have nothing to do to get Him, and you have nothing to do to keep Him. God knows the need of poor hell-deserving sinners, and He meets that need with Christ. And oh, blessed be His name, He does not give Him simply for a season, but forever.”

“But when my heart gets cold,” he eagerly said, “what must I do?”

“Bring it into the sunshine of His love, and that will warm it. Confess your coldness, judge your condition, and think of His love to you, and if that does not draw out your heart in love to Him, nothing else will.”■ “We love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19.)

Tears filled the eyes of the poor fellow as I spoke. A light seemed to break in upon his soul, and his words at parting were: ■

“Well, that certainly puts the matter into a different shape. I never saw it in that way before.”

I've Been a Rare Fool!

It was a fine summer's day when I was told that a youth in a neighboring town was dying of consumption. I took an early opportunity of visiting him. On entering the room I found him seated by a table. A pillow was laid upon it; and, with his arms folded and his head resting upon them, he thought his breathing was easier in that position. On my entrance he looked up. Disease had made sad inroads in a countenance once handsome and intelligent. My attention was arrested by an indescribable expression about his eyes; there was a bold self-willed character before me.

I addressed him somewhat abruptly: "You are very ill, my lad, and with little prospect of ever getting better."

His reply was, "You are plain spoken, at any rate."

I paused for a moment, when I added, "Do you know, in the event of your death, where you will go?"

He immediately answered, "I expect, to heaven."

I asked him the grounds of his confidence. He gave me them readily: "I never injured anybody. I have always done right between man and man; and the master I worked for would give me a character any day."

His eyes kindled as he spoke, and he looked a sort of defiance. After a short pause I proceeded to urge him for further reasons for his hopes. He gave them pretty fully; but they were briefly summed up in the fact, that he had injured no one, neither stolen nor lied, and he did not know why he should fear."

I scrutinized his features, and there was unbending decision of purpose. I rose from my seat, as if taking my leave, and said to him, "My poor lad, I am very sorry for you; for though there is unspeakable comfort in the gospel, blessed joy for those interested in it, yet it is not for such as you."

He said to me angrily, "What do you mean?"

I replied, "The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; and, from your own account, you are not one. You are seeking to stand before God in the strength of your own character, and it will utterly fail you. If you were honest and truehearted, you would admit that your conscience accuses you; and that to stifle its cries you are seeking to prop up a character for goodness, which, so far from serving you, will only shut you out of the blessing the gospel propounds. As a sinner God presents mercy and forgiveness to you through faith in Jesus. As having nothing to fear, what want you with the Saviour? "My poor lad," I proceeded, "hide not your necessity from yourself, you cannot from God. Be open and honest: unburden your heart. Seek to tell the worst you know about yourself; spread it all out before Him, and plead, that for such as you really are Christ died."

As I spoke his countenance lighted up with intelligence. He had evidently understood my meaning. He stretched out his hand and exclaimed with some energy, "I've been a rare fool. You have letten t'leet into me. (You have let the light into me.) Now leave me alone a bit, and be sure and come again soon."

I left him with confidence and hope. His case then called for sympathy and prayer, ■ere long, for thanksgiving and praise. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God was revealed to him in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6.) His conscience was purged through faith in the blood shed upon the cross. (Rom. 3:25.) He saw himself a lost sinner; God gave him to see that Jesus died for such. Poor fellow, the little time he was spared was hallowed indeed. He spoke of his Saviour with raptures: of his great need of Him, and of the grace that found him. I saw him one morning after a restless night. He was sitting on his bed gasping for breath; yet his spirit was tranquil and calm. "I know," he said, "Jesus died for me." Shortly afterward he expired.

Why Are You Troubled?

“Let not your heart be troubled.”■John 14:27.

This is just what the heart is prone to be, and was anticipated by the Lord, hence this opportune caution. That blessed One, who knew what it was to suffer, what trial was, what the scorn of man was, gives us these precious words. His path here did not exempt Him from trouble, but the very reverse, it exposed Him to it. His way was rough indeed, His position a deeply trying one. Enemies surrounded Him on every side, He really knew what trouble was, what hunger was, what thirst was. He became poor. He had riches■He could create them. He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. His prerogative was to rule, but He obeyed. What a wonder! He became man; He took our form; He was made sin for us. Let us then keep in mind whose words we are now considering. These comforting, cheering words, “Let not your heart be troubled.”

Whose heart is meant here? The heart of some one particularly privileged, someone more than all there? No. This word is to you, tried, cast down, and troubled believer. It is suited to your case. To you, afflicted and perhaps bereaved one. You may have lost a wife, a husband, a little one, on whom your affections rested. These words are for you, drooping feeble one, if you know the speaker of them. This comfort is for you, take it yourself. Don't pass it by, it is for you, for you who know Jesus, and need Him and His word in all its richness.

This word is comforting, strengthening, cheering. At present we know that it is His word we have, but soon it will be Himself that we shall have. He says, “I will come again.” This is true too.

All the way is known to him; every turn in the way is noticed by Him; yesterday's trial He knew; today's difficulty is under the eye, and tomorrow's tare is seen by Him, and He says, “Let not your heart be troubled.” Doubtless, the child of God feels he would be a wonder if he did not. The wilderness is felt, and the rough roads therein also, but this sweet word comes there too, “Let not your heart be troubled.”

This is the Lord's word, and to the true soul power comes with it; a power to bear up under the load. What is there a child of God is not entitled to take to the Lord, and there leave it? If it were the Lord's will that the believer should bear trouble, He would not direct otherwise. He does exercise the heart in the way of discipline, and it is good to be so disciplined.

In the words before us the Lord calla upon the believer, in the plainest terms, and says, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” How gracious of the Lord so to speak in the language of sympathy and consolation, guarding the trembling one against trouble and fear. He remembers us in our weakness, and administers the comforting words■words that are for us who believe. Let us then take them in their full import and power, and bless Him for them. Once more, let us repeat them, “Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

No. 1

THE few remarks here written down are in the way of suggestion and inquiry as to the use in scripture of some of these names in the Evangelists, and in the Apostolic writings. The names are Jesus, Christ, Son of God, Son of Man, Son of David, Lamb, and Lord.

Assuredly these names are never arbitrarily employed, but whether two or even three be used together, or one alone selected, there is meaning in the selection. It is in the peculiar relationships of our Lord towards the Church now, and towards Israel and the world now or hereafter, that they become of value to the student of scripture.

To begin with "Jesus." It is His human historical name, given to Him by the angel of the Lord (Matt. 1:21) previous to His birth, and means Saviour. The name is found in the Old Testament in an enigmatical way, with a view to His future bearing of it, in the word Joshua (comp. Heb. 4:8, margin), and in almost every word rendered into English by "Salvation." It is strictly individual as distinct from that of "Christ" or "the Christ," which is or may be, as we shall see, a corporate name. It is His own person or Himself individually, as born into the world of a virgin of the Jewish race. He bears the name still in heaven, and to it every knee shall yet bow. (Phil. 2:10.)

"Christ" is the name by which our Lord is known to the Church as united to Him risen and ascended. As Christ He sheds His unction upon us, and makes us Christians. It is in this name that we are united to Him. The descendants of Abraham were always in expectation of this Messiah, ("Christ" being the Greek translation of that word) even to the woman of Samaria. (John 4:25) The astonishment of the Jews, even of His disciples, was that he should appear as the carpenter's son. (John 1:45, 46, 47.) Faith received Him (John 1:12-13), and got all the blessing of the true Christ, although in a different way from what was expected, as it introduced these disciples into the heavenly portion and glory of the Church, whilst they lost that of the Jew. The Jews in rejecting Jesus as their Messiah, have for the present lost Him who was to bless them, whilst we as Christians are partakers of whatever blessing He has to give. Let us glance at two or three instances in which the individual name of Jesus is distinguished from that of Christ, or rather, I may say, changed into it consequent upon His resurrection. Among others we have (Acts 17:3,) "Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." In the earlier chapters of the Acts, where it was a question of preaching to Jews only, the difficulty still was, as it had been in the gospels, to make them understand that Jesus was the Christ, in other words that He was characterized as being the Christ prophesied of in their scriptures. (Comp. Acts 2:30, 31, 32; 4:26-27; 18:5-28, with John 1:41, 42, 45.) But to continue (Rom. 8: 11): But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by (or "because of") his Spirit that dwelleth in you. "This is an important passage for our subject. Jesus, the individual raised from the dead, becomes the Christ, so that He sends down the Holy Spirit now to indwell us (as hereafter by His power our bodies shall be quickened). The moment this took place, that is, the descent of the Holy Ghost the Church became corporately a part of Christ, in

fact, "the Christ." (1 Cor. 12:12.) There is another passage in Eph. 4:20, 21, 22, "Ye have not so learned (the) Christ, if so be ye have heard him, and been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man," &c. We learn the Christ, as the truth is found to be in Jesus, viz., the putting off of the old man and putting on the new. Finally then, whilst Jesus is the individual name, a name still known in heaven (Acts 7: 55-59, 9:17), and to be known forever, it is in His condition (if I may use the term) as the Christ that the Church comes in for her proper christian blessing.

"Son of man" is a remarkable, title, full of import, yet perhaps that with which the Church has least to do. It is probably imported from Daniel 7:13, "One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven;" whilst Psalm 8, where the same title is employed, is once and again used of the Lord by the apostle Paul in the words, "Thou hast put all things under his feet." (See Eph. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:27-28; Heb. 2:8.) Eventually this title will apply to His wide spread dominion over creation, and embrace more than that of Messiah; in fact He is to inherit that entire dominion which the first Adam lost. There is one needful remark on this name; it is, that He usually applies it to Himself when predicting His death. Let us notice in this respect Mark 8:29-31, compared with Luke 9:18-22, and Matt. 16:20-21. In all these passages the Lord charges them to tell no man that He was the Christ; but immediately afterward we have the words, "And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things,.... and be killed, and after three days rise again." Atonement being necessitated, (blessed be His name,) He would conceal His Messiahship and accept His death as the Son of man. How else, indeed, could He stand for the human race, and meet sin with all its consequences? (Comp. Rom. 5:12-21.)

As we have said that this title has perhaps least doctrinally to do with the Church, it is well to explain that in two senses we have to do with it; first, inasmuch as Psalm 8, is used in Eph. 1, as of the Son of man being Head over all things to the Church, (as Head of it, He is "Christ,") that is, the Church owns Him as such, although the title be in abeyance as to His public worldly rule, and is used only on the Church's behalf. Secondly, in the book of Revelation we find our Lord (chap. 1:13) judging the Churches with this title as responsible to His Father. Speaking in a general way, "Son of man" would imply authority and rule in all its phases. "He hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man. (John 5:27.)" This rule is first put in exercise towards the Churches. (Rev. 2. 3.)

Friendship and Love

ALTHOUGH none can say to the Most High, "What doest Thou?" (Dan. 6:35) He both can, and does often, communicate of His mind and will to others—those whom He calls His friends. Wondrous condescension! And yet not wondrous when we consider His infinite love, and the deep, everlasting interest He takes in us. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" is an instance. The Lord said it. In another place (Isa. 41:8), He uses the expression, Abraham my Friend. The days of His flesh, the Lord Jesus showed the extent of this friendship—how it was shown—in His word to His disciples. (John 15:15.) "I have called you friends; for all things which I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." All things. Here is the unreservedness of real friendship—the keeping back nothing. Had there been reserve, could there have been confidence, trust? The measure of our confidence in a person is that of his entire unfolding of himself to us, and if nothing is held back on his part, nothing is doubted, there is no uneasiness on ours. It is this which constitutes true friendship, the delightful intercourse of mind with mind, of heart with heart. There may be love without it. An object may be dear to me, and yet from some cause in myself or in the other, there is not the communion which entire unreserve on both sides would give. There was a strong, mighty love between David and Jonathan, but I am not aware that it is ever called friendship. There was even a covenant between them. But they occupied different spheres. The path of the one was not that of the other. The experiences of the one were most likely very different from those of the other. There was noble self-denial in Jonathan. He could strip himself not only of his sword, his bow, his girdle, but he could give up his hopes of a kingdom in favor of the one he loved. But he did not follow him into exile. He did not share with him his wanderings, his perils, his vicissitudes of circumstance, his sufferings in the wilderness. He would have averted them if he could, he would have shielded him from the rage of Saul, but their spheres were different, though in one thing they were blessedly alike—their devotedness to the Lord, the God of Israel. But their paths being different, the calm delights and intimate confidences of friendship could not be known, though the love was there in all its unbroken reality. There was a distance under the former dispensation between Jehovah and His people, which precluded them from entering into His counsels, from having, if I may so say, communion with Him. But Jesus has done away all that. "I have called you friends," He says. He has made peace through the blood of His cross—the veil is rent. The Holy Ghost is given. God has told out His heart in giving Jesus. The life, the death, the resurrection of the Son of God has laid the foundation, not only of peace and blessedness in life eternal to the soul of man, but of communion, intimate and blessed fellowship with the Father and the Son, so that God can tell out the secrets of the heart to those whom He has loved and reconciled, those who draw nigh to Him by the blood of Jesus, those who know their sins forgiven for His name's sake. These are brought nigh that He might have fellowship with them, that He might communicate His thoughts and purposes concerning them in all things. Jesus lives, and He says, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Live eternally, live where no evil can be, in bodies glorified, immortal, sinless, like the body of glory in which He now appears in heaven. He speaks from thence, and His communications are of the heaven from which He speaks. What God is, what His love, His fatherly mercy, His infinite perfections, His holiness, His truth, His tender

solicitude for all His little ones, His watchful interest over everything that affects them. Jesus declares the Father's love, and will declare it. (John 17.) By the Holy Ghost it is shed abroad in the believer's heart, and thus a heavenly character is formed in him while here below. The glory shines upon him, and he looks at it■the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus, though in tribulation, beset with difficulties on every hand, he can look up in confidence and peace, and say, My Father, Abba, Father; for God has given him a standing before Himself, and loves to whisper ever to his soul■

My child I am thine

In the glory divine,

And thou, though in weakness,

Forever art mine.

Chap. 24:42-51

THE Lord Jesus, as we have seen, is coming upon men as a thief in the night; and though the solemn testimony of the Lord's revelation from heaven may have been often heard, still, to the unbeliever, the event will be as sudden and unexpected as the flood was in the days of Noe. The Lord therefore adds this practical exhortation: "Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (ver. 42.) So totally unprepared will men be for this most solemn moment, that just when they are saying, "Peace and safety, sudden destruction will come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape." (1 Thess. 5:3.) The illustration that follows is that of a man expecting the thief to come to break up his house, and therefore watching to hinder it. "But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken up." (ver. 43.) The point, therefore, is of great practical importance to the people of God who will be then living upon the earth. It will be well with those who are that found watching and waiting for the Lord; for He will bring them into their long-looked-for blessing. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." (ver. 44.)

We now come to what has more direct reference to Christianity. Not that we have the Church in its unity; for, as we have before noticed, that was not then revealed. But we have the "household," and the history of individuals bearing the name of Christ on the earth. The three parables of the servants, the virgins, and the talents, show us in measure, but very strikingly, the history and the results of the profession of Christianity. We will now look a little at each of them.

1. “The Parable of the Servants

Here we have the “faithful and wise servant,” and the “evil servant” contrasted. What characterizes the “faithful” is being heartily taken up with the Lord’s interests. The Lord’s household, therefore, is the sphere where the affections and energies are exercised, and true attachment to the Master shown forth. Hence he cares for the real need of the household during the Lord’s absence, by giving them “meat in due season.” This is so well-pleasing to the Lord, that when He cometh, such will be abundantly rewarded: “He shall make him ruler over all His goods.” It is not only faithful love to Christ to care for His sheep and lambs during His absence, but the only “wise” path. By and by it will be seen how foolish it has been to have done otherwise.

The “evil servant” is far different. That he bears the name of Christian, and traffics in the things of Christianity is true, but where is his heart? Does he care for the household? Does he feed them with meat in due season? How could he, if his heart was not right with the Lord? He may hold the outline of doctrine, see the coming of the Lord, and be orthodox in other points. But he held that Christ was not coming yet, and therefore he went into the world. This is very solemn. The root of all was saying in his heart, “My Lord delayeth His coming.” He did not give up the profession of being the Lord’s servant, but he was not desiring or looking for Christ; hence he took an antagonistic place to the true servants, and associated with the world. He said in his heart, “My Lord delayeth His coming,” and we find connected with it that he began “to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken.” It does not contemplate his getting drunk, but there was no practical separation unto the Lord; there was therefore a choosing of the world’s society—eating and drinking with the drunken. The result we might expect. He is judged accordingly, and ranked with hypocrites and unbelievers. Suddenly and unexpectedly (alas, how solemn!) he is cut off. “The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Now I say, beloved, that this parable reads deeply solemn lessons to our hearts. It strikingly reminds us of an old sentence—“The Lord looketh on the heart.” It is one thing to see the Lord’s coming as a doctrine in the Bible, and another to be hoping and waiting for Him. The walk and ways show where the heart is. Christ has bought us with the priceless value of His own most precious blood, and we are His. The wise and faithful know and feel this. What interest, then, can they find in society that shuts Him out? How revolting the idea that one of His should seek it! Who on earth can be so dear to the heart of those who are in Christ as His members? “We love Him,” says the apostle John, “because He first loved us and every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him.” It must be so. To be occupied with Christ and abiding in Him is the alone power of fruit-bearing, the only place of real happiness and strength. Then we naturally, if I may so speak, fall into our right place. The heart filled with His love, and knowing the joy of His presence, finds its interests and joys alone with Him, and knows nothing brighter before the soul than the sure hope of soon seeing Jesus, and being with Him where He is. Such, too, prove that Christ is all, and go through the wilderness singing with melody in the heart■

“My God! I am Thine,
What a comfort divine;
What a blessing to know
That my Jesus is mine. | My Jesus to know,
And feel His love flow;
‘Tis life everlasting
‘Tis heaven below.” |

Scripture Queries and Answers

MAY I ask for an explanation of the following texts? (1.) In Col. 4:2 what are we to understand by “Watch in the same?” (2.) What is it to “walk in wisdom?” (v. 5.) (3.) “What is the salt?” (v. 6.) (4.) What is it to “walk in the Spirit?” (Gal. 5:25) and how may I know that I am walking in the Spirit?
■R.H.

1. Watching in the same with thanksgiving is here connected with continuing in prayer. The exhortation is that we should not grow weary or careless in prayer, and, while persevering in supplication to God, to watch His dealing with us concerning our requests: to watch in faith, in earnestness, in self-judgment, in expectation of answers. In Ephesians we have “praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with al perseverance,” &c.

2. We are to “walk in wisdom toward them that are without”■those who have not openly confessed Christ■so that nothing on our part may stumble them, cause the Lord’s name to be reproached, or tend in any way to hinder their receiving that blessed Saviour, whom to know is life eternal.

3. Our conversation should not merely be moral and gracious, or even orthodox, but savory. It should savor of Christ according to the energy of His Spirit; not only according to the letter of Scripture, but in the temper and spirit of that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. Practically abiding in Him alone qualifies for this.

4. We are not exhorted to live in the Spirit, because every believer has life in the Spirit. It is the essential characteristic of a Christian■his life is hid with Christ in God. But because we have “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:2), we are enjoined to walk in it■to walk in “newness of life.” Such have all their resources in Christ, draw from Him, obey Him, and glorify Him. The Holy Spirit testifies of Christ, and glorifies Him. He always brings the soul into God’s presence, in dependence on Him for wisdom, strength, and everything else. The atmosphere, power, motive and object connected with walking in the Spirit, are always associated with Christ, and entirely outside the working of the flesh.

A person is not walking in the spirit who is legal. The Spirit never puts a soul under the law. “If ye are led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.” (Gal. 5:18.) “Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty” ■ blessed liberty of sons, and deliverance from sin, self, law, death, and curse, ■a “liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.” (Gal. 5:1.) Again, if a person is walking in the Spirit, he may be detecting and judging the flesh, but he will not be walking after it; he will be mortifying the deeds of the body. “If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body,” &c. “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” (Gal. 5:16.)

If then, dear friend, you are glorying in the Lord, and not in the flesh, standing in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, drawing from Christ wisdom, strength, grace, and all you need, obeying His word, and seeking to honor and glorify Him, you are certainly walking in the Spirit.

The Mansion House and the Vault

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

How few seem to think of this, and act as if death and judgment were realities! Many seem surprised at death, though in a world where sin reigns unto death. Yet some so acknowledge the fact of their being mortal, that they consider a family vault a necessary appendage to a wealthy estate; but, alas! those who build the vault are sometimes the first to inhabit it. We lately read the following narrative: “I once knew a rich man who determined to have a very large and beautiful house built for himself. He bought a lot of ground in a beautiful part of the city, and took great pains to have the house built in the best manner. There were many spacious rooms and wide halls. It was planned so as to be warm in winter, and cool in summer. No expense was spared to have it as comfortable and complete a dwelling as could be found. No doubt, he looked forward to many years of enjoyment in this new and elegant house.

“At the same time that this large house was preparing for himself and his family, he had another built for them. And there was a great difference between the two; for the second house had but one small room for the whole family, and that room was mostly underground. It had, indeed, strong walls, and was built of marble, but it had no windows, and but one small door; and that, was made of iron. Yes: these two houses were built for the same people. The one was for the living family, the other for the dead. For the small low house is the vault into which their bodies are to be placed, as one after another shall be called away from life.

“The vault was soon finished, and it was ready long before the large house. And into which of them do you think the rich owner himself went first to take up his abode? Strange as it may seem, he was ready for the vault before the fine dwelling was ready for him; and many months before the spacious rooms of the new house were fit to be inhabited, its builder was laid in the narrow, dark, and cold apartment.”

How solemn this is! yet not surprising, because death is God’s just appointment, for man is a sinner, and after death judgment. And who can tell the next of whom it will be said, “This night thy soul shall be required of thee?”

Are you then, dear reader, prepared for this change? Are you at peace with God? Do you know what it is to be reconciled to God by the precious blood of Christ? We read in Scripture that Christ died for the ungodly, and that those who believe in Him shall not come into judgment, but have passed from death unto life. Depend upon it, dear reader, that death and judgment will be eternally terrible to you, unless you have taken refuge in the peace-speaking blood of Jesus. On that ground only can God accept you. By the blood of Jesus only can you escape the coming wrath, or find present peace. Well may we sing■

“Happy they who trust in Jesus,

Sweet their portion is and sure;

When the foe on others seizes,

He will keep His own secure.

Happy people!

Happy, though despised and poor!"

Dear reader, remember it is God's word that declares, that, "The just shall live by faith," and "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" and you will find, if you are called to leave this world, and you are looking only to Jesus, and relying only on what God says, you will be able to triumph in Christ, and say, Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

When Polycarp was exhorted to swear and blaspheme Christ, in order to save his life, he replied, "Fourscore years have I served Christ, and have ever found him a good Master; how then can I blaspheme my Lord and Saviour?"

An old African Negro, who had long served the Lord, when on his death bed was visited by his friends, who lamented that he was going to die, saying, "Poor Pompey is dying." The old saint, animated with the prospect before him, said to them with much earnestness, "Don't call me poor Pompey; I king Pompey."

When another was asked on his death bed, how he found himself, he answered, "I have taken my good deeds and bad deeds and thrown them together in a heap, and fled from both to Christ, and in Him I have peace."

A servant of Christ attended the dying bed of a young female, who thus addressed him "I have little," said she, "to relate, as to my experience, I have been much tried and tempted, but this is my sheet-anchor■He has said, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' I know I have come to Him, and I expect that He will be as good as His word. Poor and unworthy as I am, He will not trifle with me: it would be beneath His greatness, as well as His goodness; I am at His feet, and

""Tis joy enough, my all in all,

At thy dear feet to lie;

Thou wilt not let me lower fall,

And none can higher fly."

God's Cleansing

ARE you, dear reader, trying to make yourself clean, and fit for the presence of God? If so, you will never succeed, though you persevere and devotedly and earnestly to the end of your days: for, "Who can say I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" (Prov. 20:9.) "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." (Job 14:4.) "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" (Jer. 13:23.) And as Job, when under the hand of God, said, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt THOU plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment." (Job 9:30, &c.) And as the Lord Himself says (in Jer. 2:22), "Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me." A sinful man may, therefore, cleanse himself from outward impurities, yet is his cleanness but filthiness, in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity, and who is "the righteous God that trieth the hearts and reins."

But if God cleanse you, that is quite another thing. He cleanses by the blood of His Son, and that cleanses from ALL sin. (1 John 1:7.) The song of the redeemed is, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood." (Rev. 1:5.) Washed in that precious blood, and knowing Christ as their righteousness, they can bear the scrutinizing gaze of the holy, heart-searching God without a quiver, and, as His children, can rejoice and delight in Him as their God and Father.

If you, then, give up all thought of cleansing yourself, and, as a defiled, impure, unholy one, trust in Jesus who shed His blood for the remission of sins, you will be "clean every whit;" not as washed with snow water, nitre, or soap, but modo "whiter than snow," suited for the holy, blessed presence of God Himself. Then you will be enabled, through grace, to express the joy of your heart in some such language as the following: ■

"The Lord of Life in death hath lain,
To clear me from all charge of sin;
And, Lord, from guilt of crimson stain
Thy precious blood hath made me clean.
"And now a righteousness divine
Is all my glory, all my trust;
Nor will I fear, since that is mine,
While Thou dost live, and God is just."

Christ stood before God, as a sacrifice, on the ground of what I had done; I now stand before God, in Christ, on the ground of what He has done.

The Saviour's Joy

WHAT joy has the Good Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep, in going after, finding, and bringing home to God a poor lost soul! The sheep which He layeth on His shoulders, or carries in His bosom, may have but little joy in what His love is doing for it. Nay, in its folly it may even struggle to get away from its safe and happy place. And even if it has joy, what is it but as that of the shallow brooklet to the deep wellspring of the joy of His heart? His is so great, so overflowing, that He asks and looks for fellowship in His joy. "Rejoice with Me; FOR I have found My sheep which was lost." And all that have one mind with Him in this, His joy "over one sinner that repenteth," cannot but respond to the joy of His heart, and rejoice WITH HIM.

Do we not see in the woman of Samaria a delightful instance of this great and Good Shepherd thus going after, finding, and carrying home, rejoicing, the one sheep that was lost. Truly, she was at the well. But who had drawn her there? Even He that met her there, and revealed Himself to her.

"Lord! 'twas Thy pow'r unseen that drew

The stray one to that place,

In solitude to learn from Thee

The secrets of Thy grace."

And mark! His deep joy and refreshment on that ever memorable occasion, in His expression to His disciples: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work" (John 4:34); and in John 6:39 and 40 verses, we see what this will is.

"And this is the Father's will that 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. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

“Out of the World.”

THE day will break: so soon! sweet dawning!

The shadows gone; alone with Thee,

With Thee, my light, my love! glad morning!

Away, away, ye shadows flee.

Out of the world, out of this sorrow,

With Him, the Prince of Peace and Joy;

Farewell to night, O speed dear morrow,

When praise shall be my sole employ.

The day will break; so soon! Time's fleeting,

My little sorrows quick are o'er,

Each wings me swiftly to the meeting■

The deep, still calm of evermore.

Out of the world, out of this sinning,

Out of this death, out of this grave,

E'en now, my wondering heart beginning,

Triumphs in Him who lives to save.

Lift up thy head, O child of glory!

Shall tribulation tread thee down?

What! heart weep out thy dolesome story?

No, shout, There's victory and crown.

Arise! and, king-like, firmly gazing

On mighty foes, their tumult scorn;

A sight the angel hosts amazing,

A saint depressed that waits the morn.

How shalt thou give of heavenly blessing,

If thou art crush'd 'neath earthly woe?

Upon thy footsteps, set, are pressing
Those who would fain thy riches know.
Poor hearts, whose only hope is dying,
Whose only home this world of grief,
Arise! and from His stores supplying,
Afford them comfort and relief.
Out of this world! the morning hasteth,
Press on, press on, and greet the light.
Ah! he who morning's prospect tasteth
Needeth no longer demons of night.
The day will break; so soon! I know it,
For Thou who art the Light hast said,
The night will soon be past. Oh! show it;
Around us all Thy brightness shed.

Confess Christ

ONE mark given in Scripture of a true Christian is, that he confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus (Rom. 10:9); and one reason the Lord has in keeping us here, is, that we should carry the glad tidings of the already accomplished redemption of Christ to every creature. In former days, God's people went everywhere preaching the word. Now, though all are not evangelists, all are called to confess Christ with the mouth, as well as in life and walk. A Christian is identified with Christ, and is looked at in Scripture as having no other interests than Christ's; knowing Christ not only as his Saviour, but as his resource at all times—his treasure. Oh, how easy it is to speak of Christ and for Christ, when He is really our treasure, when the heart is overflowing with His love! Beloved fellow Christians, may we more earnestly than ever confess Christ, and tell out the riches of the grace of God to those around.

“We all must speak for Jesus,
Where'er our lot may fall,
To brothers, sisters, neighbors,
In cottage and in hall.”

“We all must speak for Jesus,
To show how much we owe
To Him who died to save us
From death and endless woe.”

Yes, it is the Lord's command that the gospel be carried to “every creature.” So the apostles under. stood it, and therefore we are told afterwards that they “went forth, and preached the word everywhere.” Be assured, that if we are living upon Christ, we shall carry about with us “rivers of living water.” Think of these words, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth in me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:37, 38.)

“Broadcast thy seed!
Although some portion may be found.
To fall on uncongenial ground,
Where sand, or shard, or stone may stay
Its coming into light of day;
Or when it comes, some pestilent air

May make it droop and wither there■

Be not discouraged; some will find

Congenial soil, and gentle wind,

Refreshing dew and ripening shower,

To bring it into beauteous flower,

From flower to fruit, to glad thine eyes,

And fill thy soul with sweet surprise.

Do good, and God will bless thy deed■

Broadcast thy seed!"

On the Application of the Names and Titles of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

No. 2

“SON OF GOD” is a name which involves considerations of greatest interest. In the gospels it is the very highest title in the honor put upon Jesus—1st on the part of His Father by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Him, with the words, “Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22); 2ndly, in the awe-struck homage of devils “and unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God” (Mark 3:11); and, 3rdly, in the confession of this name twice by man (John 1:49; Matt. 16:16), which in either case was followed by remarkable promises. In fact, it is the title, the Rock, upon which the Church is founded.

In the gospel of John it is written, “The hour is coming and now is, when the dead [in trespasses and sins] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” (John 5:25.) It is in this name accordingly, as raised on high, that He is still presented as Saviour. (Compare Rom. 1:4.) In what sense the confessions of Nathanael (John 1:49) and of Peter (Matt 16:16) were made, that is whether they conceived of His Sonship as by birth of the Holy Ghost only, and whether those statements in Rom 1:4, Acts 13:33, mean a Sonship by resurrection only, or whether His eternal Sonship and pre-existence is supposed (John 17:5), is a matter of refined interest and enquiry.

It is remarkable that in the Acts Paul (not Peter) is the first (Acts 11:20) who preaches in the synagogue “that Christ” (more properly, as in all the best copies, “Jesus”) “is the Son of God” (comp. 2 Cor. 1:19), no doubt in the sense of His eternal Sonship and Godhead. In general, we shall find that as one of God He is the present exalted Saviour—that is, for man’s salvation He is the Son of God. As Judge, He is and will be Son of man.

“Son of David” has its interesting points of view. It is the name which faith, whether in a Syrophenician woman or in a needy Jew, one of the remnant owned as belonging to Jesus of Nazareth, used. It is principally for invoking miracles of mercy. (Comp. Isa. 41:17-20.) The Jewish gospel (Matthew) has it more than Mark and Luke; in John it is not found at all, as in that gospel He does not appear in the way of fulfillment of Jewish promise, but in a free act of love to the world. I would suggest whether the Davidic Psalms, such as 113:3— “Who healeth all thy diseases,” is not to be in our mind. The name “Lord” always accompanies this invocation to the “Son of David.” Christ Himself sets forth the title against the Pharisees when indignant at their horrible pride and contempt of His person. (Mark 12:35-37.)

“The Lamb” is a sacrificial name. It is a title which usually appears in connection with the Jew, and recalls our minds to the book of Leviticus and the Jewish sacrifices. Peter has the name in his writings, but not Paul, as the latter was the minister of God to the Gentiles; and it is the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus as the Son of God which he announces, and our union with Him on high. The Lamb has usually to do with the earth, and the putting away of sin by blood. It occupies a great place in the book of Revelation, where, in the opening of the book (chap. 5) the Lamb is seen taking His earthly inheritance; and at the close (chap. 21) we see the Bride given Him with that inheritance.

“Lord” is that title which asserts the rights of Christ to dominion over us. We are His servants by virtue of His having redeemed us. It is not only that we boast of His salvation, but our wills are to be made subject to His. Every created intelligence shall eventually bow the knee to Him. It will be Jesus as Lord. (Phil. 2:10.) “He is Lord of all.” (Acts 10:36.) Sometimes the title is given to Him as the Jehovah of the Old Testament, especially when He is working the miracles predicted of Him in the Psalms. (Comp. Matt. 8:2, 6-9, 24, 26, with Psalm 89:9, 107:23-31.) In this way there is affinity between Lord and Son of David, only that in the latter it is more faith’s appeal to a positive title, to which perforce He answers. The constant reverential use of the name by the apostle Paul, as having Him constantly before his eye, is of particular instruction for us. In all his trials it was this name, or rather He who bears it, which supported and strengthened him. Comp. 2 Tim. 4:16-18:

“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me.... Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me... And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work,” &c. The expression “in the Lord” (ἐν Κυρίῳ) peculiar to Paul.

If we look through a few verses in Eph. 1, we shall find examples of how some of these names are used.

Verse 1. “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ.” Notice here that “Jesus” precedes “Christ,” because we have the individual character and person to think of as raised from the dead who sends Paul. This Jesus is also Christ. But in the latter clause of the verse the address is to the faithful “in Christ Jesus.” Their corporate character, by union with Christ, is thus kept in view; for it is by the unction from Christ risen that they are formed into an assembly.

In verse 2 he prefaces “Jesus Christ” by “Lord,” as witnessing to the individuality, and at the same time to the equality, which exists between Him and the Father as the impartor of grace and peace. He is exalted to the throne as “Lord.” Compare 1 Cor. 8:6: “To us there is but one God, the Father... and one Lord Jesus Christ,” &c.

In verse 3, God is God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is still the entire individual title—the Lordship of the One raised from the dead; but in the latter clause there is the simple name “Christ,” as marking again our corporate blessing as blessed by union with Christ.

In verse 5 we have “Jesus Christ” alone. He is the mean, or procuring cause, by which God brought about His purpose of making us sons.

Verse 10. Again the single word “Christ,” or “the Christ.” The Headship which we possess. He being our Head now for all corporate blessing, will eventuate in a heading up of all things in creation in Him.

Verse 12, “Who first trusted in Christ,” “pre-trusters in Christ,” applicable either to the whole body of believers now, as distinct from the Jews hereafter, or to the Jewish remnant who believed, we, the Gentiles, were added to them. In either case it is corporate blessing.

Verse 15. “Faith in the Lord Jesus” is faith in an individual, and therefore “Christ” is omitted.

Verse 17. “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory.” Paul asks for wisdom for the saints, that they may acknowledge fully the One whom the Father of glory has first raised from the dead and given glory to.

Verse 20. "Which He wrought in (the) Christ." Here the name of Christ is alone, as it would seem, because the same power which was put forth in raising Him is still kept in energy towards His members. (Compare particularly Rom. 8:11.)

In this imperfect inquiry into the names of our Lord, we see unfolded a little of the fullness of Him whose excellence is known only to the Father. (Luke 10:22.) Now, by the teaching of the Spirit, may we daily grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, waiting till we see Him as He is, when, like the queen of Sheba, we shall exclaim, The half had not been told us! May the gracious Lord give us the spirit of adoring worship in looking into His perfections and attributes.

Chap. 8:1-12

DANIEL 2:7 to the end of chapter 7 is written in the Chaldean language, and the rest of the book in Hebrew; for God in His infinite had so ordered it, that the Gentiles might have a testimony in their own tongue of what immediately concerned them.

Chapter 8 describes a power, or more properly a person at the head of a power, who acts in the east, and who will be destroyed because he exalts himself against Christ, after having violently deceived and oppressed the Jewish people. The previous chapter speaks of one who acts in the west, though Israel is ultimately the object of his attack, and Jerusalem the place of his destruction (Zech. 12:2-4), and who is destroyed because of his open rebellion against God. (See Rev. 13 and 19.) But the country in which these two powers are destroyed and their origin is totally different, indeed, the peculiar phases their rebellion takes differ in many important points. The beast of chapter 7 “speaks great words against the Most High,” while the power in chapter 8 stands up against the Prince of princes. (v. 25.) In the former case it is the name by which God is known as possessor of heaven and earth, what He will be then claiming from man as His right and title, and which they will then be refusing to own, ■acknowledging Him as the God of heaven (Rev. 11:13) while claiming the earth for themselves (v. 4 of the same chapter shows us God as beginning to assume His right to it). In the latter case it is a title of Christ that has reference more especially to Israel, and the place they then occupy before God in the world, both for government and worship. (Duet. 32:8.) There is reference made here to “the sanctuary,” “the holy people,” “the daily sacrifice,” and other particulars perfectly unintelligible to a Gentile, having no reference to them, and which are not found in chapter 7.

The vision here, though seen during the existence of the first Gentile monarchy, is placed further east, not at the capital Babylon, but in the province Elam (or Persia), by the river Ulai; hence a symbol belonging to that country is used, viz., a ram instead of the bear of chap. 7:5, and with two horns to represent the component parts of the kingdom, Media and Persia (v. 20); the former, though the younger of the two, finally becoming the greater, has the first place. The scene is thus more to the east than in chapter 7, and the ram pushes westward, northward, and southward, becoming great and overcoming all, when another power arises and from the west; all of these points, if noted, will help to clear up the difficulty to some of an apparent similarity between chapters 7 and 8.

Verse 5 is an inroad from the west, at first sight apparently improbable, as it was from the east that the human race sprang. This power is of vast strength, and moves with exceeding rapidity, led on by some great person; verses 6 and 7 describe an assault by this power under the symbol of a goat coming from the west with a notable horn between his eyes, which is clearly descriptive of Alexander the Great, he being the first king of all Greece, and the only one who as such so totally defeated the Medes and Persians as to answer the description here given, inasmuch as on his death, which happened when at the summit of his power, the kingdoms he had conquered were divided among his four generals, as here described■ “Therefore the he goat waxed very great;

and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven." (v. 8.) Greece on the west, Egypt on the south, Persia on the east, and Asia Minor on the north, becoming each a separate kingdom. Out of one of them a little horn arises, from which it is not said but as he waxed exceeding great toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the "pleasant land" (see Deut. 11:12; 1 Kings 9:3), it may reasonably be concluded that he came from the north; for in scripture the "pleasant land," or "Canaan," is always considered as God's center. (See Deut. 32:8; Psa. 132:13, 14.)

We now get a partial history of this little horn; how he acts towards Israel, which the interpretation tells us (v. 19) is brought in to show what will happen to them in the closing scenes of the dispensation the last end of "the indignation." (See Isa. 10:25.) In the same manner Antiochus Epiphanes is brought in, in chapter 11, as type of a power that will exist in the latter days; for though the one spoken of may be an immediate successor of Alexander, the Brand object of the Spirit is to bring out what will happen "at the time of the end." It is in consequence, therefore, of the territories he occupies that Scripture speaks of him as "the king of the north." (chap. 11:40.)

Verse 10 describes the conduct of this power (whose origin we have seen) towards the leaders of the nation, who are called the host of heaven; this marks a position, not a moral state. They are so called because of being God's people, though not yet publicly owned by Him, yet they are the ones through whom and by whom He will yet exercise His power and authority, when it shall be "the days of heaven upon the earth;" hence the expression, "host of heaven and stars" as a figure of the leaders and their subordinates among the Jewish people; for it is their whole policy that this little horn overturns. From v. 11 to the word "transgression" in the middle of v. 12 must be read as a parenthesis; they are mentioned here in connection with the Jewish system and its overthrow, in order to describe the complete destruction for a time of the worship of God at Jerusalem, and of an insult offered to Christ Himself, who is "the Prince of the host," to whom the daily sacrifice belongs, and from whom it is taken away. The margin gives a more correct reading "yea, he magnified even against the Prince of the host, and from Him (that is the Prince of the host) the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down." This verse and the part of 12 are brought in as the Spirit is occupied with what concerns Israel, accordingly a summary is given of what will befall that nation; viz., the destruction of their worship and defilement of their sanctuary; not merely what the one who is the antitype of this little horn will do, but all the worst evils with which Israel will be afflicted. No doubt Antiochus Epiphanes, who is here described, actually did all this, but in the interpretation (v. 19), which especially refers to what the antitype of this little horn will do in the latter days, not a word is mentioned of this parenthesis from v. 11 to middle of v. 12, where again the connection with v. 10 is resumed; no longer he as in v. 11 but "it cast down," &c., the same power as mentioned in v. 10; thus continuing the direct history which for a time had been dropped, in order that the Spirit of God might sum up the various evils with which Israel will be afflicted; for, as another writer has said elsewhere, "God attaches far more importance to what happens to His poor and distressed people, their priests and rulers who govern them, than to all the mighty events which will at that time be going on in the world," whereby Satan will be seeking to blind men's eyes, and deceive and hurry them on to destruction.

Scripture Queries and Answers.

WILL you kindly tell me of whom the apostle is speaking, in the latter part of the seventh chapter of Romans? ■E.K.

In order to understand the seventh chapter of Romans, especially the latter part of it, we should remember that it is an argumentative epistle, and therefore we must bear in mind what has gone before. The great point brought out in the third chapter is, that God is righteous (as well as gracious) in the accomplishment of man's salvation; so that God might "be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." The state, therefore, in which man is found as a sinner, is thoroughly gone into. The fifth chapter shows man as under sin and death, in connection with Adam. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The sixth chapter teaches that God's only way of dealing with man, as to what he is in himself, be by death. God has therefore righteously dealt with man by putting the "old man" to death in a substitute■the Lord Jesus Christ; thus crucifying our "old man" in righteous judgment, and making us "free from sin." The seventh chapter looks at man proved by the law to be a transgressor, and therefore condemned by the law, and only getting free by having died to it in Christ. But the latter part of this chapter goes deeper than the demands of law. It rather contemplates the weakness and evil of nature. The person is certainly a quickened soul, delighting "in the law of God after the inward man," but has not got free from self. In thus looking at self, he is not on the ground of faith, but so wholly occupied with self, as not to be able to look away from self to God. He therefore concludes two things about himself; first, the weakness of nature, "how to perform that which is good I find not," and secondly the wickedness of nature, "when I would do good, evil is present with me." The more, therefore, he contemplates self in the light of God's presence, the more miserable he is, and is at length forced to conclude that he requires to be delivered from his whole self. He cries out, "O wretched man that I am! (not who shall deliver me from my sins, but) who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is self, nature, his whole being as in the flesh, that he cries to be delivered from; and, blessed be God, the moment he turns to Him, he finds full deliverance from it all through the accomplished work of Christ. This fills him with praise. He therefore exclaims, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is his wretched self■ "this body of death," not sins only, but the thing that did the sins, he finds himself delivered from by Christ; and while he rejoices that the "old man"■the flesh, with its affections and lusts■has thus been ignored, he afterwards tells us that he is now not under condemnation, but has "life in Christ Jesus," and is entirely free from the law of sin and death. (Rom. 8:1, 2.)

How Can I Approach God?

ON returning home one Lord's day afternoon, I met a young woman, who was evidently in great mental distress. She said, respectfully, yet with deep emotion, "Sir, How can I approach God?"

I replied, "What makes you so anxious about your soul?"

She said, "I have been reading the Bible this afternoon, and feel convinced, in a way I never felt before, that I am a vile, guilty sinner."

"I am glad," said I, "that the Holy Spirit has thus, by the written word, shown you something of your real condition as a sinner against God. You may rest assured that God loves sinners, though He hates sin; for 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Christ died upon the cross that we might live through Him; and, sinful as you feel yourself to be, and are, be assured you can only find access into God's presence through the blood of Jesus, His Son."

A few days after, I met her again in tears, bewailing her hell-deserving condition. She said, "I know that Jesus died for sinners; but I feel that I cannot approach God." In this state she continued some time. It was clear to me, that though she talked about Jesus, yet she did not know who Jesus was. The great mystery of "God manifested in the flesh" had not been revealed to her. I therefore set before her many scriptures which refer to the person of Christ, especially such as show, that though Jesus was made of a woman, yet He came out from God, was sent by the Father, and was God and man in one person. That Jesus was the express image of the invisible God, though He was found in fashion as a man. That because Jesus was man, He was a fit substitute for sinners, and able to bear our sins, and to be made a curse for us; and because Jesus was God, there was infinite virtue in His blood-shedding and death, and infinite power to put away sin forever thereby; and that God, by raising Jesus from the dead, setting Him at His own right hand, and crowning Him with glory and honor, gave a public testimony that He accepted His finished work on behalf of His people. "Hence," I added, "the way of approach to God is through Jesus the Son of God, crucified and risen, who is now at the right hand of God; and He gives this most gracious assurance, that He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him." I then prayed that she might be enabled, by the Holy Ghost, to come to God by Christ. Her whole soul seemed to cry out,

"Give me Christ, or else I die; None but Christ can satisfy!"

When I saw her again, all tears were gone, and a peaceful smile had displaced the gloom from her countenance. She said, "I am happy now, sir!" "What makes you happy?" said I. "Oh, sir, a few mornings ago, after prayer, the words, 'Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more,' brought sweet comfort to my soul; it seemed as if God spoke them to my heart." "Can you really approach God?" said I. "Oh yes, sir, I approach God now without fear, through the blood of Jesus, His Son, who is at His right hand; and my desire is to live for His glory."

This is the substance of my conversation with this young woman, and it is related because it may meet the need of some others similarly exercised, who, knowing something of God's holiness and their own sinfulness, are saying, "How can I approach God?" It is to be feared that many never consider whether they approach God or not, who might truly say,

"I often say my prayers;

But do I ever pray?

Dear reader! Do you feel, that, sinful as you are, rebellious as you have been, and full of indwelling corruption as God declares you to be, still that you can peacefully approach God? If so, well you know that it is only through the cross of Christ; for "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin;" and Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Not to receive, therefore, this only salvation, this only way, this only fountain opened for sin, is to expose your soul to the everlasting wrath of God, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Rom. 3:21-26

Oh! how can God, who's holy,
Unto Himself be true;
Yet save the sinner wholly,
When judgment is His due?
He fully knows each creature,
Discerns his inmost thought;
Sees sins ill-favored feature
In all that man has wrought.
His Word of Truth engages
That sin must reap its fruit;
And naught but death, its wages,
His holiness will suit.
'Tis bitter in the tasting,
When man resigns his breath;
But anguish everlasting
In judgment's second death.
Alas! this theme of sadness
Might make the hardest weep;
But, oh! there's one of gladness,
Of joy, divine and deep:
'Tis fullness of redemption,
And righteousness complete,
From judgment, free exemption,
In Christ, the mercy-seat.
For God, of His good pleasure,
Hath sent His only Son,

His bosom's choicest treasure,
And He His will hath done.
For us, unjust, unholy,
He died on Calv'ry's tree,
Endured sin's judgment fully,
To set the sinner free.
This One, so great and glorious,
Who came in love to die,
O'er sin and death victorious,
Is glorified on high:—
Now, there's no condemnation
To those in Christ who trust;
And in this great salvation,
The God of grace is just.

What Is Man?

WEARY of his life, and in the bitterness of his soul, Job complains to God, "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment? How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle?" (Chapter 7)

We turn to the 144th Psalm, where, in a very different spirit, David inquires, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away." There are circumstances—such as a dying bed—which hide pride from man, bring him low, make him to feel his nothingness.

The solemn day will come, dear reader, when you will learn that you are a rebellious, guilty creature in the presence of God. You must feel one day that you are a sinner, even should it be no sooner than before the awful throne of judgment; and it may be you will soon be called to lie upon the sick bed, to bid farewell to your amusements, your riches, your honors, your companions. Sinking down lower and lower, growing weaker and weaker, you will close your eyes to all the world, and die.

In such an hour, what would you give to be able, in happy confidence, in quietness and assurance, to address the everlasting One thus— "Lord, what am I, a poor hell-deserving sinner, a poor frail creature, that thou shouldest take account of me, that thou shouldest love me, give thy beloved holy Son to die for me! What am I that thou shouldest comfort my heart, hold me up in thine arms, and lead me gently through these cold waters, as thou bringest me to thine everlasting home in glory?"

Again, for a third time, the same inquiry is made in Scripture, and now we learn fully the meaning of the question. May we bow before God, and worship and adore, for the love wherewith He loves us, for the grace He has brought to us, and for the glory He will give us who believe. "One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the Son of man, that thou visitest Him? Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst Him with glory and honor, and didst set Him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet." The eternal Son of God laid aside His heavenly dignities, humbled Himself, and became a man. For a little season He was lower than the angels, but His path of service led Him deeper down still. He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He, the Maker of all, was nailed, in company with ignoble malefactors, to the accursed tree. Thus hath God visited man in the person of His Son. Thus hath He been mindful of man's sinful estate and dust. Let us thankfully exclaim, "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Now the eye of faith sees the man Christ Jesus in the heavens the center of its praise, the object of its delights. A man, glorified and honored, sits upon the very throne of God. This wondrous mystery is God's own thought of blessing for poor, wretched, sinful man; and those who have Christ for their Saviour shall be glorified with Him. "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Will you not take courage, trembling sinner? In mercy God watches you from morn till night; in mercy He will not so much as allow you to draw one breath without His knowledge; nor does He pursue your steps to find fault, but to pardon and to heal. Bow down before Him, and cry, "What am I, that God should make account of me?" and if, with broken heart for sin, you believe on His Son, then in due season you, with Jesus, shall be crowned with glory and honor. He will bring you, a vile sinner, a guilty creature, in His own beauty, in His own righteousness, to the highest heavens. Should you gather up your feet upon your bed, and die, and your frail body be laid in the grave, the Lord will awake you from your sleep, and give you a resurrection body, all glorious and shining like His own. Or should you live until He comes in the clouds for His blood-washed people, He will change your vile body, and make it like unto His glorious body. God has purposed that man, who dieth and wasteth away, man, his rebellious offspring, shall be the most glorious of His creatures; that in man, blessed in Christ, His own great Self shall be read and understood. Once more let us join in grateful praise, saying, "Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him?"

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GOD, came down, in the Person of Christ the Son, to dwell in the midst of men, and to declare the Father. He became the servant of their necessities, and the bearer of their griefs and sorrows. Yea, more than this, for He manifested His love to needy man by an unwearied life, spent in going about “doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.”

Christ came to lift up man, morally, out of the state of mind and heart to which a fallen nature had reduced him; so that those who heard Him bore witness, that “never man spake like this man.” In all this God was with Him, so that Jesus could say, “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.” Miracles thus accompanied His teaching and His doctrines, that any who were astonished at His words might be encouraged to believe them, by the works which accredited them and Him.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son and upon subjects which were in this way brought down to the comprehension of a guilty conscience (as with the woman of Samaria, in John 4); or else meeting the lack of intelligence, so often displayed by His disciples, as in John 14.

Beyond all this, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;” so that, finally, the Lord Jesus, as the Lamb of God, the taker away “of the sin of the world;” stood in the guilty sinner’s place on the cross, and put away sin forever, by the sacrifice of Himself.

God has now brought in the gospel of His grace, and the gospel of Christ's glory, too, founded on what Jesus did on the cross, and on what God wrought, in raising Him up from among the dead. And this Christ is now preached as His power unto salvation, to every one that believeth. "God sets forth Christ, to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins.... that God might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

The gospel of the glory makes known the fact that man, in the person of the risen Lord, is now in the heavens, sitting at the right hand of God. Man is thus seen in an entirely new position with God, and is there not only in righteous title for Himself, but, having in grace suffered, bled, and died, to bring us there, is become our representative and forerunner; till He comes forth a second time, to meet us in the air, and present us before the presence of God faultless, and with exceeding joy.

As regards ourselves, we are made “the righteousness of God in Him,” as truly as Christ was once made sin for us; and being quickened by the Holy Ghost, and made new creatures in Christ, what remains, but that God should take possession of us, and assert His new title, and dwell in us? “What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

God has us for Himself; not to judge us about our sins■how can He? for Christ is at His right hand■but, as having redeemed, to bless us; and, as indwelt by His Spirit, to change us into the image of the heavenly man: or else, “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of “is Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

Besides this, we are brought into relationship with God, through the Son of His love, and taught to “behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. And though it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when Christ shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

There is yet another order of relationship in which we are set, besides those of which we have been speaking; and which may be called our collective and corporate one with Christ in heaven. The Holy Ghost came down at Pentecost to gather the individual members of Christ together in one, to baptize them “by one Spirit into one body.” Moreover, “we have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

God has thus formed a unity between those who are joined to the Lord (and are consequently one Spirit with Him), and Christ in the heavens; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, and Head of His body, the Church. There is also “a habitation of God, through the Spirit, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.”

Believers are thus members one of another; and also members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones, and the Lord nourishes and cherishes them. Further, as the ascended and glorified Head, “He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

The Holy Ghost is thus on the earth, gathering out of the world the Church of the living God; and forming the Body of Christ—the Bride, the Lamb's wife—as a witness to the absent Lord and Head, and for a testimony, to those who have rejected Him, of the present grace that is open to them.

The Lord Jesus Christ is not only the foundation which God has laid for all our confidence and hope, but also the Head and Source of life, joy, and peace, to those who are the purchase of His blood. Moreover, He is the center of every purpose and counsel of God, round whom will be gathered all things in heaven and earth, in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

Finally, the Son of man, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will come a second time, to bring in the glory in which all is to be displayed that stands before God, in the fide of redemption by the precious blood of Christ. It is His prerogative to lead all the families in heaven and in earth into their respective places, and to put all into relationship with God, even the Father.

Christ must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet; and when He shall have put down all rule, authority, and power, "He will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all."

What a beginning, and what an end! What a consummation for Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last! Christ will expel Satan and evil out of the creation of God, and fill the heavens and the earth with righteousness and praise. Christ has redeemed a new race of creatures to God by His blood, that by resurrection into His own life, and righteousness, and image He may see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied.

Another purpose, dear to Him and to us, was expressed in His own prayer: "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."

Another great result had reference to the future dwelling-place of God: "I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."

An Extract

“OF a truth,” said a dying Fijian, “God is with me. Great is my pain, but this pain of mine is not worthy to be compared with the good things which the Lord will give me on the right hand of His lordly throne. Near now is the time of my going.” But he breathed gently. Then he opened his eyes, and, lifting up his hand, said, “Weep not! weep not! Why are you weeping?”

“We are weeping,” said one, “because of your death.”

“Weep not for me,” he said, “weep for yourselves. As for me, I live. The Lord and His angels are hastening to take me with them. Yet once more will I speak. Be earnest in religion. While I was in health I believed that which is told us in the Bible, and thence came to me pardon for all my sin. I read of heaven in the Bible, and believed it; and now today shall I look with mine eyes upon the things that I believed, though I saw them not—those things that Paul speaks of, wherein he tells of heaven and my Saviour. Now I am going to possess them all. Do you not see the Lord? Look! This house is full of angels. My Saviour is hastening me away. Farewell. Great is my love to you.”

How Another Fijian Convert Died

An Extract.

“THERE was one man,” said Joeli Balu, “whom I loved greatly, and I was with him when he died. Often during his illness did I visit him. We read the Holy Book together, and prayed together. On the day of his death I said to him, ‘Nathaniel, tell me once again, for my own sake, and for the sake of these others, ■tell us, Nathaniel, whether you now trust in our Saviour, and whether He comforts you.’” Then he smiled, and his face shone as he said, “Joeli, do you see that post?” pointing to one of the supports of the house.

“Yes,” said I, “I see it.”

“Do you see it plainly?” he asked again.

I answered, “I see it quite plainly,” wondering that he should question, and fearing that his mind was wandering. But then he looked at me earnestly, and said■

“Joeli, as plainly as you see that post, so plainly do I now see the Lord.”

He appeared to be realizing one of those visions of the glorious Redeemer, such as dying spirits are so frequently favored with. We were dumb. Our hearts were hot within us. He gently patted his breast for a time, and then lifted up his arm, pointing upwards, and smiling. We looked up, but could see nothing. When we looked down upon his face again, we saw that he was dead. But we could feel no sorrow for him. The house was like heaven to us. So we rejoiced, and praised the Lord.

That convert knew, by personal experience, what it was to have “Christ in him, the him, the hope of glory.” He could say, “For me to live is Christ, to die is gain.”

Short Notes on Daniel.

Chap. 8:13-27

Verses 13 and 14 continue the history. As to the dates found here, there is not a word about them in the interpretation, and there it is that we find a description of what the antitype of this power will do in the latter days. These dates consequently have been fulfilled, and will not be repeated at the close; very different is the case in chap. 12, as we shall hereafter see. These verses simply continue the history of Antiochus, and show how at all times God interests Himself in His people whom He has chosen for the earth, and formed for Himself (Isa. 43:21), with a love that never can be quenched, and is only waiting the time of His long-suffering patience with the Gentiles to close, in order to display itself in a way infinitely beyond anything that they as yet have known.

The interpretation begins at v. 19 and is very important, as it gives us what will happen at the last end of the indignation, when Israel are again back in their land, subject to the attacks of violent and bitter enemies, and not yet restored to blessing. As a rule, the explanation of a vision in Scripture refers not merely to what has preceded, but to some future event of which the subject interpreted was in a measure typical. The distinction between the horn of this and of the previous chapter is very distinctly marked the latter arises (ch. 7:24) from out of the ten divisions that the fourth or Roman Empire is divided into, while the former comes from one of the four kingdoms of the third or Grecian Empire ■ “in the latter time of their kingdom when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.” (v. 23.) Greece, Persia, Egypt, now exist as kingdoms; it only remains for the fourth kingdom, over which Antiochus ruled, to be reformed, from out of which the king here spoken of is to arise. Thus the most casual observer cannot but see that this chapter speaks of an entirely different power from the previous one, inasmuch as the same power could not spring out of two different places at once; and here we are dealing with the east ■ “Syria;” there we were occupied with the west, and the ten kingdoms composing the Roman empire united under one head. Moreover the character of the power in chap. 8 is stipendiary he acts “not by his own power” (v. 24). The very opposite is the case with the “little horn” of chap. 7, and the king of chap. 11:36, with whom this power is often confounded in consequence of his dealings with Israel; for though he is indeed connected with them, it is not in the same way, as a careful comparison of verses 24 and 25 with chapter 11:36, 39, will at once show. The power in this chapter is the same as the Assyrian of the prophet Isaiah portrayed especially by Sennacherib. Finally, he stands up against Christ, and is broken without hand; that is, by divine power without man’s intervention. His ultimate end will be seen more in detail in Ezek. 38 and 39, where he is found in his last form. When Israel is first brought back into the land, it is merely the power occupying the former territory of Antiochus Epiphanes that is called the king of the north; as such he oppresses Israel; ultimately, however, there is a grand confederation of the various kingdoms that lie outside of the great Western Empire; these come up against Israel, as Sennacherib did of old, hoping to find them fall an easy prey, the Roman empire, with the little horn of chap. 7 and the king of chap. 11 at its head, the beast and false prophet respectively of Rev. 13 having then been judged according to the close of Rev. 19 For a while these powers, Gog and Magog, have it all their own way; there are none to oppose them, till the

Lord Himself intervene, smiting them by His divine power upon all the mountains of Israel, "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth."

Faith and Hope

THE Lord is our object, as surely as He is our refuge. He awakens hope when He establishes the soul by faith. It could not be otherwise. If Adam had the presence of God, he had also the garden of Eden; and so the saved sinner has a portion, or inheritance. Indeed, salvation, in the larger sense of it, embraces both; it bespeaks a purged conscience, and also the hope of a kingdom.

These are necessarily linked together, and by their union and combination we get, in the course of scripture, some beautiful witnesses.

Melchisedec was such a witness in patriarchal days. He was a priest dispensing righteousness and peace, providing like a priest for the need of the conscience. But he had also bread and wine—the refreshment of the kingdom for the heirs of promise, after their toil of battle.

Aaron under the law, in the day of his consecration, was another like witness, as we see in Lev. 8:9. For he and Moses came down as from above to bless the people, as he had done before, and all alone, blessed them on the ground of the sacrifice. The glory appears, as well as the fire on that great occasion, the pledge of the kingdom as well as the acceptance of the sacrifice. And in the same Mosaic age, I may say, the constant link of Joshua with Moses is an expression of the same combination. With this thought, let me ask you to read the Epistle to the Hebrews, you will there find this combination strikingly maintained throughout; all the presentations of Christ or of our calling which you get there, and all the exhortations which you listen to there embrace the two, our object as well as our refuge—all find hope as well as faith. At the very outset Christ is thus presented. He is declared “heir of all things,” as well as the One who has “purged our sins,” and all the Old Testament scriptures quoted in chapter 2 will be found to have respect to the coming kingdom. So in chapter 2 it is the Lord of Psa. 8 that is presented to us; and the Lord of that Psalm is as much the one who is to be the Head of the world to come, as He has already been humbled for our sins. Again in chapters 5-7. He is presented to us as Priest, but He is Melchisedec, and, as we know, the priesthood of Melchisedec reaches out to the day of glory, when the warfare and toil are over; and not only so, He is declared to have gone within the veil as a Forerunner as well as a High Priest, and such a title intimates that the glory is within the veil as well as a sanctuary. So when He is presented as a victim, the sufficiency of His sacrifice is declared, but together with that, His appearing the second time bringing salvation or the kingdom with Him: the accomplishment of the purpose of His first appearing is the sure pledge of His second. (chap. 9:28.)

And then again, presented in the heavens as having sat down in the perfection of His work for sinners, He is declared to be sitting there in expectation of His coming day of power. (chap. 10:13.) Our calling is displayed to us as Christ is thus presented; we see this in chap. 12:22-24. But that gives us a view of glory as well as of blood; we see the top of the mystic hill as well as the foot of it. The blood of sprinkling at the bottom sustains the whole, but there is no stopping short of the cap and the church of the Firstborn, and the angels, &c., or the whole system of coming glory. So in chap. 13:9-15, the city is shown to us as what we are called to as well as the altar and as I said, if we are exhorted as well as taught in this epistle, we still get encouragement for hope as

well as for faith. Thus in chapter 3 we are told to hold fast the beginning of our confidence and rejoicing of hope firm unto the end. So in chapter 10 we are exhorted to have “full assurance of faith,” but also to “hold fast the profession of our hope without wavering.”

And thus the voice that is heard in the epistle is a witness to hope as well as to faith: it tells of glory as well as of blood. It is the voice of the Son from heaven■of Him who is hear of all things and expectant of a kingdom, as He the is purger of our sins. And when the apostle defines faith, he links with it hope (11:1), in every way sustaining the combination.

The Law

THE law was a perfect rule man in the flesh: it condemns the very things that flesh produces. The Christian has died to the law, and is not in the flesh. Rom. 6 enjoins us to disallow the flesh, because it is dead. "Let not sin reign," &c. The gospel of the glory (glorious gospel) is now revealed, and everything is judged that will not stand in God's presence. The law is very good, if you use it as a spear to run through a man's conscience.

Have You Peace With God?

You will say, dear reader, this is a bold and searching question. So it is. But the importance of the subject demands it; and it is time to speak plainly and faithfully, for many souls are being deceived on this momentous subject.

The Son of God when on earth was personal and pointed in His ministry. He went straight to the heart and conscience of His hearers; and none ever so understood the real value of souls, or the perfectness of God's love. To one He said, "Ye must be born again;" to another, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Again, we hear Him say, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" and on another occasion, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Thus we see the Lord's true faithfulness both on private and public occasions, and should not we, who profess to follow Him, be faithful too?

In the present day the demand is urgent that our dealings with immortal souls should be close, earnest, and affectionate. We are in danger of trafficking in mere doctrine, and of allowing its purity to be an excuse for coldness, deadness, and formality. We are to present God's love to lost souls with the fervor and point that its eternal importance demands. We are to beware of lukewarmness, for Christ is rejected, and souls are perishing. It is high time to be aroused, for the coming of our Lord draweth nigh. Our opportunities of thus spreading the savor of His precious name will soon be over, and it is, alas! too evident that worldliness and indifference to the claims of Christ are sapping the energies of the church of God, while Satan is artfully spreading His soul-deceiving nets.

The fact is, that multitudes are going quietly and respectably to hell, and it is to be feared that many of them think themselves very religious. Blinded by the traditions of their fathers, and diligent in the use of ordinances, they bolster up their false hopes by doing, as they say, their duty, and thus enter the jaws of death in utter ignorance of the present reality of forgiveness of sins, and peace with God. Many too, having been systematically trained in the false idea that none can be sure of salvation till they die, have hazarded the settlement of the vital question till a dying hour, when it may be the pain and oppression of a mortal sickness will so overcome them, that they will be unable to fix the mind on anything.

Again. There are not a few who endeavor to evade the personal bearing of the question, "Have you peace with God?" by such indefinite replies as, "It is to be hoped that we are all trusting in the Saviour;" or, "We must not judge;" or, "It is quite true there is no way of salvation but by Christ, of course we all know that," and such like; which show that whatever be their knowledge of the letter of Scripture, they have never closed with the Son of God as their Saviour, or known the peace-speaking power of His precious blood.

Nor can we doubt that there are many true anxious souls who are longing for "peace with God," and have it not, because they are looking for feelings, or experience, or something else within,

instead of simply and only to the already accomplished work of Jesus, and the infallible Word of God.

We cannot, then, be too plain, or too personal and pointed, in dealing with souls in reference to this momentous and most blessed subject of present peace with God. Well might the dear Saviour of sinners, who fully knew the depths of the riches of Divine mercy, and the eternal agonies of a lost soul, exclaim, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And now, dear reader, let me lovingly and earnestly bring before you again the searching, pointed question, "Have you peace with God?" You may, perhaps, reply, That you are as happy as most people, and as quiet in mind as your neighbors; but this does not answer the question, "Have you peace with God?" You may be ranked among the most useful and religious of your district, you may be most kind, amiable, and virtuous, you may be most regular and devout in outward religiousness, and still the momentous question be unanswered, "Have you peace with God?" Observe, my dear reader, that the question is not as to how you stand with your fellow-man, but with God. It is not about your quietness of mind, or peace in circumstances, but "peace with God." Oh, beware of a false peace!

Scripture speaks of "peace with God" as a present blessing, known by those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a wondrous blessing now enjoyed not by feeling or doing, but by believing. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5:1.)

Here God tells us that we have, not shall have when we come to die, but we have peace with God, and that, not through frames, feelings, experience, or doings, but "through our Lord Jesus Christ." How simple and how blessed this is! That happy frames and feelings follow this simple faith in God through Jesus His Son I know, and so will communion, service, and testimony, but they do not precede, but accompany or follow this believing.

Those who have peace with God in the light and holiness of His presence, know that every question as to sin, death, hell, and judgment, has been forever settled for them by Jesus. It is a peace which originated in the free mercy of God, is based upon Divine righteousness in the judgment of sin on the cross of Christ, and is made sure by God raising Jesus our Lord from the dead. When clearly apprehended it cannot but give peace with God, because it is connected with an already-accomplished redemption by Christ, which has infinitely glorified God. This present peace, therefore, is not based upon what we feel, or what we have been, or are, or may be, but entirely "through our Lord Jesus Christ" ■through what God has done for us by the death and in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Peace with our holy God,

Peace from the fear of death,

Peace through the Saviour's precious blood,

Sweet peace, the fruit of faith."

Once more then, dear reader, let me inquire, "Have you peace with God?" Ponder it seriously. Look straight to Jesus at God's right hand, who did by Himself, at Calvary, purge our sins. Gaze

upon that blessed One, a Lamb as it had been slain, now in the midst of the throne, and see all your need, as a poor guilty sinner, fully met by Him. Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross, and, as we have seen, peace with God is alone through Him. Thus coming to God through Christ, you will find perfect peace in His holy presence. You will see there is not a question that God himself has not settled for you in Christ, and by His precious blood. Then you will be able to sing■

“Christ died! then I am clean,

Not a cloud above, not a spot within.”

Worship, service and devotedness to Him who so loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, then happily follow.

Luke 4:14-22

THE gospel of Luke, as many are aware, presents the blessed Lord especially as the Son of man, while His divine glory as the Son of God is prominently presented to us in the gospel of John; for in the great “mystery of Godliness,” both are in wondrous union: “God was manifest in the flesh.”

To glance briefly at the introductory chapters of the gospel of Luke, we have, first, the Spirit’s sweetly-detailed account of the birth of Jesus, the Son of God, the promised Seed of the woman; then the blessed statement that “the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him” (chap. 2:40); afterward, when He was twelve years old, of His being about His Father’s business, yet subject to His parents; next, that He “increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Chapter 2:52.) He is, as it were, from that time hidden, till He, “being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased. (Chapter 3:21, 22.) Then, when He “began to be about thirty years of age,” after His temptation in the wilderness■from which He came out, even as He went in, in purity and perfection■the devil departing from Him for a season, having nothing in Him, the narrative of our Evangelist proceeds from the point indicated at the heading of this paper.

The Lord, having “returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee” ■to the distant part of the land, far away from Jerusalem and the temple■ “there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” How blessed to see Him thus engaged! Notwithstanding all the failure and departure of Israel, we here see the faithful Servant of Jehovah■the Son and Sent One of God■walking in the sphere of whatever was of God in Israel. He was therefore found in the synagogue on the sabbath day■the day of the Lord’s appointment for His people Israel. Just as in His earlier years, He naturally went about His Father’s business, so here we find that it was His custom (note the words!) to be where the Word of God was wont to be read. With what authority and example, then, does the exhortation in Heb. 10:24, 25, come to us in these days of the gift of the Spirit, and of the privileges of those composing the assembly of God: “Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” So, being there, “He stood up for to read.” See how He, who is Himself the Word, the sum and substance of the written testimony of God, gives that testimony its honored place. “My tongue shall speak of Thy word.” (Psa. 119.) “And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias.” Was it from this that the portion for the day was appointed to be read in the synagogue? Whether it was or not, it is evident that a mightier Hand than that of the attendant brought it forth for the Lord’s perusal. He then opened the roll, or book, which was given to Him, and found the place, which in our division of the Bible is Isa. 61:1, and read as follows:■ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor;

He hath sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

These are, indeed, precious words, and if we turn to that chapter in Isaiah, we shall see how exactly, and with what divine precision, the Lord divided the word of truth. He did not—as probably we should have done—even complete the sentence; because the next clause brought in “the day of vengeance:” and as grace—grace and truth—was at that moment the blessed and only theme of His holy lips, and the essential character of His mission, He would not dim its brightness by the introduction even of the thought of judgment, which is for another and a future time, but not for this “day of salvation” and “long-suffering of God.” When He had read this sweet testimony of Jehovah, “He closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on Him. And He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” What a scene! No wonder that the eyes of all were fastened on Him, and that “all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth.”

When we—in this day of the resurrection and ascension glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit—meditate on any portion of the Scriptures of old, or on the ways and words of the Lord, “in the days of His flesh,” we have both the privilege and the responsibility of letting the full light of the completed Word of God shine upon them, as revealed to us in the Epistles, especially those of the Apostle Paul. Thus, in looking at this portion before us, the beauty and force of the act and words of our Lord are more vividly brought home to our hearts, by the remembrance that He has now finished” the work which God gave Him to do, having “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26.); that He has “died for the ungodly;” “by Himself purged our sins,” and “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” (Heb. 1:50.) We have thus the knowledge of the divine and eternal basis upon which the God of all grace could show mercy and compassion to such poor, needy, broken-hearted, crushed captives of Satan, as those enumerated in the prophecy which the Lord so blessedly brought forth, and upon which He could so sweetly announce that He had been anointed with the Spirit, and sent of Jehovah, to preach the gospel to such poor and helpless ones.

In this further light of the full revelation of the truth of God we would, then, entreat the reader to meditate on the several parts of “the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth,” as He read them from the prophet, and “began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

O Holy One! th’ anointed of the LORD,
On whom the Spirit lighted like a dove;
Thy Father’s pleasure, witnessed from above;
Who worsted Satan with the Spirit’s sword:
How blest the scene when Thou didst ope the Word,
And read the utt’rance by Isaiah’s mouth,

Whose accents breathe like breezes from the south,
Thyself that Word's fulfillment, heaven's ador'd!
O what a fount of mercy, love, and grace,
Then flowed from Thee, the Sent of Love divine!
What love and pity did in Thee combine
When Thou for us didst take the sinner's place!
And now from Thee what beams of mercy shine,
Without a cloud to darken or deface!

No More Remembrance of Sins

“Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” ■ Heb. 10:17.

WHO are the persons about whom this wonderful statement is made, and written in the Word of eternal truth? Will my reader be at any loss to say of whom it is written, and about whom it is blessedly true? Blessed be God, there are thousands we know to whom these words refer, and about whom they were spoken.

Let us thank the Lord for it, that there is a class of persons now on the earth, engaged in every kind of toil from day to day, who come within the range of this precious word. It is true that sins and iniquities abound on every hand, yea, they not only abound, but their number is rapidly on the increase. Man is waxing worse and worse. Advantages and opportunities for good are numerous; Bibles and societies are increased greatly, and many other efforts are put forth with much vigor, but still the flood of sin is on the rise. On the right hand, on the left hand, almost wherever the eye of man ■ who knows God—turns, sin is rampant.

And how can it be otherwise while man is seeking to be his own saviour. I consider that man, by his vain attempts to better his condition as to the question of sin, is only putting off farther and farther the salvation of his own soul, and not only so, but he is rejecting the Saviour that God Himself has provided.

Man, unconcerned and quiet about his soul, and about eternity, as though he had no soul, is a very common thing. Yea, we see man trifling with his immortal soul as though it was of no value whatever.

What a painful state to be in. Can you, reader, say that such a case is not yours? Can you say that your sins and iniquities will be remembered no more? I am not now asking you about some other person or circumstance, but I am asking you a proper, reasonable, and kindly meant question. Can you say, or do you believe, that God will remember your sins and iniquities no more? I do not press you for an audible reply, or a hasty one, but I do beg you to make a truthful one. It must be either the one or the other. If you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, and are now sheltered by His blood, then I can tell you, on the authority of God's word, that your sins will be remembered no more; because the blood of Christ cleanseth from ALL sin, therefore it can cleanse you. And to know that our sins and iniquities are all gone, washed away by the blood of Christ, is far, far better than a thousand worlds with all their riches and honors.

But, perhaps, my friend, you are not able ■ because it is not true ■ to say that “my sins and iniquities are all gone!” Indeed, then, your case is a deeply solemn one, solemn beyond all computation. If they are NOT gone, they are all, every one, still upon you; and if you keep them upon you, by refusing Christ as your Saviour, then your case will be a very sad one! And let me press this point a little more upon your conscience, not to do you the least unkindness, or to give you one single pain, but that which will be for the soul's good. Sins and iniquities are not to be trifled with; God does no deal with them as though He considered them of small importance. God cannot love sin,

but He can and does love the poor sinner, and He Himself has provided a real Saviour for the sinner; any sinner, the worst of sinners He can save. Tell me, reader, what could be needed more than this to save lost sinners. All power dwells in God!

What I mean by a lost sinner, is a man that is not saved, and such an one, God's word says, is lost. I am well aware that there is another cense in which the word lost may be used, viz., that man who died in his sins without a Saviour is lost, and nothing can save him now; but, blessed be God, this is not the way in which the lost can be applied to you—at least, not yet. These lines tell you of a Saviour, and of a salvation by this Saviour. Certainly the man that has died without a Saviour is lost, and lost forever. Yes, my reader, and let me tell you that his sins and iniquities WILL BE remembered, and he will eternally feel the pangs of rejecting and refusing Christ.

Can your tongue, or that of my tongue describe, what such a soul will have to endure through eternity? That is far, far beyond the power of man to portray.

Let us return for a moment to the state of standing described by the Spirit of God in the words at the head of these lines. And let me assure you that such language applies to many a man you and I see daily; yes, and generally those upon whom the world looks with marked coolness, if nothing more. Well, what a mercy it is that the Lord does not so look upon those who are His. He looks on with deep interest and delight, and says of them, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Is not this a great thing? Yes, great indeed!

What is your hope, Reader?

“Ah, You Get That in Resurrection!”

An Extract.

FOR years I had been a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and had therefore eternal life, because he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life (John 6); yet I did not know it for certain. One day I might feel happy; the next have doubts and fears, as to whether I had ever been the subject of God’s saving grace at all. However, after some years, it was my happy lot to meet with one who was not only a believe in Christ, but who knew what it was to have eternal life. We would often converse on the things of God, and often would be the reply, “Ah! you get that in resurrection.” But what it meant I had not the least idea. I believed, of course, that Christ had been raised from the dead, and, like Martha, that there would be a general resurrection at the last day; but that there was, in the present time, anything for the believer in resurrection, was quite new to me.

By searching the word of God, and by simply bowing to what it said, it was soon discovered to me, that the believer in Christ was, by the mighty power of God, quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to sit together in Him in the heavenly places. (Eph. 2:5, 6.) It was seen that there were two Adams, each the head of a creation. Adam in Eden was the head of the first creation of God, and we are all his children by nature, and partakers of his fallen state. It was seen, too, in the word of God, that Christ, the last Adam, had died and atoned for man’s sins; and that God had also on the cross condemned sin in the flesh, and made an end of it: for our old man was crucified with Him, and that old man is now put off. (Rom. 6:6; Col. 3.) And further, that the last Adam not only died, and was buried, but was raised up again by the power of God, as the head of the new creation. On the cross He made an end of the old, and in His resurrection He is exalted at God’s right hand as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. (Eph. 1) The believer is one with the risen Christ. When this was seen, believed, and by faith apprehended, peace like an even river flowed into my soul, and mercy like a flood. It is now more than ten years since I saw an end of the old Adam creation in the cross of Christ, and that I was one in the risen Christ, the Head of the new creation, and there have been no more doubts, or fears, or misgivings, as to salvation.

Song of the Christian Pilgrim

UP! yes, upward to thy gladness,
Rise, my hart, and soul, and mind!
Cast, O cast away thy sadness,
Rise where thou thy Lord canst find.
He is thy home,
And thy life alone is He;
Hath the world no place for thee,
With Him is room.
On, still onward, mounting higher,
On the wings of faith to Him!
On, still onward, ever higher,
Till the mournful earth grows dim.
God is thy Rock;
Christ thy Champion cannot fail thee,
Howsoever thy foes assail thee,
Fear not their shock.
Firm, yes, firmly, ever cleaving
Unto Christ the strong and true;
All, yes, all, to God still leaving,
For His love is daily new.
Be steadfast here;
Soon thy foes shall be o'erthrown;
Since He wills thy good alone,
Be of good cheer.
Hide thee, in His chamber hide thee,
Christ hath opened now the door,

Tell Him all that doth betide thee,
All thy sorrows there outpour.
He hears thy cry;
Men may hate thee and deceive thee,
But He cannot, will not leave thee,
He still is nigh.
High, oh, high, o'er all things earthy,
Raise thy thoughts, my soul, to heaven;
One alone of thee is worthy,
All thou hast to Thy be given;
Thy Lord He is
Who so truly pleads to have thee,
Who in love hath died to save thee;
Then thou art His.
Up then, upwards! seek thou only
For the things that are above;
Sin thou hatest, earth is lonely,
Rise to Him whom thou dost love.
There thou art blest;
All things here must change and die,
Only with our Lord on high
Is perfect rest.
J. C. SCHADE. 1699.

Peace

“WHAT would I not give to have this peace of which you speak,” said one, calling himself an infidel, to a Christian. “I would give my right arm at once to be able to say, ‘I have peace.’” But, blessed be His name, we have not to give aught to God in order to obtain peace; for He has Himself so loved us, as to give His only begotten Son to die for our sins.

Peace follows faith; “being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Poor guilty sinners that we are, without strength even to think one good thought—much less to perform one good deed; we can never have peace with God save through His blessed Son. See, dear reader, in the following testimony from the lips of a dying youth, what a blessed thing it is to believe God’s word, and what holy peace real faith in God gives.

The dear youth had few of the comforts of life to call his own, and but little sympathy to soothe him in his dying hours. Perhaps his choicest earthly treasure was the few flowers which stood upon the windowsill of his humble room, but the blossoms of the true Hearts-ease were his! Oh! that every dear reader might be as rich as this poor youth! “And how is it, Mike, that you know your sins are pardoned.” “Because,” said he, “I now believe in Jesus; and ‘He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life,’ and Jesus never told a lie.” Happy, happy youth. “Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.”

There is a danger of seeking to obtain peace by wrongful means. We heard yesterday of one who after trying to be good, trying to please God by his religion, got so tired of trying, and became so miserable, that he gave it all up as a hopeless undertaking, and sought afresh the pleasures of the world. This may be your case, dear reader, so we warn you. “I don’t know how it is,” said another, “I can’t get peace. I try hard enough; I go to chapel whenever it is open; I pray almost all night; I read nothing but my Bible, and I am a tetotalter; what more can I do?” “Try Christ,” we say with a rejoicing Christian. Yes, try Him. “O taste and see that the Lord is good.”

Extract from an Address

NOTHING can be more solemn than what Scripture teaches concerning eternal union and eternal separation, in connection with the Lord's coming. This blessed hope is associated with the most uniting idea in Scripture. In this present life we see the Lord's dear children separated, rent asunder, and torn, and often manifesting little interest, little sympathy; seldom, perhaps, giving themselves to prayer for one another. There is now little putting of arms round each other's necks, little embracing of one another, little of the tender-heartedness which characterized the saints of old. But all this will be changed at the Lord's coming. All those who are Christ's—however separated now—will be then drawn together to meet the Lord in the air. Then we shall live as we ought to live, and love as we ought to love. Whatever we do now imperfectly, we shall then do well-pleasing in His sight. However ignorant now, we shall know even as we are known then. We shall be perfectly joined together. How blessed!

But connected with this truth of saints being united, there is also a most alarming certainty of separation, in relation to the coming of the Lord Jesus. Those who are caught up and brought into the sphere of eternal blessing are limited to those who are Christ's. The Scripture is very decisive. It does not include all those who are religious; it does not say those who have been regular in going to church or chapel; no, it does not say any such thing. It says, "they that are Christ's at His coming;" whoever or wherever they may be. Many who may hold high once here, and be considered most religious and devout people, if they be not Christ's, their nakedness will be made manifest, their foul state will be laid bare, every mask will be removed, and it will be made known that he who was not with Christ has been really against Him. It will then be found, perhaps, that there were no such enemies of Christ as mere empty professors. We sometimes feel as if drawing near to the close of working on earth; but of all things our earnest desire is, that God would keep us from making mere professors—sowing tares; for it is most distinctly the work of Satan. I know there are many who think that they ought to make people tares first, and that then they will more easily be turned into wheat. I cannot see that in Scripture; I see that sowing tares is there declared to be the work of the wicked one. What we should desire to live for is, that Christ may be magnified, His saints blessed, and souls brought to the Saviour, that He may be glorified. Therefore, if there be a person here who has not received the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, I beseech him now to bow down to Him, and own Him as his Saviour and his Master.

These are the true marks of a real Christian: —he owns Christ as his Saviour, and also as his Master. "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" is the language of the soul that has received Christ as his Saviour. Therefore, as the time must come when you will be either forever with Christ, or forever banished from His presence, I pray you, listen to this truth. When Jesus comes, as I have said, it will be connected with either eternal union in glory, or eternal separation. In that moment, the wife who believes will be forever taken from the husband who believes not, or the believing husband from the unbelieving wife. I entreat you now, while it is the accepted time and the day of salvation, to solemnly think of these things, in the presence of God. I earnestly beseech you, as poor, lost, guilty, perishing sinners, who can do nothing in the flesh to please God—who have a

nature that is not subject to God, and never can be. I entreat you to come, just as you are, to the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, that blessed, risen Saviour, in the glory, who still says, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." But, oh, if you still reject Him, remember, if He comes tonight, you will be left behind to perish with the wicked. I entreat you, while God is preaching peace by Jesus Christ, that you refuse not that you turn not away from this blessed, sinner-loving Jesus, at God's right hand, who delighteth in mercy, and who is able to save to the uttermost, and who still says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." May God bless you, dear friends, so that you may escape the coming wrath, and not be among that unhappy number who will knock when it is too late; who will believe only after the door is shut; and who will hear the Lord's voice, filling them with unutterable anguish and despair, saying, "Depart from Me:" "I never knew you."

Those of you who are in Christ, who love and honor His dear Name, but who have not hitherto been looking for His coming, may the light of God's revealed truth so shine into your souls, that you may begin from this moment to cry, "Come, Lord Jesus;" because He says, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am there ye may be also."

Repentance

WE may say that repentance is the intelligent judgment we pass, under grace, upon what we have done and are. It is not merely sorrow for sin; for in Acts 2, when the people were pricked in their heart, the apostle called upon them to “repent.” Repentance involves the claims of God. All men everywhere are called on to repent, because they have not acted up to God’s claims. It is more than a change of mind, though it is a change of mind: it is connected with our judgment of self as in the sight of God. It is therefore the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance. Repentance is to be preached in Christ’s name. (Luke 24:47.)

Oh, That I Were a Christian!

I HAD heard that Miss B. was sick, so I went one day for the purpose of inquiring how she was, and found her with her sister and another young woman sitting together in their parlor. They seemed glad to see me, and I was pleased to find that the illness was nothing more than a cold, and that she was nearly recovered. She then introduced me to her friend, of whom I had heard before as one who had attended some of our meetings for the preaching of the Gospel.

After some preliminary conversation, I remarked that it was a happy thing to “have boldness in the day of judgment” ■to look forward to that day without a doubt or fear, in the consciousness that there was not a cloud between oneself and God!

Miss O. remarked, that “very few Christians could say that.”

“Well,” I said “one who cannot say so is, I fear, not a Christian; for a Christian ought to have neither doubts nor fears. Because, as 1 John 4:17 says, ‘Herein is love with us (marg.) made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as He is so are we in this world.’ We are as Christ is before God, and hence we can approach Him without a doubt and without a fear.”

“Oh, but,” she said, “it must be a person who leads a very holy life to be able to say that.”

“Well,” I said, “it is quite true that God expects every Christian to lead a very holy life; for He says (1 John 2:6), ‘He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.’ But you have no power to lead a holy life, until you are first conscious that your soul is saved.”

“Well,” she said, “I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I hope I shall be saved.”

“Oh,” I said, “but if you really believe with the heart on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are entitled not merely to hope that you are saved, but to be assured of it. For God says, ‘He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life’ (John 3:36), and if you have everlasting life you are saved.”

“But,” she said, “does not the Word of God say that faith without works is dead, being alone.”

“Yes,” said I, “unquestionably it does; but we must remember that the Scripture speaks of two kinds of justification■before God by faith, and before man by works. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans treats of the former; James of the latter. If you remember, James takes up the instance of Abraham, saying, ‘Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?’ Now if you turn to Genesis you will find that this took place in the 22nd chapter, whereas he was pronounced righteous before God in the 15th. ‘Look now,’ says God, ‘toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and He said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.’ And again, the Epistle to the Romans makes this more plain; for it says, ‘If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.’ He simply believed what God said, and he was accounted righteous.”

“Well, but,” she said, “must I not feel the witness within myself that I am saved?”

“Well,” I said, “it certainly is a blessed thing when ‘the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.’ But we must not begin at the wrong end. God’s order is this. God sends us a message of peace; we hear it, we receive it, and then the Holy Ghost takes up His abode in us, witnessing with our spirit that we are the children of God. My joy and peace is the consequence or effect produced on me by the Holy Ghost, which I received on believing the message. Let me take a simple illustration. I receive a telegram that a near relative is dead. I read the telegram. I ascertain the sender’s name. I believe the news it contains, and unfeigned sorrow is the result. The feeling of sorrow does not precede my belief in the intelligence, but is the consequence of it. So with God’s message. We should look for no inward consciousness, unless we first have believed that we have everlasting life through faith in the Lord Jesus.”

“I do not yet see it,” she said; “but if there is one thing that I earnestly desire, it is that I may become a Christian.”

“Well,” said I, “I rejoice hear you say so; but I must at the same time say that I fear it is your own fault that you are not happy in Christ. Cornelius (Acts 10) was, like you, hoping and praying, and God sent him a message by Peter, to say that the Jews had slain Jesus, whom He had anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, but that He had raised Him up, and that now ‘Whosoever believeth in Him should receive the remission of sins.’ Cornelius believed, obtained the remission of his sins on believing, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Why should not you believe, and know that your sins are remitted, and be sealed of the Holy Ghost?”

“Well,” she said, “I do believe with my whole heart on Jesus.”

“Well,” I said, “I am sure you do. Why not then believe the simple Word of God, which says, ‘Your sins are remitted?’”

“Well,” she said, “I know my sins are not forgiven, and that I’m not saved.”

“Why,” I said, “I fear I must charge you with doubting the testimony of God in His Word.”

“Oh,” she said, “I dare not do that.”

“But,” said I, “allow me to assure you that is the very thing you are doing. You say you believe in Jesus, and God says to all that believe on His Son Jesus Christ that they have ‘everlasting life,’ and ‘are justified from all things’ (John 3:36; Acts 13:39), and yet you say you are neither forgiven nor saved, when God says you are.”

“Well, then,” she said, “if I am saved I may go and do just what I like.”

“No,” I said, “God will not let you do that. The moment you believe, you have everlasting life, and have the gift of the Holy Ghost; and this life has new tastes and new decries, exactly the opposite of those you had when in your natural condition, because it is a new eternal life. And more than this, although the flesh will still lust, God gives you the Holy Ghost, so that you may not do the things you would (Gal. 5:17, &c.), so that the apostle can say (Rom. 6:14), ‘Sin shall not have dominion over you.’”

“Oh, but,” she said, “do we not see those who profess and call themselves Christians every day doing things that we know to be contrary to the Word of God?”

“Well,” said I, “I fear all are not Christians who profess to be so; and even amongst those who really are Christ’s, oftentimes failure appears. Both Moses and Paul spake unadvisedly with their lips, and their failures should therefore be a warning to all of us to walk humbly before God, and never to take the eye off Christ; by continual occupation with whom, conformity to His likeness is only to be arrived at.” (2 Cor. 3:18.)

She said no more then, so at last I asked, “And don’t you think, Miss O., that it is indeed true that those who simply believe on the Lord Jesus, as you say you do, are entitled to know, and to know it, not because they feel it, but because God says so, that they have everlasting life, or, in other words, that they are saved?” (1 John 5:13.)

“Well,” she said, after a long pause, “I do think so.” And thus we parted. And now I have written this down in the hope that it may meet the need of some poor soul, unlike Abraham of old, who, “being not weak in faith, considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb who staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” Unlike him, it may be that many have been looking for an inward testimony that they are saved, when they should in simple faith have taken God at His word, and have thus known that they were saved because He says it. Amen.

Reasons Why Many Have Not Peace with God

“I HAVE a great deal to do before I can expect peace,” or, “I don’t yet feel enough,” or, “I fear I have not repented enough,” or, “I do not love enough,” are expressions one has often heard, and show how entirely such are away from the true ground of peace. These statements are all based on the thought of something being necessary from the creature, and therefore show thorough darkness as to the fact that God has accomplished the work whereby perfect peace with Him alone is secured.

Among the many hindrances to souls having peace with God we may notice■

1. Indifference, or carelessness as to salvation. ■Many do not neglect family prayer, or even the repetition of prayers privately, but are not at all anxious as to present salvation. It may be, dear reader, that this is your case. You have not yet laid to heart the eternally solemn fact that “after death is judgment,” ■that you will have to give account of yourself to God. You have not really considered that you are now rushing onward to “the wrath to come.” Hence it is that you are so unconcerned about your eternal welfare, and so entirely occupied with the present gratification of your natural desires. If so, dear reader, may God deliver you from such carelessness, convince you of your guiltiness in His sight, and effectually warn you to flee from the coming eternal misery, by at once taking refuge in Jesus the only Saviour!

2. Ignorance. ■Alas! how many are perishing, in this land of Bibles, for lack of knowledge. It may be, dear reader, that you are saving within yourself, “I do the best I can,” or, “I am trying to do what I can to save my soul,” or, “I am trying to be good, and am more religious than many.” Ah, my friend, these remarks only show how entirely ignorant you are of God’s way of salvation. Plainly has He declared that it is “not of works, lest any man should boast.” Be assured that it is not by keeping commandments you can be saved, for Scripture says, “By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” And again, “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (See Rom. 3. 4. and Eph. 2).

3. Not submitting to God’s word, especially such Scriptures as show the utterly corrupt, and incurably bad state of man, as “they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” If this be not firmly held, there will be more or less looking to self-improvement, feelings, or experience for peace, instead of looking away from self to Christ alone, who has “made peace by the blood of His cross.” Unless the soul submit to the divine verdict of what we are in the flesh, how can we give all the glory to God, and take salvation as God’s free gift to us through His Son Jesus Christ? It is then essential for solid and abiding peace with God, that we take our true place before Him, that we allow the divine sentence that “the carnal mind is enmity against God: that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Rom. 8.) When this position is taken before God, the soul is taught that God has judged, condemned, and set aside our standing in the flesh in the crucifixion of Christ, and that He has given us a new standing in life, righteousness, and eternal blessing in Christ risen and ascended. So that of such it is said, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.” Wondrous truth! Can you, dear reader, rejoice in

this blessed testimony of God?

4. Trifling with a guilty conscience. ■ You feel the burden of sins; you know you have transgressed God's truth. The silent utterance of your heavy-laden soul is, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee." You are often truly wretched, and think no one so vile as yourself. And yet you foolishly think that by living a holy life for the future you will find happiness and rest. But whoever thinks of getting rid of the burden of old debts by trying if possible not to incur new ones? The thought is preposterous. God is love, but He is also righteous and true. There can be no way of deliverance from the guilt of transgression but by judgment. Resolutions to lead a better life fail. Efforts at amendment prove most disappointing. The self-flattering hopes of getting better only end in the soul consciously feeling worse. All these ways are false, and only trifle with a guilty conscience. God declares that "without shedding of blood there is no remission." That it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul; and that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from sin. It is God then against whom we have so grievously sinned, who has provided peace for the guilty. He is truly "the God of peace," and now preaches peace, even the forgiveness of sins, through Jesus Christ His Son. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38, 39.) Thank God that sins were laid upon Jesus. He "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. God thus "condemned sin in the flesh" in His own Son, so that sin is "put away," and "there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Sin has thus been so righteously judged, that God Himself has been glorified in the work of atonement; and so true and just has been the condemnation, that God declares, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

There is no need then to endeavor to cover over or to excuse sin. The blood which cleanseth from all sin has been shed, so that God can now righteously (yes, observe, righteously) forgive all who avail themselves of the virtue of that sacrifice. Look up then to Jesus, dear reader, a Lamb as it had been slain, now in the midst of the throne of heaven, gaze upon Him, remember His death upon the cross for sinners, that "He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace (or which purchased our peace) was upon Him, and with his stripes we are healed," and you will realize a purged conscience, know what it is to be brought nigh to God, and be constrained to serve, honor, and love Him, because He first loved you.

5. The plague of a sinful nature is, perhaps, after all the most common hindrance to peace in anxious souls. Even after the conscience has found rest from the guilt of actual transgressions, it is the evil within, unknown to anyone else, that so distresses many conscientious and anxious persons. They say, "It is not so much what I have done that fills me with doubt and despondency, as what I am. It makes me truly wretched." The fact is that an unclean nature is still carried about by cleansed souls. Indwelling sin is in them, though, as to their standing, they are "not in the flesh." It is impossible that souls can get above the pressure of this evil, unless God's testimony to the work of the cross be somewhat clearly apprehended. It is not only sin that were borne in Christ's body on the tree, but He was a substitute for us. "Sin in the flesh," ■ think of those words ■ "sin in the flesh," or, if you like, the evil nature, the thing that did the sin, or, as Scripture puts it, "our old man" was crucified in the crucifixion of Christ. Hence, said the apostle, "I am crucified with Christ." The old nature, therefore, the old Adam standing we were in, has now no place before God. He

sees us in another standing altogether. "The Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." It is not only then that our actual transgressions have been righteously dealt with in death and judgment on the cross, but our old man, our evil nature, has been set aside by the cross in death and judgment. Hence we are told, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." And because we still carry about the flesh, we are enjoined to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through (or in) Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:6-11.) The comfort then of the work of the cross is not only that our sins have been put away, but wretched self, our old man, the flesh in which dwells nothing good, has been substitutionally under judgment and death, and thus we are righteously and forever delivered from it. If we allow it, and trust in it, the Father's rod of discipline may be upon us, but the cross has delivered us from the eternal condemnation that it deserved, and we have the Holy Ghost given to us, not only to unite us with an ascended Head in glory, but as the power of life and godliness, communion, worship, and service.

We wait for Christ, when we shall have the redemption of the body. It is impossible to have abiding peace with God, unless we see that God has delivered us from ourselves, as well as from our sins, by the death of His beloved Son, and given us a new life, a new standing, and made us a new creation in Him risen and ascended. There is no difficulty in getting into the joy of this truth, except through unbelief; no effort is needed, no growth or attainment necessary; it is simply receiving God's testimony about the work of the cross. When one cried out, "O wretched man," ■not O my sins, but, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" how did he get deliverance? By simply looking up to God, and taking all thankfully from Him through Christ "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is faith■receiving all from God, through believing His word about Christ, and His finished work. And what then? He knows, though he is delivered from the guilt and condemnation of the flesh■the old man■he has to go on till the end with the two natures; therefore he adds, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Rom. 7:24, 25.)

Observe here that he accepts God's sentence of death upon the old man, so that he disowns it, because he believes that God has judged it and set it aside in death on the cross. He therefore no longer calls it himself, he calls it "the flesh," and himself he now recognizes as the new nature which alone is able to serve and please God. This is reckoning ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Dear reader! have you really accepted God's testimony to the death and judgment of your old man in the cross of Christ? and have you therefore the sense in your soul of a new life and standing in Christ in the heavenlies? This is the true ground of peace.

The Epistle to the Colossians

THE leading thought in Colossians is Christ in God, the Father's estimate of the Son. We should never have had the epistle to the Colossians if there had not been failure in their estimate of the person of Christ. The only answer of God to failure is something higher than man had before seen. He brings in something fresher and fuller when man had spoiled what He had made before. The glory in this epistle is far wider than in that to the Ephesians. There it is the Church of Christ. Wherever it is a question of us, it must be something lower than the person of Christ: the people at Colosse were in a lower state than those at Ephesus doubtless. What gives the Colossian epistle such preciousness is that the personal relationship of the Father and Son is taken up.

Short Notes on Daniel.

Chap. 9

IN chapter 8 we were occupied with a power in the East. Here it is the West as in chapter 7, only the scene is Jerusalem, as in the previous chapter. The vision is concerning “the people and the holy city” (v. 24), and is given to Daniel consequent upon his confessing and interceding for them. No doubt the partial restoration in former days was a type of all this, and so much so as to cause many pious souls to be led away with the belief that it is all we are to look for with respect to the nation of Israel; but “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” “Hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not perform?” “This people,” whom He has formed for Himself, spite of all their failure and rebellion, will yet “show forth His praise.”

The main subject of this chapter then is Jerusalem, and the future history of God’s people. Daniel understood, by the use of the ordinary means that were within the reach of the spiritual man, that the time was drawing nigh for Israel’s deliverance from their captivity (v. 2); and the effect of this upon him is at once to bring about a deep and earnest intercession for the people and the sanctuary that the Lord loved, and for the place of which He had said He would “put His name there,” declaring of it that it was His “rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.” (Psa. 132)

It is most solemn and important for the soul to seek, in but a small measure even, to enter into Daniel’s position here—how he pours out his heart before God, acknowledging the sins of the people and their rulers spreading it all before the Lord, and humbly confessing it as if every act had been his own. Like Moses of old, and Paul in his time (Rom. 9:3), he makes their cause his own—sees them as being God’s people, and on that ground appeals to Him, never giving up the truth that they were His people, and Jerusalem His city. Bad and degraded they might be, quite true; a hissing, a by-word and reproach; still nothing could alter the blessed fact that they were God’s people. Had He not said, “I am the Lord, I change not?” and faith ever counts on Him. As another has it, “sees Him as behind the scenes, though moving all the scenes which He is behind;” and faith thus draws into God’s presence the soul that understands His mind. with confession, not thanksgiving.

And good indeed would it be for us if that were more the spirit with which we were actuated. How little, if at all, are we before Him in confession for the state of failure around, while ever counting on His power and goodness to bring us safely through, owning, on the other hand, how every trust that has been committed to us has been abused, and that which to Him was as a pearl of great price been trailed in vs. 5 and mire of the world, to suit the carnal desires of those to whom the tare of this precious treasure had been committed.

From verses 5 to 11 Daniel owns the righteousness of God in bringing all this evil upon them. Their iniquities had been great; judgment they surely served; but the Lord was gracious (v. 9); mercy belonged to Him; it was His sweet and blessed attribute. This is pleaded for from verses 12 to 16, and then faith becomes more bold, and soars higher. Were they not His people? But they were a reproach to all about them. And was it not for this very reason that afore time He had said when they would be oppressed with the sword without and terror within—scattered into all

corners■that He would then spare them, and not make their remembrance to tease from among men, “lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely and lest they should say, Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not “one all this?” And so on this ground he pleads, from verses 17-19, that the Lord would deliver them for His mercy sake, because of His “city and His people, which are called by His name.” (v. 19.) It is this we get brought out in Rom. 11. God is shown to have shut them all up in unbelief, that they might come in on the alone ground of grace ■unmerited, undeserved blessing, that thus it might be shown to have all come from Him.

It is to be noted here, that Daniel does not go back to the promises made to Abraham; for they were absolute, unconditional, bound up and centered in Christ; but to those made to Moses (vv. 13-15), which were only secured to Israel after failure by God’s intervention in grace, thus enabling Him, while dealing in righteousness, to have mercy on whom He would have mercy. (See Ex. 33:19.) It is on this Daniel counts, and God never disappoints faith. While he was thus praying and interceding for Israel and Jerusalem ■the holy mountain of his God (Isa. 2) —not the Church, as some would have it, the man Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly, came and talked with him. What a blessed scene (v. 23) opens out here before our souls! God’s faithfulness in sending an immediate answer to His beloved servant! “At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth.” And then, because there is a needs-be that his heart should be drawn out in prayer and intercession, the answer is delayed until he has spread out the whole state of the people before God, who, while thus necessarily disciplining His child, will not fail from His gracious promise, that “before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear.”

The prophecy which begins at verse 24 is the answer to Daniel’s prayer; and here they are dealt with as of old time God dealt with Moses concerning them■ “Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.” (Ex. 32:7.) He cannot own them as His, they are corrupt; but Moses intercedes; and though God cannot accept his intercession as making atonement for them, He can spare the people because of it. Nothing can be more beautiful than the way in which Moses appeals to God, apprehending His grace through it all, spite of Israel’s sin, still calling them “thy people,” refusing to be made a great nation of himself, and bringing in God’s glory as at stake. (See Ex. 32:12.) So here in like manner Daniel appeals to God, who answers him as He had done Moses, calling them “thy people,” and “thy holy city.”

We see also that it is the narrow sphere of Israel and Jerusalem upon which we have entered; and this is most important to be understood, in order to arrive at a right understanding of the prophecy. Seventy weeks, he is told, are determined upon his people and city before transgression will be finished and an end made of sins, reconciliation of iniquity fully accomplished, everlasting righteousness brought in, vision and prophecy done away with, and the Holy of Holies anointed. This period of time must elapse before these events can all be fully brought about. Separated from the ages they are surely; but still they must run their course ere perfect blessing can be brought in. This period of seventy weeks is divided into three parts, and speaks solely of the re-establishment of Israel’s city.

The first part consists of seven weeks (25) or forty-nine years, and is occupied with the building of the city, as described in Nehemiah, thirteen years after the book of Ezra. (See Ezra 7:8, and Neh. 1:1.) During which time it would be re-built, its desolate houses overthrown, and its walls restored. Then a period sixty-two weeks, from the time of the wall being built again until the Messiah, the

prince is cut off, which closes this portion. In chapter 7 we have seen a powerful empire rising up, with a great prince at its head, who would mightily oppress the Jews. Here, in verse 26, the people of this prince who is to come ■not the prince himself, but the people from whence he afterward arises■destroy the city and sanctuary, sweeping over the land like a flood: all of which has actually happened. A remnant of Israel were restored to their own land■rebuilt the temple and city; Messiah came, to whom the gathering of the people belonged; but Israel knew not her day, and uniting with her Roman oppressors put to death the Holy One and the true, and Pilate and Herod shook hands over the murder of the “Son of God.” But the very nation to whom she had thus crouched, declaring she had “no king but Cēsar,” soon (as described in Luke 21:11-24) sent forth armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Titus consummates the act of destruction by drawing a plow and sowing salt across the city, whose name even was soon afterward changed to a Gentile one■Zlia Capitolina. The course of seventy weeks is interrupted; Israel as a nation disappears from the history of the world; and nothing remains but a period of desolation of undefined extent for the beloved city; while those who might have been a holy nation are wanderers and outcasts. As Daniel only treats of that nation, it would not be in accordance with God’s ways as revealed in Scripture to go outside of them, and give a consecutive history of the course of events. He has done so elsewhere as far as it is necessary for us to know, especially in Ephesians and Revelation. In the former it is what His people are to Him during this interval, the special place they occupy in His counsels; and in the latter it is judgment on those who while professing that they know God yet “in works they deny Him, being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”

One week more remains to be fulfilled; the close of the sixty-ninth, as we have seen, bringing us down to the cutting off of Messiah and judgment on the people’s city. The commencement of this last week or period of seven years is marked by this “Prince that shall come,” making a covenant with the leaders and people of the Jewish nation. It is thus connected with chapter 7, as that treats of the Roman Empire; and they are the people mentioned here, the city and temple being destroyed by them, as has actually been the case. Other scriptures show how a remnant will be saved; but the masa of the people receive him. It should be “a covenant,” not “the;” for that it is not Christ who is spoken of here is very clear. He is not merely Prince of one nation, but “of the kings of the earth,” and His covenant with Israel is an everlasting one, not for seven years. For the first part of this week, viz., three years and a half, things go on very well. Israel having been restored to their land through God’s providential dealings, by means of the Gentile nations (see Isa. 18.), make this covenant with the leader of the powers that have thus helped to restore them. Their temple being re-built, and sacrifices resumed, in the middle of the week this prince causes them to cease, breaking his covenant with them, and substituting something else instead■doubtless what we have in 2 Thess. 2:4. Anyway, Israel, as a nation giving up all trust in God, go back to idols for protection, as the Lord in Matt. 12:43 had prophesied they would; and because of this He gives them up to a desolator, the Assyrian of a previous chapter, and whose actions are more fully unfolded in Isaiah, the power here mentioned, and the king of chapter 11, “the Antichrist,” being at that time the ones to whom they look for protection; therefor are they given up to these terrible chastisements. They would put their trust in man, and refuse God’s warning concerning him (Isa. 2:22, and 40:6); they must now learn the lesson for themselves, as we see by the Psalms, hence a judgment “such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be,” is poured out upon the desolate one, that they may learn to say, “It is better to trust in the Lord than

to put confidence in man ■ better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.”

“One Thing I Do.”

MORN, noon, and night,
Through days o'er cast and bright,
My purpose still is one;
I have one end in view,
Only one thing I do,
Until my object's won.
Behind my back I fling,
Like an unvalued thing,
My former self and ways;
And reaching forward far,
I seek the things that are
Beyond time's lagging days.
The day declineth fast,
At noon its hours are past,
Its luster waneth now;
That other heavenly day,
With its enduring ray,
Shall soon light up my brow.
Oh! may I follow still,
Faith's pilgrimage fulfill,
With steps both sure and fleet;
The longed-for goal I see,
Jesus waits there for me,
Haste! haste! my weary feet.

J. N. D.

What Do You Believe?

AN old Christian meeting a youth by the wayside proffered him a tract, headed, "Believe, and be saved?" "But what am I to believe, sir?" said the youth. "That all-important question," replied the gentleman, "I am delighted to hear you ask; for most persons content themselves by saying, 'Oh, yes, we ought to believe.'" The old Christian lives, the youth was suddenly snatched away by illness, but he learned the gospel of God in his heart.

Dear Reader, may we respectfully but earnestly ask, "What do you believe?" and remember that eternal peace or misery depends upon this.

1. What do you believe about yourself? That you your very self will live forever? That you may die at any moment to this world? That the way which the tree falls that way it will lie? That there is no place for repentance after death, it being appointed unto man once to die, and after this the judgment? That you will either be forever in heaven with God and Christ, the holy angels and holy men from every dime and tongue and age; or, that you will be forever in hell with the devil and his angels, and with all the vile people that have hated God and loved sin from the first?

You have been brought up from youth so to believe, but can it be possible that you verily do so believe? Not merely assenting to the facts, but believing these things in your heart as things which concern your own self? Do you believe that you will be judged for your sins, and that after the judgment comes the second death—that is, the lake of fire? Be honest with yourself, we pray you. Then one more question about yourself. Are you now, at this moment, safe for all eternity. Certain that there is no condemnation, no fire, no torment for you; assured that heaven is your home; that every sin which you have ever done is clean gone forever, washed away in the blood of Christ, blotted out of God's book of remembrance and by Him forgotten?

You hesitate. "Are all MY sins forgiven?" This, you say, is a presumptuous question, ill-befitting genuine humility and true religion. "No," is your reply, "Neither have I, nor has anyone else, a right to say my sins are all forgiven."

Honest friend, if you really believe that there is no repentance after death, and that at any moment you may die, and yet cannot say you are now forgiven, then you must be miserable. And if you are not utterly miserable, then what you suppose to be belief is merely educational assent. The truth is you do not believe that you are an immortal being, whose destiny is everlasting happiness or woe, and whose only opportunity for mercy depends upon this short uncertain life.

Does the tempter whisper, "But there will be pardon at the day of judgment?" Oh! dear reader, this is a cruel temptation, heed it not, heed it not. Read the account of the great judgment of such as die with their sins unforgiven recorded in Revelation, chap. 20:11, 14, and if you believe what is there written, you must confess that the idea of pardon at the day of judgment is a cruel snare of Satan. Be not entrapped thus.

Neither dream of a thousand years of woe, nor of ten thousand years, nay, nor of ten thousand thousand years of woe, for it is eternal, ever existing woe. The second death and the lake of fire mean the same thing. Be not deceived by these pleasing lies of the Liar and Murderer.

Another question we make bold to ask you? What do you believe about the Scriptures? Do you indeed believe that the Scriptures are God's own words? That they "cannot be broken?" That though heaven and earth should pass away, yet not one jot or tittle of those Scriptures can pass away until all be fulfilled?

Now this belief is far more solemn than that about yourself; though, indeed, what you profess to believe about yourself you learned from God's word—learned by His revealing it to you. No human mind ever conceived what you profess to believe about yourself and eternity.

Do you believe that those Scriptures teach us God's plans and counsels, and His character and glory—record His ways with men, His way of saving men, and the character of His salvation. That He is most jealous over His words, that if one word failed, then His character would be blotted? And, therefore, that a man is bound by God's word, bound to believe it, bound to obey it, bound for time and eternity by it? That trifling with God's word is a great sin, that saying, "It cannot mean so and so," when the plain words have only one meaning, is a crime against God Himself?

3. Do you believe that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God?" (Rom. 3:23.) You may be inclined to smile at the question since it is the habit of evangelical persons to call themselves hundreds of times yearly, "miserable sinners," or to say continually, "we must repent."

And this question we should not have asked were it not the case that much of the religion of the day is so deceptive. People fall upon their knees and cry aloud to God, "We are miserable sinners, spare us, be not angry with us forever;" or, "We must repent, we must repent," and having done so, they go home to eat, drink, and be merry until the time comes round for them to do the same thing again. So they go on, round and round, until they drop into the grave.

Honest reader, do you believe for a moment that God accepts' such a way of men coming to Him as sinners? That such shallow outside work satisfies the great Searcher of hearts and Weigher of actions? Indeed, it is a most important question to ask of you, "Do you believe in the light of God's truth that you are a sinner?"

But, whispers the evil one, it says "all," so never mind, you are not worse off than others. But are you any better off? When the passenger ship, London, began to roll between the monstrous waves, and when the great seas began to wash over her poop, and at length to break through her skylights and the water to pour into her saloon, so that all on board saw the ship was lost and that all must perish, tell me did the agony of despair diminish because fathers, mothers, children, were lost together? because captain, sailors, and passengers were all lost? And because rich and poor, young and old, are all sinners, and because all are sinking down, down, down to the everlasting waves of the lake of fire, does it make your own case the better? If you were lying dying on a field of battle, where the wounded cried piteously for water as their life-blood eked away, would your thirst be less, or your pains lightened by the thirst and pains of others? Folly, folly, flap, UNBELIEF, when men say, well, we are all alike.

It is not only a general likeness of mankind, and a family likeness, that God gives us in His word, but it is you your very self-photographed to the life. If you were to stand before a looking-glass you would go away and straightway forget what manner of man you were, saith James. The reality would be exchanged for an ideality in your mind, but you are drawn exactly in God's word. And not your appearance, but yourself. Not your exterior, but your heart. Not y our smiles and church graces, but the facts and abominations of your inmost self. Man paints pictures hiding the uncomely part of the face: God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all, and He gives the very truth.

We will end the questions for the present by asking you whether you believe that the following portrait is yourself. May the Holy Spirit convince you as He did David by the lips of Nathan, for "Thou art the man." "None righteous, no, not one: none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God. Gone out of the way, become unprofitable; none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asp's under their lips: mouth full of cursing and bitterness: feet swift to shed blood: destruction and misery in their ways: the way of peace they have not known: no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3)

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

Heb. 11:7

The Scripture says in Hebrews 10:38, “The just shall live by faith.” There is the faith that justifies us, and the faith by which we live from day to day. Three times the above quotation from Hab. 2:4 is used in the New Testament: in Rom. 1:17, and Gal. 3:4, to show that we are justified by faith, and by faith in contrast with law; in Heb. 10:38, to show that it is by faith we live from day to day, as Paul says, in Gal. 2:20, “The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Dear reader, are you aware that you can be justified solely “by faith, without the deeds of the law?” Do you know that if you simply accredit God’s testimony, that Jesus was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, you are accounted righteous before God, and you have peace with God? (Rom. 4:24; 5:1.) “Oh!” you say, “does not everyone believe that Jesus died for them?” “Yes,” I say, they do in a general or historical sort of way; but the justified man does more than that. Not merely does he believe that Jesus died, but that Jesus died for him, and was raised again for his justification. Believing this, he knows his place is made with God. Faith personally applies to ourselves that which we are historically convinced of.

Now let me tell you little about Noah. In Gen. 6:3, I find God’s counsels; in verse 13, the revelation of those counsels to Noah. God had said to Himself, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh. Yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.” Man is ever the same, whatever way you look at him. In the Garden of Eden, under law; with Christ openly manifested to him, with the Holy Ghost likewise present; or, as in this instance, left to himself, he has ever displayed the same characteristics that were found in his seducer, Satan, at the very outset. Corrupt and violent he was, since the day iniquity was found in him (Ezek. 28:15-17, John 8:44); and corruption and violence characterize those who are under his sway. In Eve we find corruption; in Cain violence. Here “the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence (verse 11). Therefore God says, “I will destroy man.”

Dear reader, are you aware that another judgment is coming upon this earth—not the judgment of water, but the judgment of fire. The Scripture tells us that “all flesh shall not be cut off any more with the waters of a flood;” but it also tells us that there will be another judgment, and a far more terrible one, that of fire.

Turn to Rev. 20:11: “I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.” Mark these words: so terrible is the face of Jesus, then sitting as God upon His throne—for all judgment has been committed to Him (John 5:22)—that actually the very heavens and earth flee from before Him. The cause of their departure we find here; the manner of it in 2 Peter 3:7, where it speaks of “the heavens and the earth, which are now... reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men... for the day of the Lord” (and a thousand years is as one day) “will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

Dear reader, are you one of those who are making yourself comfortable in the world■ planting, building, marrying, giving in marriage? Let me tell you that your plantations, your houses, your lands, will all be utterly consumed in the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The very seat on which you are sitting as you read this will be consumed; the very ground on which you walk will be dissolved. Ask yourself, then, have I a perfect title to take my place in the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness? How solemn to think that God's testimony to you may close today and that instead of dying comfortably on your bed, as you expect to do, you may in a moment be taken away for judgment to pass eternity in the lake of burning. The moment for the passing away of the present heavens and earth is the moment for the final condemnation of the wicked. The whole of the old creation passes away together. First the earth and heavens■the abode of Adam's race; and then that portion of the race that has died without God and without Christ, they receive their sentence, and they are damned. (Rev. 20:12-15.)

How solemn to think that every one that does not receive the gospel here, that bows not to Jesus here, must bow to Him there. They despise Him as the Son of Man■their Saviour; they receive His sentence as the living God■their Judge.

Just as God revealed His counsels to Noah of the approaching doom of the earth, so are we not ignorant now of the coming demolition of both heavens and earth. And just as Noah saw that the end of all flesh had come, so do we know now that judgment is the end of Adam's race who die without faith.

Do not imagine, unbelieving reader, that the lake of fire will annihilate you. Oh no! you will pass eternity in the lake that "burneth with fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" there "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever,"■which is the same word as Rev. 10:6, "God, who liveth for ever and ever." If the life of God is interminable■which I do not suppose you doubt■your punishment will be of equal duration.

Man's necessity, however, is God's opportunity. If judgment was revealed to Noah, so was the means of escape from it. It has ever been so. When the cities of the plain were destroyed, there was still a Zoar for Lot. When judgment hung over Egypt and Jericho, still there was a mode of escape for Israel and Rahab.

And so here. The ark was the display of God's love to Noah, at the moment of his greatest need. God's heart had planned it; God's tare provided the materials; God's love unfolded it to Noah. None but God would ever have thought of such an expedient. It was at once the place of Noah's perfect security and perfect delight. When once the Lord's hand had shut him in, not a doubt crossed his mind as to his perfect safety. One hundred and twenty years of careful labor had led him to know that his craft was perfectly weather-tight and sea-worthy. Had it not been so, he never would have entered it; but in perfect confidence he committed himself and all that was necessary for life, and sacrifice, and food, to it; and calmly gazed, through the window above, to the home where his God abode.

Is Christ the ark to you? Can you say, Christ is to me the one in whom I have perfect confidence and absolute satisfaction? His blood has purged my consciences, and His person occupies my heart.

Noah had turned his back upon the world, it was a judged, a doomed thing to him. He had preached righteousness in it, and behaved in it as one that was manifestly dead to it. He had new hopes, new joys, new interests. His joys were centered in the ark; with delight his eye ranged around its spacious chambers, and surveyed the varied groups which occupied them. He had everything he wanted there, there was no necessity to go outside for anything.

Is Christ everything to you? Have you learned the true value of the water He gives (John 4), so as never to thirst? ■to thirst for nothing, ■neither for things temporal nor for things spiritual. Things temporal have no attractions for you now, because you have a new life that delivers you from them, and now if you have food and raiment you can be content. Things spiritual you do not thirst for, because you have them. "A full soul loatheth an honeycomb," and if you have Christ you thirst no more, you have got everything, ■ "all things are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

The circle of Noah's interests was the ark. The circle of yours is Christ.

If I go outside of Christ for anything, ■if I indulge myself in anything of the world beyond what the body actually requires, I am denying the fact that I have a life that never thirsts.

Noah entered the ark, and found perfect security and satisfaction. You believe in Christ, and you find rest for your troubled conscience, and peace for your weary heart.

But mark another point.

Noah and the ark were absolutely identified together. Together they passed under the waves of judgment, together they emerged from them, together they rested on Ararat's summit. I grant you that the type fails here; for Noah was unchanged throughout, Noah was the same person throughout. But still I learn from this that believing on Christ, I am entitled to know that my old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed; as Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ." He, blessed be His name, passed under the waves of judgment for me; as He says (Psa. 42), "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows have gone over me;" or again (Psa. 88), "thy wrath lieth hand upon me, thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves."

What, I say, have all God's waves gone over Him, my blessed Saviour? Then there is no condemnation for me. I see in Christ upon the cross the end of myself, the judicial end of my Adam nature, the end of my "old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust." (Eph. 4:22.) I reckon it dead, I believe what God says, that I am "dead." (Col. 3)

But more than this. The ark bore Noah safely till it rested on mount Ararat, and there it set its burden down. Where has Christ set me down? God raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies. I was dead in trespasses and sins, but He has quickened me together with Him, raised me up together with Him, and made me sit together in Him in the heavenlies. What perfect rest this gives me. Noah was not sorry, I am sure, to exchange the rolling motion of the mighty ship for the firm standing of the mountain's top. I can bless and praise God that Christ has ascended up on high, and led me, long Satan's captive, His own captive, and given me a life that is hid with Himself in God His Father. I have already by faith my place in heavenly places; for I have my place in Christ the Head of the new creation ■the Head of all principality and

power. And now what is my occupation? Why, like Noah, to build my altar, and to joy in God, by whom I have received the reconciliation, while the bow in the cloud tells me there is now no condemnation for me, for Christ has borne it all.

Dear reader, can you say the same?

(An Extract.)

GOD assures us that the blood of Jesus, shed on earth, has been accepted in heaven, and accepted in such sort that, as to all who believe, their sins and iniquities are not forgiven only but forgotten. "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sin and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 10:14-1;7.)

Such, beloved reader, is God's testimony. And what a comfort that it is the testimony of God! As some one has observed, the difficulty of believing a statement—the amount of evidence or authority required to satisfy us—is in proportion to the degree in which the statement bears directly on ones self. Some such illustration as this was used to make it clear. Suppose some one should say to you, "Such a person died lately in Russia, having an immense property which he bequeathed in his will." You hear the statement with the slightest possible amount of attention, and readily assent to its truth. It is what concerns you in no way, and you have no difficulty in crediting what you hear. But your informant goes on to say, "He has bequeathed his property to you." Now you are all ear, all attention; but just in proportion as your interest is awakened by finding how the statement bears on yourself—in that proportion do you find it difficult to believe it.

"Who was there in Russia likely to leave me an estate? I have no relatives there, no friends, no one that I am acquainted with. It cannot be true." Who does not know that the mind works thus in such a case? It may be true what you have heard, but you must have it on better authority than that of your informant, before your heart can rest satisfied in its truth. Now it is just so as to the Gospel. You may hear its blessed truths, and assent to them in a loose, general way, as long as you do not regard them as bearing immediately on yourself; but when conscience is awakened, and you see your sin and ruin, and feel the burden of guilt which presses upon you, and it becomes thus a question of your own salvation, then you become conscious of the difficulty of believing the Gospel, and you feel you must have it on the highest authority for it to give real rest to your soul. Now it is just here, my reader, that God meets us in His grace We do need the highest and most unquestionable authority for such announcements as that God has given His Son, that Christ has died for our sins, that God has raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to His own right hand, and that through Him we (believing these facts thus made known to us) are forgiven and accepted, and have everlasting life. We do need the highest possible authority for announcements such as these. But what authority would you have? Could you have higher than that of God Himself? And is it not God Himself that declares these things in His Word. "As God is true," the apostle says, "our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God Jesus Christ who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in Him was yea." (2 Cor. 1:18,19.) It was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, they preached; and "as God is true" was the sanctioned certainty—the attestation of all that they declared. Would you have anything more than this? Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the Object of our faith; and the veracity of God Himself, who is the Testifier, as its foundation. As God is true!

Surely if one had ten thousand souls to be saved, they might all be staked on this.

Do You “Preach Christ Crucified?”

THE difference is very great between a man in his lost state, with all his guilt upon him, being met by a legal delivery, through the courts of God's judicature admitting of a substitute, and this substitute the Son of God in the likeness of sinful flesh, who answers all the charges against the sinner on the cross; and on the other hand, that same person made sensible only of his depravity, and regeneration by the Spirit preached to him. Depravity, which needs a change of nature, does not explain his terrible condition. There is nothing in the meaning of the word to make him realize his guilt, as he is viewed at the bar of a righteous God. It does not show that a sinner is guilty there. Supposing him to hear a gospel which declares his case to have been met at the cross, he stands before God with a conscience free from guilt, accepted in the perfectness of Him who has done a perfect work for him. Otherwise■ supposing regeneration, or, in common language, a new heart, to be preached■he is cast for peace and assurance upon a change wrought in himself (uneven in its results, because of indwelling sin), without the sense of the throne of God being satisfied. The conscience in this condition remains ill at ease. The man is looking at himself for the fruits of regeneration, instead of at the removal of his guilt, which Christ has effected for him before God. The state of mind found among those who receive this preaching is anything but happy. They seldom have settled peace, for they are thrown upon the work of the Spirit in them, rather than on the work of Christ for them. The work, say they, that saves them, is the Spirit's work; but the Holy Spirit having, as before observed, to form and conduct His work■ speaking reverently■ within the heart, and, as it were, amid the changing feelings of that heart, these feelings mingle themselves with the Spirit's proper work, and they judge of their state, even as to their acceptance with God, according to these feelings of which they were never intended to be the index. Thus they are on one day happy, and on another under a cloud.

Those experiences, which, if rightly understood, would be the barometer to measure our high or low state of communion with our heavenly Father, in consequence of our previous justification, are used instead, as the only means of knowing whether we are the children of God or not. Having failed in communion■that is, in fellowship■we think we have lost salvation. People in this condition are rarely certain of anything in the way of acceptance. They are never, in their own eyes, set right with God, although, through grace, they may be in His. If you ask them whether they are saved, the reply is, “They hope they shall be;” they are looking at themselves, and not at Christ. Districts where this preaching predominates may be said to abound with backsliding sinners, those who have once, as they say, “felt happy,” but who have never properly looked at the work of Christ, as settling the question of their guilt and condemnation before God. Meanwhile the mischief that is done to those in an anxious inquiring state, who live in such neighborhoods, is deplorable. Their conscience tells them that there must be a godly walk, and they have seen the halting and stumbling of failing professors. Ask such inquirers whether they believe on the Lord Jesus, the reply is almost always either, “No, I know I do not; there needs a great change in me first:” or else, “It's no use to talk of believing, unless we go by it.” The one class are looking for a change in themselves, to produce peace within; instead of looking, like the bitten Israelite, at the

brazen serpent outside of himself. The others, seeing the need of a holy walk, are beginning, or intending someday to begin, to prepare themselves beforehand, hoping in due time to get on so well that Christ will receive them, and then that they shall not dishonor their profession by a fall, like some of their neighbors. Oh that they knew the “good news” of a finished redemption; of an accomplished salvation! Oh that they knew that Christ receives sinners, saves them just as they are, washes them from their sins in His own blood, and conveys to them a power of walk, through the power of the Holy Ghost! For the first thing He does in giving them life is to save them, and as the life conveyed is the issue of God’s love, it mingles with our hearts, and thus teaches us to love Him who first loved us. Thus we are sweetly drawn along, motives in us combining with the power of the Holy Ghost.

I wonder whether the Philippian jailer was thinking of how he was to walk, when, after the great earthquake—to which the awful break-up in his own soul responded—he cried out, “What must I do to be saved?” Would not the terrible condition which a sinner is in before God—if we could bring it before him—lead to the same cry, rather than, as we too often find, a prolonged exercise of religious feeling, which ends, perhaps, in some fancied self-improvement, without the conscience of the man being satisfied as to his safety before God?

But, indeed, it may be added, that rather a marked feature in this character of mind is, that people understand they must be got ready to go to heaven, but they do not realize that they are going to hell. It is not a change of heart, but a change of state, which is first wanted, whilst surely the change of state is connected with change of heart.

The Israelites at the Passover (Ex. 12) knew they were safe, because God said, “When I see the blood I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you.” Faith ever looks at things from God’s point of view. Rahab in Jericho was safe, because the scarlet line was tied to her window, and hung down over the town wall, where it could be seen of the spies, that being the sign agreed upon. She had only their promise as connected with the line, but that was enough for faith, and every happy feeling she had sprung from it. It is not the improvement of man, but the Saviour provided by God to deliver him from the condemnation that else awaits him, which should be our first business to bring before a sinner, and should be his first anxiety—as the following passages witness. Acts 8:5: “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ to them.” Again, verse 35: “Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture” (vs., Isa. 53), “and preached unto him Jesus.” In the one case, “there was great joy in that city;” in the other, the eunuch “went on his way rejoicing.” Again 10:43: To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” Again, 13:39: “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things.”

Texts might be multiplied, but these are enough to show that the business of the preacher of old was to show the guilt and condemnation under which all men lay, from which faith in Christ delivered them. The work of Christ meets them in their awful state, and justifies them, or, in other words, pronounces them righteous. The fruit of godliness of walk will surely follow.

Finally, be it remembered, if we are right in our surmise that it is ignorance of the Word of God, or, at all events, how to divide it aright, which hinders the peace, and therefore scants the service, of the children of God; it is just an acquaintance with all that God Himself is to us, and we to Him,

which is calculated to produce fruit. Such truths are made known to us for this very purpose. It is true we may misuse them, but we shall never advance by withholding them, nor succeed in producing, by fleshly rules, that which it is the province of God by His Spirit to effect.

Peace.

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God Ephesians through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ■Rom. 5:1.

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” ■Eph. 2:13.

COME, let us sound the Saviour's praise,

Whose fame shall e'er increase;

Proclaim His wondrous work and ways,

Of mercy, love, and peace.

He on the cross, in purest love,

Accomplish'd His decease,

Was buried, rose, and went above,

And so established peace.

He, who on earth thus shed His blood,

For guilty man's release,

Now sits upon the throne of God,

To give the sinner peace.

Mercy and truth, made firmest friends,

From former conflicts tease;

Their ancient feud in Jesus ends,

In righteousness and peace.

O blessed truth! that God, in grace,

From judgment can release

The soul that looks in Jesus' face

For pardon, life, and peace.

Peace, peace with God, gives holy calm

With joys that still increase,

And raises from the heart a psalm

To Christ, who is “our peace.”

Homely Conversations

"I AM glad to see you so well at your age, Jenkins; and as we have an opportunity of speaking of heavenly things, I should be pleased to make use of it, if I do, not hinder you."

Jenkins laid aside his work, answering, he was only too glad to speak of such matter. So I inquired, "Can you now say that all your sins are cleansed?"

"I should hardly like to be so bold."

"But you believe the Scriptures?"

"Indeed I do; every word of them," said he, with feeling.

"But what say you to this Scripture ■ 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin?'"

"It is very encouraging; but I think my sins are so many."

"But, Jenkins, you believe that Jesus, your Creator, became a man, and died upon the cross for sinners?"

"Yes, yes, that I do; indeed I do. But I do not like to be so bold as to say, My sins are all cleansed; that were very bold indeed."

"But see! Suppose you owed several sums of money; that you were in debt for bread, meat, rent, and clothes, and that someone come and paid all your debts, and gave you the receipt; tell me, would it be bold to say, My debts are all paid?"

"No, no; and I begin to see where you are coming."

"And what would be the best thing you could do, suppose now and then you got a little bit nervous and doubting? Why you should just go to the shelf and take the receipt down, and read the word 'Paid.' Now take down God's word, and read what He says."

"That I will," said he; "and what that says there is no gainsaying. It ends all argument, so I believe."

"Look, then, in 1 John 1:7 at these words."

So he got out his spectacles. "No, I can't read; the print is too small."

"But, Jenkins, you must read it yourself if you can."

"Well, I'll try the other specks. Yes, I see it now. Why this is the verse the lady made the ink mark under. Don't you remember, wife? 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'"

"'All sin,' friend, God says. Now, don't you be so bold as to say, All sin except some of mine. You must not write under God's words, 'All, sin;' not all mine, O God That would be bold indeed."

“That is another way of looking at it; and truly sometimes I feel comfortable like when I think about Christ, but then it all goes again. What you say does cheer one though.”

“It is what God says; we will keep to the Book. Now, look at that word cleanse. What does a little childlike better than playing in the dirt? Very well, its mother washes it; the little thing cannot wash itself. So we like sin by nature, but God washes us. We will turn to Rev. 1:5, and read about it there.”

So he read, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” “Dear! that is comforting; it is beautiful, and so simple, too! Well, I do bless God that I see it so plain. I hope I won’t be so bold as to doubt His word any more. But then we must not go to the dirt again?”

“No, indeed not. But what is it makes the child hate the dirt so much as putting on it a nice white frock? You never saw a girl drag her clean dress in the dirt all at once. We teach the little ones to love to be clean by washing them, and putting clean things on them.”

“That is true enough, poor little dears. But how simple it makes it, does it not, wife? We shall try to keep from sinning; if we know we are washed in the blood, so we shall. Do you see it? It comes very plain and comforting to me.”

“But one thing more, friend. When a little one is washed, and has a clean frock on, yet the mother takes its hand lest it should fall.”

“I see where you are coming again,” said he. “Yes, so He takes care of us.”

“Indeed He does; and He has said, I will never leave thee; ‘I will never forsake thee.’ All is His doing. He sent His Son for us; Jesus washed us in His own blood, and He keeps us from falling. Now, after this, you must look the devil straight in the face, and tell him you are washed, and forgiven, and taken care of. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you; for he is a great coward but if you turn and run from him, he will punish you cruelly.”

“Yes, I will say to him, See, I have got it in this book, and read it out, and say, I don’t want you; so go.”

So we placed a marker in each page where these two tests are to be found; for Jenkins would not have the leaves of God’s holy book turned down—and lined round that in Revelation as that in John’s epistle had been done.

Reader, does God’s word end all argument with you? May it be so, for His own Name’s sake.

Ex. 12

ON that ever memorable night in Israel's history, when "the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle," the children of Israel were shut up in their houses under the shelter and security of the blood of the lamb, with a direction from the Lord that "none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when HE seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Thus we see that the blood of the "lamb without blemish" was the only ground for the safety and deliverance of the children of Israel when the destroyer was abroad. All were to be shut up within the blood-sprinkled houses. The old man, bowed down with the weight of a hundred years, and the aged partner of his joys and sorrows; the strong man rejoicing in his strength, and the mother that had borne seven; the young man and the maiden, and the children, from the rosy boy and girl to the babe that had just uttered the cry of life;—all were safe from the destroying sword, simply because they were confined within the doors of their houses on which was the sprinkled blood. Outside of the boundary of blood neither the hoary head of the aged nor the helplessness and harmlessness of the infant could shield them from the judgment of Jehovah, which was that night taking its way through the land of Egypt. All depended upon the blood. "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

Just so. "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." (Lev. 17:11.) "And without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. 9:22.) Apart from the blood of Christ, which was shed for the remission of sins, there is no salvation for the sinner, nor deliverance from the judgment of God; for to meet God in our sins is to meet Him in judgment. The value and virtue of that blood are only fully known to God Himself, but every soul that takes refuge in it finds present and everlasting salvation, and has his joy and delight in Him who shed it, gladly joining in that blessed ascription of praise, "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 for ever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5.)

“Ho! Every One That Thirsteth.”

“IF any man thirst (said Jesus), let him come unto ME, and drink.” (John 7:37.) “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. 4:5.)

COME! all oppressed with sin and care,
Who weary and much laden are,
Cease from your works and REST.
By faith in God’s life-giving SON—
Who for your guilt did once atone,
Now bids the outcast find a home
Of refuge in His breast.
Who thirst for life’s free waters, come!
Drink now and be refreshed.
You’ve naught to do, for ALL is DONE!
That work’s complete which Christ begun,
Only on it depend.
You’ve naught to pay, for ALL is PAID!
Without your help salvation’s made,
God is no debtor to your aid,
Christ’s works you cannot mend.
BELIEVE on Him your sins were laid,
Then “doubts and fears” will end.
Will He take pleasure in your cries,
If you His finished work despise,
And trust to “tears” or “prayer”?
Thus want a Saviour of your own!
Christ and good works, not Christ alone!

TWO Saviours, then! God offers ONE!

He'll not His glory share,

Add to His work or take therefrom,

Sinner, you may not dare.

DEAR READER, —The cry has gone forth “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him,” calling forth this response from the hearts of those who are looking for the “blessed hope” and the “glorious appearing” of Him who is also to them “the bright and morning star,” and who says, “Surely I come quickly. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

Those who anticipating that time, and the joy of meeting “the Lord in the air,” and so being ever with Him, can sing new the song of victory, “Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”

Reader, may I ask, Do you belong to this class, or to that which on the other hand having heard of, yet have neglected this great salvation, and whose only cry when the Lord appears in His glory will be to the “mountains and rocks” to fall and hide them, and the hopeless wailings of despair?

Be sure that if you despise the blood of the Lamb now, you cannot escape from the just wrath of the Lamb then. You must either see Him now, with the eye of faith, with its present “joy and peace in believing,” or you will assuredly see Him in another way then; for “Behold He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him... and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.” In the meanwhile, “The Spirit and the bride say, COME. And him that heareth say, COME. And let him that is athirst COME. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life FREELY.” (Rev. 22:17.)

THE Christ is in Christ before God, and Christ in him down here. What characterizes the Christian is that he delights in Christ.

The Ten Virgins. Chapter 25:1-13

MANY thoughts have been expressed about this parable, and very different interpretations have been given. Those who have not seen the Scripture truth of the Lord's coming as the believer's hope, not knowing how to understand it otherwise, have taught that the Bridegroom's coming is death, or judgment; while some who have accepted the doctrine of the second coming, have missed the true force of the parable, by trying to refer it to the Jewish remnant; and of late some have endeavored to deduce from it the very erroneous doctrine that all the virgins are real Christians; that the practically faithful only are taken to be with Christ at His coming, and the others—though finally saved—are, in chastisement for their unfaithfulness, brought through the great tribulation. Let us see what warrant there is from Scripture for these ideas.

In the first place, this parable cannot set before us the popular notion of the Lord's coming for His people in death, because all who are removed in this parable are taken away at once—all that were ready. "They that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut." (verse 10.) This is not the case with believers dying. All do not die at the same time; we know that daily facts are opposed to such a thought. It must therefore have another meaning. Besides, death is not spoken of in Scripture as Christ coming to us, much less as the Bridegroom coming, but that when we die we go to Him— "depart and be with Christ;" it is therefore "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." It is quite unaccountable how true Christians can imagine that watching for the Lord's coming should mean watching for death; and yet who does not know that one of the commonest selections of Scripture for a funeral address, by many in the present day, is the thirteenth verse: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Where is there a single text of Scripture which shows that the Lord's coming is connected with the believer's death?

Nor is there any ground for regarding this parable as setting before us the so-called day of judgment, and for this simple reason—there is not one word, or one idea of judgment in it. Not one person in this parable is judged. Besides, in the judgment of the great white throne, every wicked person who has died is raised again, and the action is entirely confined to the wicked dead; whereas in this parable we are considering it is exactly the opposite: the wicked are untouched, it is simply the "wise"— "they that were ready"—who are removed. Is it possible there can be anything more thoroughly opposed to the thought then, that the parable of the ten virgins describes the day of judgment? because it is not judgment we have here, but the action of Divine perfect love. Christ is evidently presented to us as "the Bridegroom" satisfying the desires of His heart, in receiving to Himself those objects of His affection.

The idea that the Jewish remnant is here set forth is entitled to more respect, though a little consideration will show that it cannot for a moment be sustained. Their hope will not be Christ as Bridegroom, but Christ as King; and that not to remove them, but to come to them on the earth, and reign before His ancients gloriously. Again—they will be too much oppressed and persecuted to have false ones in association with them, or to slumber and sleep while looking for their

Deliverer. Further, the action of the Lord then will be entirely opposite, for He will separate the evil-doers from the remnant of Israel, and while He crises as the Sun of righteousness with healing in His wings to Israel, He will at the same time tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of their feet. Thus the words of the prophet Isaiah will be fulfilled— “The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.” (Isaiah 63:4.)

The modern doctrine that the ten virgins are all real Christians, and that only part of them are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, cannot be too severely censured. Not only is it at variance with almost every fundamental principle of the Church of God, but opposed to some of the simplest and plainest instructions of Divine truth. The Church being a body—one body—all the members united to their living Head in heaven by the Holy Ghost—is the idea conceivable that part of this body can be glorified with Christ, and severed from the rest? Besides, will the Bridegroom come and take to the marriage a part of His bride—a portion of that one Church which He loved and gave Himself for? Impossible. Are we not told that He now nourisheth and cherisheth her, and that His purpose is to present her—not a part of her—to Himself, a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing?

Nothing should more awaken our suspicion than finding persons building a grave doctrine on parabolic interpretation. Who does not know that a parable generally presents some main line of instruction, rather than a minute doctrinal discourse. It is quite true that Scripture says, “to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:28); but are not those set in contrast with another class who are appointed to death and judgment? And can there be a true believer, a soul who has tasted the redeeming love of God in Christ Jesus, that does not look in some sense for Christ, however beclouded his hope may be by false teaching? Is there a heart that knows Christ to be precious that is not assured that its perfect satisfaction can only be to see Christ, and be like Christ? But what is the plain teaching of Scripture on the point? Will any that are Christ’s, however feeble or faltering, be left behind when He comes into the air with a shout? Assuredly not. As to the order of the resurrections, we are told “Christ is the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.” Mark the Divine statement— “they that are Christ’s.” (1 Cor. 15:23.) Can anything be more conclusive? Again, we are told “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ”—observe, “the dead in Christ, not the most faithful of those who are in Christ, but “THE DEAD IN CHRIST”— “shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain” (who are the “we,” but all the saints that will be then living on the earth?—not a part of them) shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thess. 4:16,17.)

Surely nothing more is needed to show how utterly unscriptural is this modern interpretation of the parable of the ten virgins. Like other false doctrines, it is seldom held without other things equally or perhaps more destructive; and this brief exposure of it should be enough to teach us the vast importance of searching the plain testimonies of Holy Scripture to arrive at a just conclusion as to what the counsels of God really are. That we should be faithful to the Lord during His absence is most surely due to Him, and becoming to us; and that He will not be unmindful when He comes of the smallest service rendered to His members, or wrought for His name’s sake, the Scriptures abundantly teach, for He says, “Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be.”

Thoughts on the Names in 1 Chronicles 1-4

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,” &c., yet how often have the above and similar passages been passed over by the child of God as being but dry and uninteresting at the best. Yet it is not so; for we have only to be simple, as “he that is simple shall learn wisdom,” content to give up our own thoughts, and in child-like simplicity accept God’s, to find a vast field indeed open before us— “green pastures and still waters,” blessed results to us of His never-failing grace.

We have presented in the book of Chronicles, as another has put it, “the history of God’s people as He loves to remember it,” their dark spots are passed over or but lightly touched upon; not that God was indifferent to the evil, far from it; other Scriptures show that that indeed was not the case. Here, however, it is His blessing and grace to His own, only such of their failings being noticed as would the better serve to show His patience and long-suffering.

While the clothing of the book is Jewish, and speaks directly of their blessings, more especially of that of the family of David and tribe of Judah, what God is—His heart of love and the blessed fullness of divine grace, is thus made known to us; so that by tracing His ways with His people Israel we the better learn Him who has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace. And this is the great object of our wilderness journey. As with Israel of old, so with us now, “He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger.... that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

In this apparently mere list of names we find an order and arrangement telling of past events and future glories, all of which, whether past, present, or to come, unite in unfolding the ways and grace of God. The direct object of the Holy Ghost is to trace out the line of genealogies from Adam to David, who with Solomon his son is presented as a figure of Christ reigning in His millennial character on the earth, as Son of man, Son of David, and as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Thus the events in their respective histories, which are more particularly figurative of that time, are here given strong prominence to. In the description of the temple, the millennial state of things is especially presented; consequently we find the vail introduced, which is not so in Kings, the little chambers also found there (6:5) being omitted here; for in Kings we have it more as symbolical of that which is heavenly, of the Father’s house, from which the vail for us is gone, and we have boldness to enter into the holiest. While for the Jew in the millennium there will still be a veil, even their prince (which may be the Lord’s vice-regent on the earth) entering no further than “the threshold of the gate,” while “the people of the land worship at the door of this gate before the Lord.” (Ezek. 46:2,3.) Of that place which is now our portion they are strangers. Blessed on earth, it is true, they indeed will be with all earthly blessings. But what is that to ours— “fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ,” and in the very light itself— “these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.” Can anything be compared to such a place as this? May the Lord give us to appreciate it more fully, and be very jealous of our hearts straying away and seeking

rest or joy in any other place but that supremely blessed one—our assured portion through the unchanging value and efficacy of the precious blood of the Father’s well-beloved Son!

The genealogies, then, commence with Adam, “the first man.” Abel is omitted, being cut off in the midst of his days; likewise Cain, who was “of that wicked one;” to make room for Seth, who, in Gen. 4:25, is raised up instead of Abel. Thus early in man’s history is the Brand truth of resurrection brought out as the platform on which everything that is to remain must be built, and contently the only ground on which we can stand before God for permanent blessing.

The seed of God are then named, seven in number (v. 2, 3), that being ever used in Scripture as a number of perfection. While man was thus running riot on the earth, giving full vent to his self-will, God had verse 5 whom He here traces out for us. Noah begins the second group, and his three sons, in the order of their birth, are given; but in verse 5, Japheth takes the chief place. So it is ever; for God always allows nature to work first, that when it fails, as most assuredly it will, and ever does, there may be room for Him to, come in and act in grace according to the goodness of His own heart and perfection of divine wisdom. In Gen. 9:27 Japheth is given the place of power and authority; in accordance with which, in the description given of the inroad of the great northern nations in the latter days upon Palestine (Ezek. 38), the names of his sons and their immediate descendants appear as the stock from whence those nations sprang, who are there found in opposition to God’s people, and to His thoughts and purposes concerning the earth.

The sons of Ham come next (v. 8). He first takes the upper hand, and from him and his seed sprang those who afterward became the bitter and unrelenting enemies of the people of God, and in whom were fully developed the wickedness and abomination of man’s heart. Then, in verse 17, we have the line of Shem whose genealogy is minutely traced out, the period of Babel being especially marked, as it was then that God arranged the nations, with a view to having an elect branch of Shem’s seed for His earthly center. (Deut. 32:8.)

Abraham, the father of his race, is the next to whom a prominent place is given, and his sons; but not in their order according to nature (v. 28), but according to God’s purposes. The child of promise and of grace, the one in whom death and resurrection, as the ground of blessing, is so blessedly set forth, being given the first place, though, as far as nature and appearances are concerned, the other has the uppermost hand. Then Keturah, Abraham’s Gentile wife, comes (v. 32), figure of the Gentiles being ultimately brought into a place of blessing in the latter days. (See Gen. 25)

The posterity after the flesh being given first, then the child of election and grace, we accordingly find that of the descendants of Isaac’s sons, Esau and Jacob. The former has the priority, and we have a long list of them— dukes and princes; but, as is ever the case, nature comes short, it fails when put to the test. We only read of eleven dukes of Edom (vv. 51, 54), but God’s number is twelve. Israel, as such were set the center of His earthly system.

All the sons of Jacob are given, but not in their order of birth, Judah being repeated in verse 3 to lead up to the family of David. Thus we find the circle narrowing. First the family of Shem, from among whom Abraham is chosen out of the midst of idolatries. (Josh. 24:2.) Then, of the twelve sons of Jacob, Judah is chosen to be the royal race, “the one whom his brethren should praise,” “whose hand should be on the neck of his enemies, and to whom his father’s children should bow

down.” (Gen. 49:8.) Though Judah was thus to hold the scepter, and be as a lion’s whelp, the others were all under the care and eye of God, hence have their place here. Of Judah’s sons the eldest is first mentioned, and then when he fails grace comes in, where there was not nor could be any claim (Gen. 38) because of the grossness of the sin; “but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;” hence the line is continued through guilty Tamar, through Pharez, his son Hezrom, and Nahshon, a prince of the children of Judah, to Boaz, who in grace takes up the Moabitess Ruth; from whence spring Obed, then Jesse, of whose sons the seventh and the least is taken from the sheepfolds, from following the ewes, in preference to his elder brother Eliab, the one according to nature, and one so apparently well suited that the prophet of God, when he is brought into his presence, exclaims, “Surely the Lord’s anointed is before Him.” David, of whose root and offspring the Messiah was to be, is thus brought upon the scene, “the man after God’s own heart,” from this point, occupies the chief place, the whole of chapter 3 being given to his genealogy, and to that of Solomon, who along with him complete the type, as far as a type can, of what 2 Chron. especially presents; viz., the reign of Christ as “Son of man” and “King of Israel.” Verse 17 brings us down to the captivity, and 24 beyond it; for Chronicles was written on the return of the remnant under Ezra and Nehemiah. (See 6:15, and 9:1.) Hence the apparent discrepancy in many of the names, their language having in a measure changed during the sojourn in Babylon.

There are two points in these first four chapters that are especially worthy of note, as they bear a practical lesson for our own souls, to which we will do well to give heed. They are the path of Caleb and Jabez. In the one we have the sure and blessed consequences for the single eye and undivided heart; and in the other, that, no matter what the state of things around may be, no matter how great the failure of others, the faith which counts and reckons on God ever finds an answer, not merely according to its thoughts, but according to the heart of the One—even God Himself, on whom it has leant.

In Num. 13:30 Caleb’s faithfulness is narrated, how he stood for God in the face of universal declension; a somewhat parallel time to 2 Timothy, where the apostle, walking in the power and energy of the Spirit of God, is left to stand alone, “all they in Asia having turned away from him;” “at his first answer no man stood by him;” and so will it ever be. He who would be for God, in the midst of a scene where His testimony has been rejected, must be prepared to stand alone. In grace, because of our weakness, He may give us the fellowship of others but not necessarily so. Paul had none; the Lord Himself had none. He was “as a sparrow, alone upon the housetop.” As to Paul, he says, “No man stood by me;” “notwithstanding the Lord stood with me;” for He never fails.

As He stood by Paul, so He stood by Caleb His servant, who, “because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land.” And not only did God bring him into the land, when the others “fell by the way,” but the greater part of chapter 2 is occupied with the genealogy of his family, tracing them through many vicissitudes and fortunes, till, in verse 55, we find “Hemath the father of the house of Rechab,” of whom it is said (Jer. 35:19), “Sonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me forever.” Thus to this day, as far as this world is concerned, a member of the house of Caleb stands before the Lord, —blessed testimony to us of His faithfulness, and proof of how, in a higher and more spiritual way, God ever stands for those who stand up for Him.

Amazing privilege to be granted to such as we are! May we through grace value and count it the highest and most excellent honor that can be bestowed upon us, to stand—it may be alone, and in a place of reproach, yet still to stand—for Him and His truth in the place where it has been either rejected or perverted, where the beloved one of the Father found no place to lay His head, where in the midst of “His own things” He passed a stranger unknown and uncared for save by a “little flock.” May He deepen in our hearts a sense of His grace, of that love which led Him along such a path, that we may be constrained to follow in His footsteps, at a distance it may be; but still to follow, accounting His word to be more precious than rubies, that time our feet may be guided in the way of His commandments, and then, whatever appearances for while may be, the result will prove, that He who stood by Caleb and by Jabez will likewise stand by us; for He is still the same, and still values as highly the feeble efforts of His redeemed ones who stand for Him in the same of His rejection.

“As He Is, so Are We in This World.”

WHAT a thing it is for us, walking in obedience in the Spirit, to be privileged and ABLE to look right up into heaven, and to know, on the authority and warrant of the Word of God, who “cannot deny Himself” (2 Timothy 2:13), that we are, and not waiting to, be, but ARE members of Christ body, of His flesh, and of His bones; because, as BEING “the circumcision,” that is to say, CUT OFF from everything pertaining to nature and the —first Adam, we have, no existence at all before God apart from His Son, now at His right hand, TOGETHER WITH whom He made us ALIVE, having forgiven us all trespasses.

It only fellows, therefore,—for how could it possibly be otherwise?—that we are in this world as Christ is, that is, not morally, but in God’s account, sight, and thoughts, as taught in His Word, with which, and with which, and with which ALONE, FAITH has to do.

Here, then, she takes humble stand, and sets to her, seal that God is love, and shall be, too, in spite of all.

The ground of assurance is the blood of Christ—the power of assurance the Holy Ghost given: there is conflict with the world and Satan, but perfect peace with God.

Homely Conversations.

No. 2.

“Your husband is not at home, I fear, Mrs. —? I wanted to see him, and to hear him say more about that blessed Saviour he has found. What a mercy it would be if you too were saved!”

“I believe I am all right,” she replied.

“Do you, indeed. It is a great thing to say; but there is nothing like it. Only think, right for all eternity! right for all eternity! No, Mrs. —, there is nothing like it.”

“God is very good to me. He hears my prayers. Oftentimes, when I have asked Him to help me, He has done it. When we had the illness, He was a friend to us all those weeks; and I am sure us poor folks could not get on without Him.”

“Quite true; and a mercy it is that you do pray to Him; for, alas! many live as if there was no Creator at all. But what makes you think you are all right for eternity?”

“Why He hears my prayers, and helps me; so I know He is kind.”

“But surely, Mrs. —, you are never going to rest the salvation of your soul upon God’s goodness in giving you bread, and clothes, and house? He feeds the sparrows, and the young lions when they cry, and does not so much as forget the flowers, but supplies them with rain and sunshine, and they have no souls to be saved. Really, you must not think you are quite like the flowers and sparrows.”

“I don’t see what you mean,” replied Mrs. —.

“It says in scripture, ‘He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and unjust.’ But because God is kind, and supplies us His creatures with clothes, and hears our cry when we are hungry, it does not show one bit that we are saved, and all right for eternity. Don’t you see, don’t you feel, that you may be evil and unjust still, and your soul bad and wretched, notwithstanding God hears your prayers about your body for daily mercies. Believe me, unless your sins are washed clean away in the blood of Christ, you will perish in hell! Your husband will go to heaven, because God has forgiven him his sins. You will never get there as you are, but be in torment.”

So we parted, and Mrs. — pondered over her faith in God, and found it was not saving faith,—that it was faith about her body, but not about her soul. “And oh,” said she, “what an awful thing it will be if (her husband) goes to heaven and I am down in hell fire! There he will be singing along with the angels and all the holy people; perhaps the children there too; and I a poor wretch lost in hell fire, with devils and everybody that is bad and wicked.”

The earnest cry, “What must I do to be saved?” now broke out. Neither was it long before she found joy in Christ as her Saviour.

If you were now to speak to her, you would hear her tell of God’s love in the person of His Son, of the gift of Jesus, and of His blood, which cleanseth us from all sin. And the knowledge of His everlasting love only makes it the more sweet to run to Him in every time of trouble, should the children be sick, or anything be wrong indoors or out; for none of our troubles or wants are too big or too small to bring to God.

The World

To be “of the world,” is to be judgment. Solemn truth The Lord Jesus, in the prospect of “what death He should die,” said, “NOW is the judgment of this world.” (John 12) The statement by the apostle John, that “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness,” (or the wicked one,)” is a bold and blessed one for those who are “of God;” but an awful one as regards “the whole world.” The world representatively by its “princes,” or great ones, “crucified the Lord of glory,” and is consequently under the judgment of God for that heinous act.

And yet in love to this very world, God “gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.” (John 3.) But, then, every one who thus believes “is delivered from this present evil world,” and thenceforth is not of the world, even as Jesus is not of the world. They are in the world, and pass through it as those who are sent into it, but they are not of it.

It matters not, then, as regards the standing of a soul before God, what its character is, if it be “of the world.” One may be amiable, moral, benevolent, active, and intelligent in all matters affecting the good of his fellow-creatures, and even devout in the services and charities of religion; but if he be “of the world,” he is under its judgment, from which there is no escape but b” faith in the Son of God. The soul that believes God’s record concerning His Son, the Saviour of the world, is not only delivered from “the wrath to come,” but he is no longer “of the world.” He is “born again,” “born of God,” has a new life; Christ that life, is not a citizen of the world, but has His citizenship in heaven. His hope, His aims, His end, and His eternal portion, are not of the world which fadeth away, but are “of God,” established to Him in Christ, the Son of His love.

“What the Law Could Not Do.”

THERE is a point of immense value, and I may likewise say of striking contrast, between the last half of Romans 8 and the opening verses of Romans 8.

In the former scripture, the commandment, which is holy, just, and good, is so pure as to detect an unknown lust, when applied to my state morally, in the sight of God. Moreover, by its authority and power exercised upon me in enforcing the good and forbidding the evil, it unavoidably stirs into activity what is in fallen human nature, and therefore works in me “all manner of concupiscence.” Further, it convicts me of the detested sin, and charges the guilt of it upon my conscience before God, discovering to me that I am carnal, sold under sin. Nor can the law stop here; for that which was ordained to life necessarily becomes a power of death, and condemns me. Thus Rom. 7 makes an end of the sinner on account of sin, and leaves the culprit in the condemned cell, under the tormenting sense of his wretchedness, and with a hopeless inquiry, “Who shall deliver me?”

On the other hand, Rom. 8 reveals a totally different action on the part of God in grace; so that Christianity, instead of putting an end to the sinner, declares an end of sin by the cross. “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh,” is the measure of this difference; for it could not extricate from the sin it detected, nor slay it in the flesh which had conceived it, nor spare the man who committed it; but, on the contrary, killed him. He was blotted out. This was extermination.

In this way and by such mean God could only be known, as terrible in His holiness, and fearful in His judgments.

The grand reserve of God in grace therefore comes in at this crisis, and He does what the law could not do; for “God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemns sin in the flesh;” but saves the man on whose behalf Christ has died. Sin itself is gone. Death has satisfied the righteous claims of the law, and paid the penalty. Death has been accepted by Christ, and by the blood of atonement God is glorified. The veil is rent, and a risen Lord is gone up to the right hand of the throne of God, in life, righteousness, and glory.

But further, the death of Christ, as our Substitute, by the judgment of God upon sin in the flesh, has separated, nay terminated, that existence for the believer in which he sinned. Therefore, passing out of it, by mean of this judicial death, through “the body of Christ,” in new redemption title, “he’s free to be married to another, even to Him that is raised from the dead, that he might bring forth fruit unto God.”

Another law than “the law of sin and death” now claims him; and in perfect fealty to this new one he can say, “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free.” He is thus separated by death (maintained in him by the power of resurrection life) from that nature in which, as a child of Adam, before he knew Christ, he was alienated from God, the consciousness of which made him cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?” Henceforth, as a new creation in Christ, he takes his stand in life, and, brought into the law of liberty, asserts, “The life that I now

live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

How wondrous are the ways of our God, and unsearchable, save as opened out to us in Christ Jesus the Son of His love, and made good in our own souls by the indwelling Spirit, in present fellowship and love, that even then “passeth all understanding.”

He reads the Scriptures well who brings the from it instead of to it.

We shall never be above our Jeep and increasing sense of the value of the blood of Christ.

The Ten Virgins

THE subject is the kingdom of heaven— “Then shall the kingdom of heaven,” &c. The expression, “kingdom of heaven,” is found only in Matthew, and occurs about 28 times. We have therefore only to look through the passages in which it is found to gather its true meaning. It is generally descriptive of Christendom, including all professing Christians, whether true or merely nominal. Hence we have in “the kingdom of heaven” wheat and tares, good fish and bad, those with and without a wedding garment, and, in the parable before us, wise virgins and foolish. We have not here the church looked at in its unity as one body, but Christianity as found in the earth. It sets forth the course of those who bear Christ’s name, or who profess subjection to Him who is now in heaven, during the Lord’s absence, and shows us the real state of things when He comes again. The context has occupied us with the Lord’s commendation of the faithful and wise servant when He comes, and shows that the nominal professor, or evil servant, must have his portion with the hypocrite. Hence this parable begins with “then,” and treats of the state of Christianity in the earth when the Bridegroom comes, and the separation that must necessarily occur then between the true and false, the wise and foolish.

The profession is alike in all. Each takes a lamp. All pretend to be virgins, pure and chaste in affection and desire towards Christ, and to go forth to meet Him. All who call themselves Christians own, verbally at least, the cleansing power of His blood, and profess the hope of being with Him by-and-by. Hence the regular observance of the so-called sacrament, and the scrupulous celebration of funeral ceremonials. It is very awful; but, alas! how true it is that many are so blinded and deceived. The Lord’s words are, “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.” (Verses 1, 2.)

The next verses show the characteristics of the virgins. “Taking oil” or “no oil” made the difference. The omission of oil was fatal. The possession of oil was vital. The wise knew this, and they had oil not only in their lamps, but had a resource for replenishing whenever it might be needed. “They that were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.” (Verses 3, 4.) If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His, is a plain and most unmistakable announcement. A Christless soul is a lifeless soul. “He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” To them who now obey the gospel, and, thus receive Christ as their Saviour, God gives His Holy Spirit. Hence we read, “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.....And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” (Gal. 3:26;4. 6.)

What a most solemn contrast there is between the wise and foolish virgins. How imperative it is that every individual who professes to be a Christian should most certainly have all his hopes based upon the finished work of Christ, should know Christ at God’s right hand as the object of faith, his life, righteousness, and peace, and have the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. It is one thing to have Bible knowledge, and to possess clear outlines of doctrine, but

it is another thing to receive Christ as the Saviour whom God has sent, to credit the testimony of God's word, that believing in Him we have forgiveness of sins, we are children of God, and are justified from all things. It is easy for any one to call himself a Christian, and to pass among a crowd of others for a Christian, but to trust in the already accomplished work of Jesus, to know Him at God's right hand as the soul's refuge and rest, and to love Him because He first loved us, characterizes every true Christian. What an amazing difference, then, there is between a mere professor and a real Christian! How the consideration of this common error and fatal mistake should stir our hearts to earnestness, and quicken us with unwearied love and faithfulness to those around us! How clearly the parable shows us that many will seal their eternal doom by trafficking in mere outward religiousness, the heart all the while deceiving itself by refusing God's infallible testimony to the finished work of Christ; and consequently, such do not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost! What folly! Could any course be more unwise than caring for a little temporary credit among men, and, when too late, finding it insufficient to deliver them from the wrath to come. What blindness and self-sufficiency characterize such professors! Foolish virgins, indeed!

How very different are the "wise virgins." They reckon on nothing of self. Their hearts are truly set on Christ. With them it is not merely profession, but possession. They have received the Saviour whom God has sent. Their hopes are entirely built on Him. They know His love; they have received the Holy Spirit; they are well provided with oil; they are gone forth to meet One whom they love. It is Christ they are expecting to see and be with, and they have already received "the earnest" of glory. "After ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Eph. 1:13,14.) What security this gives, and what confidence it warrants!

But many a true Christian has been a failing Christian. Many have given way to self-gratification, and become weary of watching. The night soon began to feel long, and the true hope and expectation of the Lord's return to be let slip. Spiritual decline may be very gradual, but not the less real on that account. It may, too, be very general, and yet, alas, how true! We know it has been so. If Church history be correct, the hope of the Lord's coming very soon lost its power. Hence we are told, that "while the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." Wise and foolish were alike involved in this forgetfulness of the Bridegroom's coming. At first there was real earnestness of desire for His return: for we read that the Thessalonian believers "turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, whom He raised from the dead, and delivered us from the wrath to come." It is impossible to mistake the real character of this hope, or to doubt that it is the personal coming of the risen and ascended Jesus that they so ardently desired and waited for. But all grew weary of watching, and "all slumbered and slept."

Union With Christ

It is not correct to say that Christ had union with us in the days of His flesh. He was God manifested in the flesh. He came to save us—to bring us to God. He loved us, and died for us; but He was alone. Perfect in every respect, and holy He was at all times, and knew no sin—was without sin. We, on the contrary, were dead in sins. How could there be union therefore between the infinitely holy and the thoroughly unclean? Impossible. He had the deepest, richest mercy and compassion for us most surely, but that is not union. His obedient to His Father's will and love for us led Him on to the death of the cross. Before that He was a solitary stranger in a world of sinners. The Lord plainly taught this, and showed that union with Himself must be consequent upon His death upon the cross. "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.) This test is enough to show that union with Him could only be after death, and that it could not be before it. Elsewhere we are taught that the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven consequent on the glorification of Christ, forms this union: "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12:13.) While, then, the union of the believer with Christ is righteously based upon the redemption work of Christ, the reality of this union is effected by the Holy Ghost linking believers on with the Head of the body in heaven.

We see Him as Emmanuel—God with us—in every step of His path of sorrow from the manger to the cross, but He thus manifested the grace and holiness of God. In the cross, too, we see the righteous claims of God judicially met in His suffering for sins, the Just for the unjust, but that was to bring us to God. It is, then, in reference to the exalted Christ at the right hand of God that we are taught that "We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones." (Eph. 5:30.) It was always the divine counsel and purpose, even before the world was, that we should be "in Christ," but that could not be established and realized until the transgression and iniquity with which we were associated—the sin under which we were—had been righteously dealt with, and God's holiness perfectly vindicated. When eternal redemption had thus been accomplished, the eternal counsels and purposes of divine love could then unhinderedly flow forth.

It is a fact, then, whether apprehended and enjoyed or not, that everyone who now has the Lord Jesus risen and exalted as the object of faith is united to Christ in the heavenlies by the Holy Ghost. It is a truth full of comfort and blessing to those who receive it as a divine reality, but it is not contingent on our experience or intelligence, because it is entirely the work of the Holy Ghost. If souls were simply influenced by the Scriptures, and depended on the teaching of the Holy Ghost, they would doubtless be instructed in this blessed truth; for when Jesus was going away, and He spoke of the coming and operations of the Holy Ghost, He said, "In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." (John 14:21.)

If this truth were believed, what joy and power in walk and testimony there would be! One with Christ—how high the dignity, how elevated the position! What riches in glory does this standing secure to us! If we enjoyed the truth that we are one with Christ, how could we carry a divided heart, or how could the flow of affection to Himself be checked? What interest could occupy us but

His interests? what place could we crave where He is not? or what honor could we seek but that which cometh from God only?

Thorns

“The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.” Mark 4:19.

PERHAPS, after all, there are no such hindrances to the Christian’s real growth as cares and lusts, or desires. When the heart is oppressed with cares, it soon becomes almost unable to think of anything else, and readily magnifies their importance, until the troubled spirit is unable to live and walk in the atmosphere of its own blessing. The song of joy and thanksgiving soon also becomes exchanged for sorrowful if not discontented feelings. Instead of being above the care, and rejoicing in that blessed One, whom having not seen we love, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, the heart is drawn under the weight of the care, and unable to rise above the region of sight and sense—itsself, its burden, its circumstances. Thus the exercise of the heart by the influence of the word of God is choked; the soul, too, becomes paralyzed for the walk of faith: how therefore can there be fruit-bearing?

To carry our own cares is direct disobedience to the will of God, who enjoins us to cast all our care upon Him, because He careth for us. (1 Peter 5:7.) To carry our own tares, therefore, must arise from self-confidence, and also from not believing the blessed fact that He careth for us. A soul truly self-emptied, and walking humbly before God, finds its own thorough insufficiency to deal with the cares of this life, and therefore most thankfully accepts God’s loving injunction to roll each burden upon Him, who is both able and willing to bear it. The attempt, therefore, of carrying our own burden is positive disobedience, and the fruit of unbelief. The world get on with their difficulties by casting them away, and drowning their effects in the pleasures of sin, in some shape or other; but faith truly estimates the care, or difficulty, or sorrow, or whatever it may be, and in child-like simplicity, and with filial reverence, casts it upon God according to His own word, and finds sustainment in thus dealing with Him who says, “My grace is sufficient for thee.” It is impossible, therefore, that a Christian can be prospering spiritually who is thus preferring to carry his own cares, and refusing to cast all his care upon his heavenly Father, in the happy confidence that He cares for him.

The other point, “lusts of other things,” are also thorns, and choke the word, which doubtless accounts for much of the present unfruitfulness. Few things are more important for those who are in Christ than watching their own desires—keeping the heart with all diligence. The depths of divine mercy, seen in the person of Christ crucified, risen, and glorified, teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to desire, above and beyond every other consideration, the glory of God. If, therefore, our hearts are pining after worldly things, or any things of earth, instead of being content with such things as we have; or striving after worldly position, instead of learning in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content, earthly things become the object of our hearts instead of Christ. Again, if instead of being practically and in heart and soul associated with Christ in humiliation and rejection, whom the world cast out and still refuses, our hearts are desiring more of its wealth, its pleasures, its rank, or its gratifications, how can the Spirit that dwelleth in us be

otherwise than grieved? and how can we be bearing fruit to the glory of God? Was Christ like this?

It is well, then, to search our hearts often as to the desires we are encouraging, and whether we are trying to be our own burden-bearers, instead of casting them all upon God. The heart will not find leisure to search the Scriptures, or to addict itself to much secret prayer, if such thorns are cultivated by us. They are indeed thorns, the natural product of a corrupt nature, the offspring of unbelief, and the results (however unconscious we may be of it) of pride and self-confidence.

Oh, for our hearts to be kept so dwelling in the love of God, that we may be able to live above circumstances, whether painful or pleasant, and rejoice in the Lord always. Should it not be enough for us that all things work together for our good, and that it is God Himself who invites us to cast all our care upon Him. because He careth for us? When the heart is habitually occupied with Christ, finding Him not only all our salvation but all our desire, then it is that we are strengthened both to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to follow Him through honor and dishonor through evil report and good report.

“SHALL I not trust my God,

Who does so well love me,

Who as a Father cares so tenderly?

Shall I not lay the load,

Which would my weakness break,

On His strong hand, who never does forsake?

“He doth know all my grief,

And all my heart’s desire;

He’ll stand by me till death through flood and are!

And He can send relief,

My Father’s love so free,

Till the new morning shall remain to me.

“Who doth the birds supply;

Who grass, and trees, and flowers

Doth beautifully clothe, through careless hours;

Who hears as, ere we cry,

Can He my need forget?

Nay, though He slay me, I will trust Him yet.

“When I His yoke do bear,

And seek my chiefest joy

But in His righteousness and sweet employ,
He makes my soul His care; Early and late doth bless,
And crowneth work and purpose with success.

“O blessed be His name!

My Father cares for me!

I can no longer unbelieving be.

All praise to Him proclaim;

I know He is my Friend;

I know the Lord will love me to the end.”

Short Notes on Daniel.

Chapter 10

To the close of the book we have continuous subject. We are back in the east, and find chiefly powers that sprang up from the ruins of the third monarchy, as in chap. 8, used for types of what will happen to Israel when they are back again in their land, though not owned of God. The visions in 9 and 10 are answers to Daniel's prayers and supplications. The place that he takes in both of these chapters, while it shows what should be the place of every child of God in a day of failure, when that trust which He has committed to them has been abused in every way, as Israel had done with the place of blessing God had put them in in Canaan, is more especially a figure of the path of the godly ones—the remnant Isa. 18, during a time yet to come. When that nation is restored to their own land by the providential dealings of God, as described in Isa. 18, they will be brought through deeper trials than any they have yet known. A false Christ having risen up, the great mass of the nation apostatizes after him, while the faithful will have to learn that their trust is alone to be in Jehovah, who, though He may try, yet cannot forsake them, or forget His own name. Deceived by man on every side, they will have to learn that the flesh—nature, take it in any form you will—is good for nothing in the presence of God. And this is true at all times. “We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead,” is the testimony of a beloved servant, though belonging to the present dispensation, and moving in a different sphere. Has the flesh improved since those days? 2 Tim. 3 and 2 Peter 3:3 will answer.

Daniel is intent on understanding the ways of God with His people. This is ever the case with the godly soul; for that which is occupying God's heart must surely be very dear to those who are His; and if the Church is now what fills the mind of Christ, around whom all the counsels of God center, what, it may well be asked, should occupy us?

For three weeks Daniel makes renewed intercession; at the end of which time no less a one than the very Jehovah Elohim stood before him. He alone saw it, and the effect was that no strength remained in him, and his comeliness into corruption. All flesh must be silent in His present; and Daniel, like others before and since, had to learn that lesson. In verse 10 another touches him—a messenger of the glorious One that had just stood before him—and opening the veil that hides other worlds from view, shows him how God in His perfect faithfulness had heard his prayer from the moment he uttered it, but, for the good of His beloved servant, and in long-suffering patience, had allowed the one who had been opposing man from the very first, and His counsels towards him, to hinder for these three weeks the answer being given. This is one of the few portions of scripture where we are let into the secret of the apparently inscrutable providential ways of God, and of which angels have the execution until the number of His elect are gathered in, and the Church assumes in the glory the place to which His grace has destined her; for “unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come!” But it is with this present age we are here dealing, and find the solemn truth that Satan and his angels are in the heavens ever resisting the carrying out of God's purposes and plans, who for a while may and does allow it, but only for a time. Soon Satan will be cast out of the heavens. First, for a little season, down to the earth (Rev.

12.), then into the bottomless pit for a thousand years, from whence he is loosed and allowed again to test man (Rev. 20.), but only for a moment. The lake of fire is his ultimate doom, there to be tormented forever. An end fully in keeping with the opposition and enmity God in His patience has allowed him to display. From being the “god of this world,” the “prince of the power of the air,” he is yet to be the most miserable of all created beings in that place already prepared for him. Persia being then the ruling power of the world, Satan, in keeping with his character, is called the prince of it. Michael is well known in scripture as the guardian angel of Israel. To his care the body of Moses was entrusted (see Jude), and he will yet take an active part in their restoration to their promised blessing.

Verse 14 confirms the statement already made, that all this refers to the latter days, as we also saw to be the case in 8:19. The thought of what His beloved people have to go through brings such deep anguish and sorrow upon Daniel as to make him set his face toward the ground and become dumb, when One like the Son of man touches his lips, and speaking peace to him, enables this one “greatly beloved” to receive more detailed communications as to future events. Practically this must ever be the case; for until we are thoroughly settled on the ground of grace, and at peace with God, we can neither understand nor receive the knowledge of His will; nor shall we know what peace is till we have learned that all that belongs to the natural man is unfit for His presence. Then, when self is judged, and, through His grace, practically laid aside Christ fills the soul, and the peace of God thus dwells in the heart, fitting it to receive, though at the best but in a feeble measure, because of the earthen vessel in which this treasure is, His thoughts and purposes concerning the various streams of blessing which already have, and will yet flow forth from Him to the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God.

The first Adam was turned out of Eden by God for his sin; the last Adam (Jesus) was turned out of the world by man for His faithfulness.

The way I know that I have eyes is because I behold the object; the way that I know that I have faith is because I look to Christ the object.

Love likes to serve, selfishness to be served.

What Do You Believe?

AMONG men it is easier to bear with faults than with extenuation, yet man’s mouth is full of excuses before Him who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. The penitent cry, “I have sinned,” God hears; the covering up of transgressions He hates. Addressing such as profess to believe God’s word, and who, while owning that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” yet betake themselves to the ten commandments, we shall ask you certain things in order that you may inquire whether you believe “that what things soever the laws saith, it saith to them that are under the law: THAT EVERY MOUTH MAY BE STOPPED, and all the world may become GUILTY BEFORE GOD.”

You have placed yourself under the law, you cry, “Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.” But do you really believe that God means what he says, “Do this and thou shalt live?” Are you depending for eternity in any measure upon doing what the law enjoins? If so, do you believe that once—say only once—in all your life time you have transgressed any one of the commandments? Have you ever had one thought contrary to the holy just and good law? Have

you once desired that which the law said you should not wish for? Then hear the awful sentence, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." You are under this curse if you are under the law. You have offended in one point—you are guilty of all; death is your doom.

Perhaps you are so bold as to spiritualize the law. Now, in sober honesty, what would you say if a criminal, proved guilty of breaking his country's laws, were to address the judge, "My lord, I beg you to observe that I do not take the law of this land literally, and when it says to me, Thou shalt not steal, I understand it in a sort of spiritual sense?" But many men with the fullest assurance, preach and practice a spiritualization—in truth—a weakening of the plain and only meaning of God's law. Such "religion," however it may pass current in this world, will not bold good before God. It should be called by its proper name, impiety, profanity, a taking of the Lord's name in vain, for which He will not hold guiltless. But if you will place yourself under the law, be honest, go to Sinai, hear the rolling thunders and noise of trumpet, behold the lightnings and the smoking mount, and, as Israel did, remove and stand afar off, fear exceedingly and quake; for God speaks thus to you; you are under His curse.

Surely if you do believe God's word, you will give up your routine of so-called "law-keeping," and inquire for what purpose is the law? "It was added because of transgressions." Weighed in its balances you are found wanting. Measured by its standard you are short of holiness. Tested by its proofs you are guilty. The law was not given for a man to save himself by it, but to show him his sinfulness and his powerlessness, and thus to drive him to the sacrifice. "If there had been a law which could have given life verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them who believe. "God has said it," By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If you sow an empty religion to your soul, you will reap everlasting death. May God open your eyes, and show you by His Spirit your real condition in His sight, that your mouth may be stopped, and you feel your guilt before God.

But supposing the impossibility of your having kept the law, and of your having fulfilled all its requirements, there is another standard more excellent than even it by which God will test the children of men. And we ask you, Do you believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God was man upon this earth? Have you considered the grace and truth which came by Him? Yes, it is more excellent than the law which was given by Moses.

We remove then from thunderings and lightnings to behold the glory of God in the face of His Son. You believe the records of His life on earth as given by the Holy Ghost, and see in Jesus perfect holiness and perfect love in the midst of evil and hate. Are you like Him? Have you ever fallen short of His standard? Have you kept all His injunctions as laid down in Matt. 5; 6; 7, and Luke 6? Is your life an exact reproduction of His?

Nor is it sufficient to say, But it is not my nature to bear spittings, scourgings, mockings, as He did. Never to murmur, never to repine, never to threaten. His patience, meekness, gentleness, is divine. Quite true, it is divine, for He is God; yet very Man as well as very God, and in Him you see

what a man the Lord from heaven can be in this world of sinners.

It would be more consistent of persons calling themselves Christians to make Christ their standard rather than the law; yet who in many places would be so bold as to substitute the life of Christ for the Ten Commandments, and cry, Lord, have mercy upon us, make us exactly like Christ?

It was alone in Him that the Father was ever well pleased. Adam did not please Him; every man is full of iniquity, but in Jesus was no sin. Christian (by name), "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

If you are honest, if you believe in your heart what God the Holy Ghost records of the life of Jesus on earth, then you must own your utterly ruined and lost condition; that your nature is polluted in its very springs; that what God delights in your nature hates; that you are an enemy to God by wicked works. We know it is the fashion of so-called Christians to write about the life of Christ on earth, but read what saith the Scripture; compare yourself with Jesus, and you will say, "I am vile, I will lay my hand upon my mouth;" "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

One more question, dear reader, upon these great facts of Christianity and of God's word, which every professing Christian accepts; yet it is even more solemn than what has already been said. To have heard God speaking from Sinai to men is solemn enough, but to hear and see His own Son upon this earth, oh, what can be set beside this? But we say there is an accepted fact vastly more dreadful and yet more blessed. Do you indeed believe that Jesus died for sinners? I would that you entered your closet and shut the door, and alone before God answered this question. Do you believe that He died? that He shed His blood and gave up His life? that man nailed Him to the cross of wood and pierced His side? that verily the Maker of the worlds was nailed to the cross, and wounded, and crucified by the hands and hearts of that very dust—man—to which He gave breath? Can you possibly believe this in your heart, and have one thought of man being worthy of anything save the murderer's doom? Further, do you believe that God hid His face from Him, forsook Him, left Him in the darkness? Left Him in whom was no sin, who knew no sin, Him in whom He was ever well pleased, because He was made sin for us?

If you do so believe, you believe that you yourself deserve all that Christ endured, and (though it would be impossible) a thousand-fold more. If you believe that He took the guilty culprit's place, and suffered in his stead, you believe and feel that your state is so utterly bad that nothing but the death of Christ could meet it. As for self-improvement, as for trying to keep commandments, or for trying to become like Christ, —no, no; all such thoughts are banished forever from your mind the moment you see Christ dying for you.

If you saw a murderer on the way to execution, what would you say to the moralist who bade the man conduct himself in a manner suitable to the dignity of humanity? You would bid the prating fool know it was too late. Or if a religious man drew near and read the unhappy victim a sermon on the ten commandments, you would cry, Away, mocker, it is too late; for such a man there is nothing but the sword of justice and the felon's grave. And so we cry aloud to you, It is too late for morality to save you, too late for religion to save you, 1800 YEARS TOO LATE; there is nothing for you as you are but the justice of God and everlasting death, if Christ be refused as your Saviour.

Our earnest desire and prayer for you is your salvation; but Christ you will never want, His blood you will never value, saved you will never be, heaven you will never gain, unless as a guilty sinner you draw near to God. It is a melancholy task to dwell so much upon evil, but may God prove to you your guilt by the law, your polluted nature by the life of Jesus, His judgment upon you by the death of His Son, and give you to own yourself guilty, condemned, dead in sin.

What would you say to the physician who allowed your dearest friend to die without warning him of his approaching end? The very thought of such cruel selfishness stirs your indignation, but with what feelings shall the preacher of peace be regarded when there is no peace; no peace in time or in eternity!

“Whiter Than Snow.”

Snow is very white; perhaps the purest, the most spotless, thing we know in nature. But there is something whiter than it. What can that be? No one could have supposed what it is if God had not said so. It is the sinner who is washed in the blood of Jesus. How blessed! “Purge me with hyssop,” said David, “and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” The hyssop, doubtless, refers to the bunch of hyssop that was often used for sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice, and certainly pointed to the all-cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That blood takes sin so completely away from the sight of God, that it leaves the one who is washed whiter than snow. Hence in one of Israel’s worst days of sin and failure the inspired prophet exclaimed to the sinful people “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool” (Isa. 1:18.) And the voice of God in the New Testament is, that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin; that He who is the brightness of His glory,” and the express image of His person, upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on “the right hand of the majesty on high.” The sins being purged, the sinner is thus cleansed, spotless and unblameable in God’s sight. It is the person, the believer himself, that thus stands justified before God. It is God who justifieth. He says so. He tells us also that the ground on which He pronounces present justification is the blood of Christ. “Being now justified by His blood.” And the person justified is he who believes. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5:1.) And lastly, that the character of the justification is to account the sinner that believes righteous in His sight. Marvelous grace! But so it is, and so it has ever been; for “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” “And to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Rom. 4:3,5.) This is not the righteousness of the law, but, as we are told in Rom. 3, the righteousness of God; and it is this which God has blessed us with in Christ— “Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” This is not man’s work, but God’s work; it is not through our doing, keeping commands, ordinances, or anything else, but what God has done for all that believe in His Son Jesus Christ. Hence it is written, “Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto as wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” Surely such persons as God accounts righteous in His sight, as standing before Him in all the acceptability of Christ, as made the righteousness of God in Him, have a spotlessness and purity, that of them it can be said, They have been washed, and are made “whiter than snow.”

We are informed that when John Bunyan was one day walking in a field under great distress of soul, with an unusual sense of his own vileness, he says that he heard, or thought he heard, a voice saying to him, “Your righteousness is in heaven.” He went to his home, and turned to his Bible, and though he could not find the exact words, he found the blessed truth, that Christ in heaven is the righteousness of every one that believeth. Oh, the heart cheering blessedness of those two line of divine truth running all through Scripture—the judgment of God of sins and of

sinful self in the cross of Christ, and the gift of life, righteousness, and acceptance in Christ at God's right hand.

"WHAT is the foulest thing on earth?

Bethink thee now, and tell:

It is a soul by sin defiled,

'Tis only fit for hell;

It is the loathsome earthly den,

Where evil spirits dwell.

"And what's the purest thing on earth?

Come, tell me if thou know:

'Tis that same soul by Jesus cleansed,

Washed whiter far than snow;

There's naught more pure above the sky,

And naught else pure below.

"God's eye of flame, that searches all,

And finds e'en heaven unclean,

Rests on that soul in full delight,

For not a spot is seen:

Cleansed every whit in Jesus' blood,

Whate'er its guilt has been.

"He sees no sin, but sees the BLOOD

That covers all the sin;

'Tis Christ upon the soul without,

'Tis Christ he sees within

To judge it foul were just to judge

God's Christ Himself unclean.

"Thou Lamb of God! Thy wondrous grace

This great redemption wrought;

Not only snatched from yawning hell,

But to God's bosom brought;
And raised the ruined wrecks of sin
Above created thought."

True Worshippers: Who Are They?

It is a wonderful thing that man, so far from God as he is by nature and practice, should now be brought, through the redemption—work of Jesus, upon the ground of thanksgiving and worship, before the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we sometimes sing—

“Once a rebel far from God,

Now made nigh through Jesus blood.”

But so it is; and so perfect too in its character that the Holy Ghost enjoins us, in the epistle to the Colossians, to give thanks unto the Father, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of saints in light.

The question now is not as to the place of worship. That time has passed. Jerusalem was the place where men ought to worship. God’s presence was then specially associated with an earthly temple, and an earthly order of priesthood. That made it the place where men should worship. The question now is as to the worship and worshippers being true; and it is a serious point, especially in a day like this, when so many imagine, because they have visited a so-called place of worship, they must have worshipped. It is important therefore to see what scripture says on the subject.

Strange to say, the person who introduced the subject of worship in conversation with our blessed Lord was a woman of notoriously immoral character. The conscience having been aroused by what she had heard, she, like many others, took shelter in the religious ways of her forefathers, and claimed relationship with those who had worshipped in Samaria’s mountain. “Our fathers,” said she, “worshipped in this mountain.” The truth is that man so ignores the fact of being a fallen creature in Adam, that he takes for granted that he is competent to worship God, and that it is simply a matter of opinion with him as to when, and where, and how. This is a fatal mistake. It is quite true that God did establish priesthood, ordinances, and a worldly sanctuary on earth at Jerusalem for His ancient people, and there was the place of worship; but even then the uncircumcised and unclean were forbidden. The vail too which then separated the holiest of all from the holy place was still unrent; thus showing that man, though under covenant, was at a distant from God. Since then the vail of the temple has been rent from the top to the bottom, —a sacrifice of everlasting efficacy having been offered and taken away sin. Jesus too has entered into heaven itself with His own blood as our great High Priest, so that by faith we can now enter into God’s own presence in the heavenlies and worship.

We therefore get no mention in the apostolic writings of any place of worship on earth, and for this reason, because we are welcomed to the throne of grace, and enjoined to enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus. This is the new and living way, through the rent vail, that is the sacrifice of Jesus, spoken of by the apostle in the tenth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews.

If this be not clearly perceived, and acted on in faith, people must retrograde to Jewish ordinances of sight and sense; and a place on earth will be revered, and a Jewish order of priesthood

acknowledged; and thus the way of faith and the path of the Spirit will be exchanged for something to gratify the natural mind, and more or less intoxicate the senses. We walk by faith; and the moment the walk and life of faith are given up, the activities of human intellect will return to something visible and carnal as a compensation. It may not be rank ritualism at first, but in principle it will be the same.

There are two great systems of religion in the Bible —Judaism and Christianity. The former was suited to people standing in nature, and it would have educated and cultivated the natural man if he had been capable of it. But we know how entirely he failed. The other—Christianity—is spiritual; it is for faith, and sustained only by the power of the Holy Ghost, and an unseen living Head and Lord in the heavenlies.

The maintenance of the two is wholly incompatible. Christianity came in on the ground of the entire failure of Judaism. The warning voice of the Galatian and Hebrew epistles are against persons getting weary of this life of faith—real Christianity, and returning to Judaism. We are therefore not surprised at finding this tendency, though its present extent is most alarming. The great point of instruction in Hebrews is to show that Christ has fitted those who believe for God's presence, giving them liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. This is most blessed, and clears fully the ground for true worship.

The entire change in this character of worship is shown by our Lord's emphatic remark, "Believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father... But the hour cometh, and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." (John 4:21,23.) Thus true worshippers are clearly defined. They are not associated with any place on earth. Its entirely spiritual character forbids it. But the object of worship, and the qualities of worship, are plainly set forth.

The Father being the object of worship, redemption must necessarily be the ground of worship, and those who are the children of God the worshippers. It is not merely the acknowledgment of God as Creator, or Almighty, or as Jehovah, as He was made known to the children of Israel; but it is God known and recognized as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of those who believe in His name. This knowledge is one mark of a regenerated soul. "I write unto you, little children, because you have known the Father." (1 John 2:13.) Reconciliation to God, a purged conscience, peace with God, acceptance in the beloved, and conscious sonship, seem to be involved in the necessary qualification for intelligent worship. The reason is this: God has now revealed Himself in Christ. He has spoken by His Son as having purged our sins and obtained eternal redemption for us; as having gone into heaven by His own blood, where He ever lives to make intercession for us. Jesus, the Son of God, therefore is now known in heaven. He is the great High Priest passed into the heavens for us. He declared the Father when on earth; He is the great High Priest in heaven as the Son consecrated for evermore. In Him we know the Father. We are sure that the Father sent the Son. He said: "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." (John 16:28.) The counsels of the Father, and the work of the Holy Ghost, are to make us children through Christ. This is true of all believers. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:26.) "Ye not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8:15.)

Thus we see that those who believe God's revelation of Himself in the Son of His love, and are taught of His Spirit, cannot fail to know Him as Father, and be taught to cry, Abba, Father. We see also why the Father should be the object of worship. We know that Jesus, who is of the seed of David, is God over all, blessed forever, and that the Spirit leads us to call on the name of the Lord, and to commend ourselves to Him. Nor is the eternal Godhead and personality of the Holy Ghost overlooked; but Jesus is presented to us rather as the way to the Father, and the Holy Ghost the power of worship. "Through Him [the Lord Jesus] we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18.)

It is then to the Father, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, chosen us in Christ, predestinated us to the adoption of children, redeemed us by Christ, accepted us in Christ, and sealed us with the Holy Spirit of promise as the earnest of our inheritance, that the Holy Ghost directs us in worship. This is surely a wealthy place—the ground of everlasting praise, of adoring gratitude, of ceaseless thanksgiving.

The qualities of true worship mentioned by our Lord are two— "in Spirit, and in truth."

In the fourth chapter of John's gospel the Lord is especially speaking of the gift of the Spirit, which should be, in those who received it, as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Elsewhere he spoke of the thorough unprofitableness of the flesh; hence another power was needed to bring forth acceptable fruit to God, whether it be prayer, or worship, or service of any kind. Hence we read in Jude of "praying in the Holy Ghost," marking the faithful in an evil day. So here it is worshipping "in spirit." Nothing can be plainer, than because God has pronounced "the old man" to be a corrupt tree bringing forth only corrupt fruit, that He has given us another power— "the power of the Holy Ghost." Capable of being grieved, and quenched, and resisted He most surely is; yet we are distinctly told, "that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" and that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." We are therefore cast upon the Holy Ghost as the power of worship. It is also quite true as to prayer; for "we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26.)

But as scripture links the Spirit and Christ together, though speaking of them as distinct persons, so we find the Spirit and the truth also constantly presented together. Seeing this keeps souls from the fanaticism and extravagancies that some have fallen into. We know nothing of Christ but as He is revealed to us by the Spirit and through the written Word. So we know nothing of the Holy Ghost but in connection with Christ and His truth. He is the Revealer and Testifier of Christ, and guides into all truth.

Thus we are told that true worshippers worship the Father in Spirit and in truth. This leaves no door open for man's opinions, or the workings of the imagination, but plainly teaches us that the true worshipper is subject to God's truth, and therefore worships "in truth." It is not simply sincerity of purpose, but presenting to the Father that which is in the spirit and energy of divine truth. This shows the need of getting God's truth by searching His word, and meditating upon it habitually in dependence on His Spirit. Human tradition is not God's truth. Man's deductions from Scripture may not be God's truth. Jesus said, "Thy word is truth." The vital importance of these two qualities are again commended to us by their repetition in the next verse: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Observe, too, the peremptory character of the

worship here insisted on. It is “must,”—not should, or ought, but “must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.” Nothing could more plainly set forth the absolute necessity of the worship in order to its being acceptable, being in the spirit and according to God’s truth. The spring of true worship is the true knowledge of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it consists rather in telling God what He is, than what we are.

The true worshippers, then, are those who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. And oh, how blessed it is to know that the Father SEEKETH such to worship Him. What marvelous grace! It is He who says, “Come boldly to the throne of grace.” It is He who says, “Enter in with boldness [liberty] into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus.”

The important question for the reader now is, “What do you know of this spiritual worship? Do you take your place before the Father as a true worshipper, knowing that He is seeking such to worship Him? Do you rejoice in being a child of God, and an accepted worshipper? if not, where are you?”

Remarks on Matt. 24, 25

The Ten Virgins.

THE long silence, however, was broken. The culpable quiet of the slumberers was disturbed. A soul-stirring sound was heard. "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." And the cry was effectual. A general awakening followed. All were aroused. "Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps." It is not well to speak positively, perhaps, as to when this part of the parable had its accomplishment; but it is very remarkable, that until about forty years ago the hope of the Lord's coming seemed to be entirely lost. This, too, had been almost universally the case for many centuries. When about that time this "blessed hope" was earnestly set forth by many of the Lord's servants in different parts of the world, and especially in this kingdom, a decided awakening took place. Since then, where the testimony of the Lord's personal return has been proclaimed, thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, have been aroused; and, with fresh-girded loins and trimmed lamps, have found it their heartfelt joy to go forth to meet the Lord. It is remarkable, too, that when the hope of the Lord's coming has been truly set forth, the finished work of Christ, the security and standing of the believer as accepted in the Beloved have been preached in connection with it; for it is evident, if I have the present possession of everlasting life, if I am a child of God, if I have passed from death unto life, and am now complete in Him who is the Head of all principality and power, I can wait only for glory. If our citizenship is now in heaven, what can we look for but the Lord Jesus Christ to come and change our vile body, and take us up to meet Him the air? I refer to this, because it is clear that Scripture does connect the present standing and security of the believer with this "blessed hope." On the other hand, as we might expect, Satan has taken certain parts of prophetic truth, and turned to his own evil purposes, by associating with them some of the most pernicious doctrines; and in this way uses prophecy to endeavor to undermine some of the most important parts of divine revelation. The perfection and glory of Christ Himself make everything manifest. Prophetic events, or any other doctrine, may amuse the activities of human intellect, but the heaven-born soul is taught that Christ is all. It is Christ Himself he looks to, draws from, seeks to please, sympathizes with, and waits for; and when He is really the heartfelt enjoyment of the soul, it is easy and happy to be subject to His word and Spirit; and such cannot stray far from the truth.

But to return. In all ages there have been, doubtless, true Christians; and it may be those, too, who held fast and enjoyed the doctrines of divine grace, and have been filled with love to the truth and service of Christ. But going forth to meet the Bridegroom in the energy of bridal love, is what marks the wise in this parable, and characterizes those who have received the testimony of His coming.

Observe that though the arousing spoken of in this parable is first of all general, it soon becomes connected with inevitable separation. The true devotedness of the wise virgins to the Lord Himself, carried on as they were with faith and hope, soon made manifest the awful fact, that there were among them those who had "no oil." Their destitution was apparent to themselves as well as to others. The consequence was, they were compelled to halt, they were unable to keep pace with

the faithful ones; and separation necessarily ensued. It is a most solemn and instructive lesson. Were it better understood, we should not find true Christians complaining of their being associated with so many they feared were only mere professors, and had “no oil” in their lamps; for a few faithful steps on their part in the narrow path of faith, and love, and hope, from felt personal love to Christ, would at once leave such far behind. It is the unfaithfulness of Christians that has given the opportunity to the enemy to make false professors. “While men slept the enemy come, and sowed tares.” It is a searching and important point, and demands the most solemn consideration before the Lord as to the path we are each personally pursuing. As long as all were slumbering and sleeping, it was most easy for those who had “no oil” to be found in ostensible association with those who had. But when the heart was aroused towards Christ and glory, and faith and hope in obedience to the divine cry gave impetus and power to those who were really true to the Lord to go forth to meet Him, then the awful discovery became apparent, that many of those found in their ranks were mere professors—had lamps, but “no oil.” And surely it is clear now, that nothing so effectually separates the Lord’s “little flock” from those around, who plead only for outward and visible things—sensational religion, if you please, instead of personal devotedness to Christ in faith, and love, and hope, and obedience to the Word of God—as being practically stirred up to own and follow the Lord at all costs, in blessed hope of soon having every desire of the soul satisfied by seeing Him at His coming.

CHRIST has no place in the natural heart, but He is everything to God’s heart.

WE have in redemption not merely forgiveness, but deliverance. This is what a soul taught of God feels he needs: “Who shall deliver me?” Redemption is a person taken out of the state he was in, by price, and brought into another. It takes us out of our condition as children of Adam, and brings us into the condition of children of God, with all the value of Christ’s work upon us. God has no remedy for the flesh but death.

Choosing and Refusing

OF all the objects that have been presented to you, may I ask, dear reader, which is the one of your heart's choice? Is it worldly pleasure? Is it money, rank, worldly accomplishments, or the like? Is it self-advancement, or any other form of self-love? Is it religiousness? or is it Christ? God's heart is set on Him. He delights in Jesus His beloved Son. He found a savor of rest in Him. The world knew Him not. They said, This is the Heir: let us kill Him. They saw no beauty in Him. His gracious words, "loving ways, and" tender-heartedness had no charm for men then; they did not desire Him. Their choice was "not this man, but Barabbas;" "away with Him," "crucify Him." This is very solemn; but is it not true? Therefore it is that I ask you, in all love, on what your heart is set? what are you delighting in? what are you choosing? You cannot serve two masters. It must be either Christ or something else.

You refuse also. Those who chose Barabbas refused Christ. How very affecting is the thought; but so it is. Everyone around us is both choosing and refusing. What are they refusing? Ah! that is the question. The Lord had to say, in the days of His flesh, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." They were refusing Christ, refusing life.

Dear reader, do you know Jesus the Son of God? I do not ask what religion you profess; but I do ask, Is He the object of your heart's choice? Is He the chiefest among ten thousand to your soul, the altogether lovely? Can you, do you say of Him, "This is my Beloved, this is my Friend?" It will be so if He be the object of your heart's choice; if you have received Him as the Saviour whom God hath sent. (1 John 4:9, 10.)

May I ask you, then, what you are CHOOSING? and what REFUSING? Moses, a man of faith, refused the world's honors, and its pleasures of sin. Why? Because he had something better. His deliberate choice as a man of faith was rather to identify himself with poor men working at the brick-kiln, because they were God's people, than the royal court of Egypt; and to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to have a transitory enjoyment of the pleasures of sin, knowing that God would reward him for his faithfulness. Have not these always been the principles of faith's choice?

But, alas! what are people about? Are they choosing the pleasures of sin, or Christ? And what is God about? He is publishing the glad tidings of present and eternal salvation for even the chief of sinners, through the blood of Christ, that "whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Oh, how many, it is to be feared, will hear the awful words, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." (Prov. 1:24-26.)

Again, dear reader, I would affectionately ask,—

WHAT ARE YOU CHOOSING? AND WHAT ARE YOU REFUSING?

Not of an Address

“For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

Ex. 12:12-13.

GOD’S sentence of judgment had gone forth upon all the land of Egypt. His testimony by Moses had been again and again rejected, and now God’s hand must smite. His long-suffering has ran its course. He had repeatedly manifested His displeasure, but it had been unheeded. His patience could no longer endure. He said, “All the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die.... and there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt.” Thus death was threatened throughout all the land. God declared it should be. This was enough. The result we know.

And so now the word of God speaks of coming death and judgment. God’s testimony of abounding grace has sounded in men’s ears for a long time. “any have rejected it. Few believe the record He has given of His Son, and inevitable judgment is pending. The sentence has been passed— “now is the judgment of this world.” The executioner is coming— “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.” (2 Thess. 1:7-9.) It is certain then that terrible judgment is coming, and that it is simply a question of time as to its execution; there surely will be sudden and everlasting destruction, and they shall not escape.

Nor could it be otherwise, for men are not only practical transgressors, but by nature unclean, and therefore unfit for God’s presence. Every trial has only proved man’s sinful and undone condition. God has tried man first, in innocence, then without law, and under law, by privileges, priesthood, prophets, kings, by the personal ministry of Christ, and now by the ministry of grace by the Holy Ghost; and all have proved man to be only corrupt and evil. Early in man’s history, God’s testimony was that “the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man are only evil and that continually;” and still the declaration of God is that “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” (Rom. 8:7,8.) This is God’s verdict, and the sentence is final. Whether people agree to it or not, it is God’s righteous estimate of man. How terribly has he fallen! If these men in their natural state do not, and cannot please God, how can they be fit for His presence? The ways of men invariably prove that such is the heart’s condition; for if God commands he disobeys. If God sends His Son to bless and save, they hate without a cause, despise, and reject, saying, “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him, that the inheritance may be ours.” If God preaches pardon and peace, they will not believe. As therefore the judgment upon the Egyptians was deserved for rejecting God’s testimony, so the coming wrath is inevitable because of man’s terrible wickedness,

and thorough unfitness for God's presence.

Dear friends, do you believe that you are so utterly and incurably bad as God says you are? Do you not see that you cannot make yourself better, much less fit for God's holy presence—that you really are, notwithstanding all your fancied improvements, only rushing headlong to the eternal judgment of the living God?

We may next observe that before the judgment actually come, God, in His pity and love proclaimed the way of escape. So He does by the gospel now. The people were told to take a lamb without blemish, to kill it, and to make the blood of the sacrifice the sole ground of their safety. And so the precious blood of Christ, the Lamb without spot and blemish, is the only ground of safety now. We have not therefore to seek a spotless lamb, for God has provided it, and it is slain, too. Jesus is the Lamb of God, His beloved Son, the Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us; and His blood has been shed, and shed too for sinners. "Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God." Nothing can be clearer than first, that judgment is coming; and secondly, that God has provided, and by the gospel, proclaims a way of escape in the atoning death—the precious blood of His beloved Son.

But the vital point in this narrative is that they availed themselves of the full value of the blood, by putting themselves under the shelter of it. This many do not do. They go no further than the bare knowledge that judgment is coming, and that Jesus is a Saviour. They do not believe to the salvation of their souls. The people were told to "take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood, and strike the lintel, and two side posts of their houses with the blood." This being done, they were to remain in their houses all that night; in fact until the judgment had passed. In this way only could they be safe.

This is to us the vital point. Many stumble here, and are forever lost, for there is safety no where else.

"Nothing can for sin atone

But the blood of Christ done."

They know they are sinners, and assent to the truth that Jesus died for sinners, and is the only Saviour; yet they do not avail themselves of the value of His atoning work. They do not take shelter in His blood as the alone ground of safety before God. This is unbelief. God declares that "without shedding of blood is no remission;" that it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin; that in Christ we have redemption through His blood; and that the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. There is not a sin too deep or too black, but that precious blood can wash away, for it cleanseth from all sin—sin of every sort and degree. Yes, it is the blood which maketh an atonement for the soul; and happy indeed are those who believe God's testimony to the efficacy of the blood of Jesus, and know that blood to be their perfect security from the wrath to come.

What folly it is to pretend to be a Christian, and not believe God's testimony to the atoning work and sin cleansing blood of Jesus. Oh, my beloved hearers, have you believed the record God has given of His Son? and are you sheltered by His blood from the coming wrath? Can you say you have no ground of safety or of peace with God but the blood of the cross?

Now let us see what God said to those who took Him at His word, and relied entirely on the sheltering power of the blood of the lamb. He told them two things. First, That the blood, (mark! not their feelings, or opinions, or even prayers, but the blood) and the blood only, was to be the token to them of their perfect safety. Come what might, they were to think of the blood, and they were to be in peace, because sheltered by it. "The blood shall be to you for a token in the houses where ye are." This is most blessed. The cure for every fear, question, or suggestion of the enemy, was found in the divine assurance, "You are perfectly safe, because of the blood." Secondly, God said: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." Thus we see that the blood answers every claim of God, and meets every need of our souls.

My dear hearers, be assured that God knows the heart that trusts in Christ. He knows every soul that has availed himself of that everlasting shelter, and He will never allow the sentence of condemnation to fall on such; for "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." My beloved friends, let me solemnly and affectionately ask you if God, who reads every thought of your heart, sees that you have taken refuge from coming wrath in the blood of Jesus; and believing His testimony as to perfect safety through that blood, that you have peace before Him? Is it so? If not, why not now take refuge in Him who is at God's right hand, the Lamb of God, and give glory to God, by finding every need of your soul met in the blood of His cross? Nothing can be more plainly taught in Scripture than that redemption is alone through the blood of Christ. We are told that Christ entered into the holy place with His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

But further, let us notice the results. The judgment did come according to the word of the Lord. In every house in Egypt where the blood was not, death lay prostrate the firstborn; and there was not a house in Egypt where the blood was, that the destroying angel entered. The most perfect safety was realized by all those who were sheltered by the blood. And so it will be; for the long of those who are brought to glory, and there forever gaze on the adorable Lamb of God, will be, "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Not only redeemed from our lost and ruined condition, but redeemed to God, and all through the blood of the Lamb. This faith knows now, and the heart delights to say, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Rev. 1:5,6.)

"Not half His love can I express,

Yet, Lord! with joy my lips confess,

This blessed portion I possess,

O Lamb of God in Thee!

Peace.

An Extract.

AT the birth of the Lord, the earth was saluted with words of peace. "Peace on earth" the angels proclaimed in the fields of Bethlehem.

This, however, was but a salutation. It was not the authoritative pronouncement of peace. It was like the word which the Lord afterward put into the lips of His twelve or rather of the seventy, in Luke 10, when sending them out; for He then told them, into whatsoever house they entered, first to say, "Peace be to this house." This was a salutation, a wishing well, the proclamation of good-will towards the house, not an authoritative pronouncement of peace; that would rather follow in its being found that the son of peace was there.

Upon the resurrection of the Lord, however, we have the other thing. "Peace be with you," the risen Saviour said to His disciples, then returned to them and when He said that, He showed them His hands and His side. He gave them to read their title to peace. Peace was now, not merely wished, but authoritatively pronounced, conveyed to them on the warrant of the cross. Jesus now gave peace to them, because He had already made it for them. And this is the peace that we, who are in it, may testify to our fellow-sinners. We do not merely like the commissioned seventy, say "Peace be to this house" as saluting it, or wishing it well, but we proclaim to it the sure, settled, purchased peace, which sinners have title to in the blood of the cross."

“I Believed You Wished to See Me.”

The foreman of one of the factories in a small manufacturing town in the north was anxious to know what he had to do to be saved. His master was a man of God. He loved his foreman, and often prayed for his salvation. At last he thought that God would bless a step he was going to take in order to bring the soul of his foreman to see that God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. 2:4.) Accordingly, the master wrote a note to the foreman to come to see him at six o'clock, after he left "work." At the appointed hour the foreman was before his master, with the letter in his hands. "Do you wish to see me, James?" his master inquired. "You wrote to me, sir; you wished to see me; here is your letter; I believed—." "I see, James, you believed my message, and you came at once—." "Surely, sir!" replied the anxious foreman. "Well, James, see here is another message for you by your Master and Saviour, more in earnest than I for your eternal welfare; here is an invitation to you for today, giving up your works; read here, James, in His own word, His loving message to you." James took the Bible and read, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." (Rom. 5:8-10.).

While James was reading his lips quivered, and his eyes filled with tears. At last, with a smile of gratitude to his master, he said, "I see! I have just to believe God's merciful message in the same way I believed your letter." "Just in the same way," replied the master. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."

Reader! you believe man, who can disappoint you; believe God's word— "He cannot deny Himself."

Remarks on Matt. 24; 25

The Ten Virgins.

The lamp, however, soon went out. The need of oil was manifest. The one question now is, Where can a supply be had? Alas! what ignorance, with all the profession! But ignorance and unbelief always look to some human resource. They know not Christ the Son of God, and therefore make not God their refuge. They flee to man. How characteristic of their real state! They cry, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." And is not this what we constantly find? When many are really in trial, or roused in conscience to a sense of their perilous condition, not knowing the blessedness of fleeing to the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, they take refuge in their fellow-man for help; but it always ends in disappointment according to the Scripture, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." So it was with these foolish virgins. The wise can only tell them of the folly of looking to them for oil, of the impossibility of having their need met by them; but they assure them also, though it be at the last moment before the Bridegroom comes and the door is shut, that oil is still selling, and to be had without money and without price. And this is quite plain, but while they were considering the matter, while they were intending to have some, yes, while they were going to buy, the Bridegroom come, and the door forever shut. Oh, how solemn this is! It is neither poetry, nor fiction, but it is a picture to the very life, drawn by the Lord Himself, of what is still going on to this awful reality. "While they went to buy the Bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage, and the door was shut." The wise virgins are safe and happy — "forever with the Lord," according to His faithful word. But the foolish now discover the tremendous reality of being shut out from the Lord's presence. Their deep and fatal folly was specially marked by two things. 1st. By being content to have credit among men for being Christians, without divine spiritual life. "They that were foolish took their lamps, but took no oil with them;" and 2ndly. By turning to man for oil when the conscience was awakened, instead of to God through Christ. Their final state too is settled by the Lord's own words, "I know you not." Elsewhere it is said, "He knoweth them that trust in Him," but here it is in reply to their cry and knocking to be let in, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

What other lesson could we learn from this most solemn and instructive portion of divine truth but the importance of watching. Hence our Lord adds, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour" (verse 13). The remaining words of the verse are omitted in all the best copies.

"He comes! He comes! the Bridegroom comes!"

The "Morning Star" appears;

The "cloudless morning" sweetly dawns;

Saints, quit this vale of tears.

Your absent Lord no longer mourn;

Reproach no longer bear:

“He comes! He comes!” Rise, happy saints,
To meet Him in the air.
“He comes! He comes! the Bridegroom comes!”
Oh, sinners, hear the sound;
Accept Him now if you among
His chosen would be found.
Still mercy’s offered—costless—free,
No longer turn away;
“He comes! He comes! “Oh! linger not,
Come “While ‘tis called today.”

The Talents

This parable presents another line of instruction. Here we have the responsibility of servants. It is not the question of profession or possession, but present responsibility to the Lord during His absence, and His future dealing with the servants according to their having been faithful or unfaithful. It gives therefore the most solemn instruction, that when the Lord returns He will inquire into the practical conduct of those who have taken a place of service during His absence. It is presented to us in the most homely, simple way, but full of most serious and searching questions for the heart and conscient, especially in a day like this, when many scarcely deem a man respectable who does not in some way or other profess to be a servant of Christ.

In the Lord's remarks on the sheep and goats which follow this parable we have a sessional judgment, but it is not so here. It is true that each case will be entered into, and dealt with according to the Lord's perfectness, but it does not follow that all will be disposed of at the same time. For instance, we expect the Lord's true servants to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be with the Lord, and to be manifested at His judgment-seat, before we come forth with Him in manifested glory. The judgment of false people, such as tares, will not be till we appear with the Lord at His coming to judge first the quick or living, then the dead. The Lord therefore speaks of His going away, committing certain talents to His servants, and when He returns making the most solemn inquiry as to the use they had made of them during His absence. He likens Himself therefore to a man traveling into a far country, who called His own servants and delivered unto them His goods. "After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them." (Matt. 25:14,19.)

As to the talents, it is important to notice that the servants do not all receive the same number of talents. "Unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one." There was also in the distribution of the talents regard had to the fitness, natural fitness of the vessel, to whom the talents were entrusted. He gave to every man according to His several ability. This shows not only the perfect wisdom of the distribution, but also assures us that the Lord never gives talents to people who have not the ability to use them. It is remarkable, too, that the persons who faithfully used the talents not only gained by trading, but the talents actually increased in number, the servant got "other talents." Nor should it be overlooked that it was not the person who had several talents committed to his trust that so grievously failed, but the servant that had only one talent. How true it is that he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.

How few seem to consider what responsibility there is connected with the profession of the Lord's service. The Lord has been absent now for a long time. More than eighteen hundred years have passed since He rose from the dead, and sat down on the right hand of God; but the night is far spent, and the day is at hand. The long-suffering of the Lord has been very great, the door of salvation by grace has long been wide open; but long-suffering must have an end, the door must be shut, and the Lord must judge those who have professed to be His servants. "After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them."

The judgment of the faithful servants is simple enough, and nothing can be happier. They knew the Master's loving heart; they proved His succor; they experienced His blessing. The joy of the Lord was their strength; His love constrained them; His worthiness enabled them to append their talents in His service with alacrity and delight. They were conscious, too, of vast increase gained by trading. Thus the more they sowed, the more they reaped; the more they gave, the more to them was given. They therefore see their Master's face with joy, and render their account with confidence and cheerfulness. "So he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. "The Lord commends and honors him." His Lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (vv. 20,.21). Nor is this all, the talent which the wicked servant did not use was also given to him. With this exception we find the same confidence and joyous confession to the Lord of the one who had used the two talents faithfully, and the same proportionate increase by its use. He has also precisely the same commendation from the Lord: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (v. 23). This is very blessed, and shows that the Lord does not expect from us what He has not given us power to perform. While He loves a cheerful giver, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not. The great instruction seems to be that the Lord expects us to use faithfully for Him during His absence what He has entrusted us with, and at His coming He will reward us accordingly.

The account of the servants who had but "one talent," reads to us the most solemn and serious lessons. The chief feature in his history is, though professing the Lord's service, that he has a bad opinion of Christ Himself. This is fatal. He believed not the record that God gave of His Son. He saw nothing attractive in Him. He received not the grace and truth that came by Him. He perceived not the inimitable beauty and worth of Jesus. He knew not the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich. This was the root of all His unfaithful conduct. How could he be faithful to one of whom he had such thoughts? "He that had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I know thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed." With such thoughts of our adorable Lord, how could there be confidence? How could the heart be melted and sweetly drawn into willing happy devotedness to such an austere man? No marvel then, that the further confession of his heart, uncovered as it was in the presence of Him whose eyes are as flame of fire, should be, "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." (verses 24, 25.) Not a word of faith, or love, or true knowledge of Christ in the whole confession! Like another king Saul, he might have had a splendid gift, but the vessel was unclean, unreconciled, unwashed, untaught by the Spirit of God as to his own guilt, and his need of the infinite suitability and perfectness of the atoning work of the Son of God; his heart was not right with God; there was no right motive in action in his soul. Hence the Lord pronounces him to be "wicked," "slothful," and "unprofitable." He convicts him from His own lips, and shows his utter inconsistency with his own principles: "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." (Verses 26, 27.)

There is a point that must not be overlooked in the Lord's judgment of this wicked servant. It is this. The Lord permits men here to bear His name, and to be called His servants by others who manifestly know Him not; but it cannot be so in eternity. Everything now covered up is then to be thoroughly unmasked; men will be consigned to punishment as they really are. There will be no professors of the name of Christ in hell fire. If the one talent be but the bearing of the name and truth of Christ, he must be entirely stripped of every shred of it, and go to the pit of everlasting torment as a wicked man, for such he really is. There are those who in the holiness and brightness of the Lord's presence are declared worthy of that name they have confessed before men, and Christ is not ashamed to call them brethren, or own them as His good and faithful servants. "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Verses 28-30.)

Can anything more solemnly admonish us to attach the deepest seriousness and reverence to the Lord's service; or more simply instruct us as to the grace of the Lord Jesus, and personal acquaintance with and enjoyment of Him, who suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, as the spring of all faithful service to Christ. Does it not also show how careful we should be to urge any to the profession of the Lord's service who are not truly reconciled to God by the peace-making, peace-speaking power of the blood of the cross?

O blessed Lord! what hast Thou done!

How vast a ransom paid!

Who could conceive God's only Son

Upon the altar laid!

Lord! while our souls in faith repose

Upon thy precious blood,

Peace, like an even river, flows,

And mercy like a flood.

But boundless joy shall fill our hearts,

When gazing on thy face;

We fully see what faith imparts,

And glory crown thy grace.

Whosoever

A young man was greatly troubled about his soul. He knew that he was a sinner in God's sight; and so deeply did he feel this, that he was often ready to lie down in despair, saying, "Is it possible that God can save such a miserable sinner?" In the day time he thought of hell as his justly deserved punishment, and at night he would sometimes imagine himself shut up in the pit of outer darkness. He tried to reform, and live proudly on his good works; but, alas! he got nothing better, but rather grew worse. One evening, however, he was passing a large building, where a servant of the Lord was preaching. He went in. Soon after he entered, he heard the preacher call attention to the words of our blessed Lord, "Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16.) Mark, said he, this word "WHOSOEVER!" For the first time this troubled hearer began to perceive the freeness of God's grace in the gospel, and to think there was some hope after all, even for such a sinner as he was; because "whosoever" included him, and every one else who accepted Christ for his Saviour. I need not say, that by the power of the Spirit of God, his heart was thus led to look wholly to Jesus for salvation, and thus found joy and peace in believing, and has delighted in the service of the gospel for many years.

Dear reader, Have you thus simply accepted Christ? Are you trusting in Him who died on the cross to save sinners? Is the precious blood of Christ the sole ground of your peace with God? With many others this saved young man can say:—

Until I saw the blood 'twas hell my soul was fearing;
And dark and dreary in my eyes the future was appearing;
While conscience told its tale of sin,
And caused a weight of woe within.
But when I saw the blood, and looked at Him who shed it,
My right to peace was seen at once, and I with transport read it;
I found myself to God brought nigh,
And "Victory" became my cry.

But there is another "WHOSOEVER," equally general in its scope, and free in its application. Yet, oh, how wide the contrast! "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15.) Mark, it is "whosoever;" no matter who it is, or what plea is raised, it is "whosoever;" for God is no respecter of persons. How solemn. If a man has not Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the giver of everlasting life for his Saviour, how can his name be written in the book of life?

Indifference

INDIFFERENCE is the destroyer of souls. There are more who perish by this fatal poison than by any other cause, for we speak now to such as know the truths of God's word and not to heathen. Men are earnest about health, business, pleasure, about all that concerns them in this life, but about their future existence they are careless and unconcerned.

Nor even upon the dying bed do sinners always rouse to their true condition; when the world and its pleasures are fast receding from their gaze, they too often die as careless, as thoughtless, as indifferent as they lived.

And not only does the heedless patient sink down unmoved into death, but, too frequently, the living around him use their endeavors to hinder the awakening of his soul. "He is too sick today to be conversed with upon such matters,"— "He has seen too many friends on worldly affairs to see a visitor on religious questions at present." And if, by entreaty, the visitor gains access to the patient, his words about eternity will probably be interrupted by remarks upon the pain or patience of the sufferer! And when the short visit is over, and the few words about eternity spoken, the nurses of the sick man will probably by vain talk blunt the edge of all that has been uttered.

Even religion (so called) itself is used as an ally for the destruction of the soul, is made the handmaid of indifference to being pardoned by the blood of Christ, and in this way a man upon his death bed says he is unprepared to die; he is without peace—without Christ. Then comes someone and prays with him, or administers the sacrament to him, and the sick man, relying upon the prayer or the sacrament, wraps himself up in soul-indifference and dies.

Were it not for the mercy of God and His determination to save sinners, disappointed and heartbroken, what would those do who seek to rouse sinners! But His purpose is to save, His gracious will is to bless sinners, and thus, in spite of all the carelessness and heedlessness of souls, we are assured that some shall be awakened by His Spirit to their true condition and to His forgiveness.

And to you, careless and indifferent reader, in the assurance of His infinite mercy and compassion, the following incidents are related, that He may speak to you by them.

The first case may be yours, like the poor dying man of whom we speak. Your unconverted friends may shut the door upon those who would speak to you of Christ in your last moments! We were asked some little while since to see a man, who, though a moral liver was known to be not even a professor of religion. We begged admission, but were refused by his wife on the plea of his very great weakness. Whether any Christians ever saw him during those fearfully important last hours we know not; all we could do was to write down some texts upon a slip of paper, begging his wife to read them to him, earnestly praying God to save his soul.

The wife, like too many in similar cases, satisfied herself by saving her husband was very patient and resigned. If you, reader, hedge yourself up with indifference in health, your friends may hedge

you up from hearing about Christ and His blood when you are sick and dying. Yet should your friends allow some faithful Christian to speak with you, as it was with the poor man of whom we are about to speak, so it may be with you. You may hear that none but Jesus can save; that you may be washed in His precious blood; that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, in order that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life; and you may say with him in reply, "Please come again tomorrow, I am very tired today." Your visitor, as did his, will leave you hoping to call again, and while doing so probably reminding you, "Unless your sins are forgiven in this life, poor dying man, your soul will be lost forever." You too may die as did he, before you or any one else expected. On the morrow—the day he begged his visitor to call again, his soul had gone to God who gave it, and his body, in which the soul had tabernacled more than forty years, was waiting for the grace.

If you, reader, make tomorrow your opportunity, you will die before you expect it, and perish forever.

"Come again tomorrow!" Alas, how many times has your soul so spoken! After hearing some solemn sermon, after reading some stirring tract, after perusing the scriptures, after the death-bed of a friend, a neighbor, your heart has replied with the fatal echo "tomorrow!"

Those dying words, "Come again tomorrow," ring in our ears. True, the man was sick and weak, and nature was overcome, but on the morrow eternity had begun for him, and for him indifference had ended. All was reality, all intensity, all earnestness.

If that soul is lost, then all the unutterable darkness of the future of the lost in his. No tomorrow bringing hope on its wings, but a night without a morning ray. "Blackness and darkness forever." Immeasurable words— "forever!"

If his soul is saved, then his joys who can describe them? Their duration who can utter it? "Forever with the Lord,"—with Him who bled on Calvary for sinners, whose nail-pierced hands are still out-stretched towards sinners, whose voice will lead the triumphant anthems of the redeemed.

Reader, indifferent reader, oh that you could spare some tears for your lost soul, some moments for eternity! Would that the beseeching of those who have been brought to God by His grace might move your spirit, and that you, awakened, earnest, longing to be saved, might find mercy in the precious blood of Jesus the Son of God.

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED." (Rom. 10:9.) What love!

"God is love, I surely know

By the Saviour's depths of woe:

In His spotless soul's distress

I perceive my guiltiness:

Oh, how vile my low estate,

Since my ransom was so great!"

What Is Your Treasure?

“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”—Matt. 6:1.

DEAR READER, I want to say a word or two to you respecting your treasure and your heart. Mark these two words, treasure and heart. You may at first be constrained to say, “I have no treasure; what treasure have I? what has this paper to do with me, I should like to know?” Well, my friend, that is the very point I wish to bring before you. It is for you I pen these few lines.

You say that you have no treasure! But how can this be—no treasure? Look at the words again—no treasure. If you were to ask me, I should certainly say that you had a treasure, and you may even now have one.

Perhaps you may, even now, seek like some others to turn the question from you, and say, ‘Yes, if I had a thousand pounds in the bank, with all the interest added to it, I might boast of a treasure; but I have not even as many pence, therefore I certainly have no treasure.’ My friend, you will excuse me, but I must press this thought upon you. Allow me to say that you have both a treasure and a heart. Doubtless you will quickly reply and say, ‘Yes, I know that I have a heart; but as to treasure, you are wrong there.’

Now, let me ask you what it is that you consider a treasure? Is a treasure confined to hard cash, or to landed property? I think not. The common way of judging what a treasure is, is to fix upon that which the party most values. It is the manner of persons to take great care of that which they consider the most valuable. It is not always the case that persons value the same thing, or to the same amount. One man may value a small thing, another may fix upon quite a different thing. One may value his farm—another his house; a third may set a very high value upon his horse—another his business; and another is taken up with his standing in life, &c.

I don’t forget or deny that these things have, and ought to have, their proper place and attention, of course they have; and it is not my desire to speak a word against the proper use of all good things, but I want to convince you that you have a treasure. Yes, a treasure!

Think of it with due attention. Let me ask you, what is that which you are pressing after every day of your life? Your morning, mid-day, and evening object, to gain which a hundred other things are laid aside. It may be a trifling thing, or it may be a great thing, it may be a worthy thing in its place, or it may be a worthless thing. One thing is as successful as another in the hands of the enemy to occupy the soul with. Anything or everything may be used by Satan for the injury of poor souls.

The word of God tells us that “where the treasure is, there will the heart be also.” Now, to get at the true state of things, as to our condition, the question to the point is this, where is the heart? If my treasure or your treasure is in the world, then, according to the word of everlasting truth, the heart is in the world also. In that same word I read that the world lieth in the wicked one, that he, Satan, is the prince of this world. And what can be the state of any man who is satisfied to be in such a condition as this?

To be in the world, and of the world, and to be ruled over and guided by the great enemy of God and man, is a sad and dangerous condition for any man to be in. Yet Satan blinds the eyes of many simple souls with the every-day toil of this poor world.

If man has a treasure, then the Christian has a treasure. And what and where is the Christian's treasure? Look at his treasure for a moment. What is the Christian's treasure? The treasure of him who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven, and that treasure is the One who died on the cross for sin; and He that believes in Him is entitled to say, "My treasure is in heaven." What does the word say of such an one? Why, that the heart is there also.

Now, my reader, this is the point I wish to bring you to. Is your treasure in heaven? Is the object you most prize in heaven, or on earth? You may answer this to yourself, to your own heart, or you may answer it to God. He knows well whether His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the treasure of your heart or not. Could you, dear reader, tell God that you do not love Jesus Christ His Son so much as you love some poor feeble thing in the world, or it may be the world itself?

Perhaps you don't believe it, but it is not the less true, that Jesus Christ is the most despised, though the best friend that man ever had. This is the great question with God, one that He has yet to settle with man. Happy is that man who flies to the cross of Christ, and knows it is settled there. If settled there it will be well, and you are saved; but if it is left for the day of judgment, you will be forever lost as sure as you read these lines.

Bow to Christ on the cross, and you are saved. God saves everyone who comes to Him by Christ, that is, who comes depending upon the blood that was shed there. Every man is a sinner against God, and God will save every sinner who depends upon the death of Christ. God is abundantly satisfied with Christ's death and blood; are you? What else can you want? God will receive you THROUGH Christ, not without Christ. He only saves by Christ, and Christ crucified.

Now let me again ask, Where is your treasure? Where, and what is the most precious object you possess? Is it Christ? Is He the joy of your heart? If not yet, when will it be true of you? The answer of some is, 'I hope and trust;' and that may be your thought at the present moment. By what reasoning do you come to the sad conclusion that tomorrow, or next week, or next year, will be a better time for your receiving Christ than today, this hour! Why you don't put off loving your child, or your father, till tomorrow, and why put off your soul's salvation?

Let me caution you against these sad delays, and beseech you to fly to the cross of Christ at once. The end of the day of salvation is drawing nearer every day we live. The end is near. Judgment is near. Jesus has been in this world once, but He is gone, and gone to come again. To the world I can say, "Every eye shall see Him!" That day is hastening very fast, and when that day comes, it will be too late to think of getting salvation; then it will be judgment, not mercy; now it is mercy and not judgment.

It is well to remember that judgment will be for those who will not have mercy at the hands of God. Fruitful fields and a flourishing business are acceptable to man, provided he may use them for his own purpose, and according to his own will. These things are for the body, and therefore man delights in them; but what God offers to man in the cross of Christ is for the soul, and for eternity, and this the eye cannot see. Faith is not sight, and sight is not faith.

The eye saw Christ when He was here on earth, but it was and is faith only that can lay hold of Him for the soul's salvation.

How do you now think of your treasure? Can you yet come to the belief that you have one? How as to your heart as well as to your treasure? Once more let me press this question upon you as to your treasure. Certainly you have some object upon which you look with deep interest and value much. If so, where is this treasure? May I ask you, if it is Christ that you value, and is it Christ that you delight to think upon? If so, well, but if you are fixing your heart and affections on any other object, I cannot promise you joy or comfort, or any real benefit. What is all the world, or ten thousand worlds, if the soul has no Saviour for eternity?

There is a Saviour provided for the sinner, but on these terms alone: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) In this way God can save any one, yea, delights to save, and therefore you, if not saved.

J. T.

Separation; or the World, What Is It?

WE may speak of the world as a great system built up by men and Satan, where those who are of it are trying to be happy without God and Christ. It suits therefore the lusts and habits of a fallen and depraved nature. Its works, whether moral or immoral, are evil; whether highly esteemed among men or not, they are displeasing to God. (John 7:7.)

Scripture tells us that the world is that which is not of the Father, and that Satan is the prince of it; "for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:16.)

We all are naturally of the world. We all were having no hope and without God in the world. The holy Son of God was hated by it. The world knew Him not. So morally sunken was it that none of the princes of this world knew Him; for had they known Him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Hence it is that the cross of Christ manifests the real moral condition of the world. Every department of this vast system was represented at Calvary; they were associated together in the crucifixion of the Son of God. All were unanimous in crying, "A way with Him," "crucify Him." "Not this man but Barabbas." The cross therefore left the world under judgment. "Now," said Jesus, "is the judgment of this world." It secured also such triumph and victory over Satan, that his final overthrow and ejection were certain. "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." (John 12:31.) Thus we see at that moment the doom of the world and Satan fixed. Though Satan may be allowed to go to and fro in the earth as a roaring lion for a little longer, still the divine verdict is passed that he "shall be cast out."

The world then is doomed; its sentence passed; its executioner coming. A little while, and Christ will come in flaming fire taking vengeance. Instead of preaching peace and salvation to the chief of sinners as He now does, He will then put all enemies under His feet. To this the world is madly rushing, in ignorance and unbelief. Like prisoners in a condemned cell, they are trying to amuse themselves and make merriment by indulging the forgetfulness as to where they are hastening, and what so speedily awaits them. But, though crying, Peace and safety, the Lord will come upon them as a thief in the night, and we are told that "they shall not escape."

Now, while Christ is seated at God's right hand, crowned with glory and honor, God is sending a message to every creature. This is "the gospel of the grace of God," and it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. The testimony shows how righteously God can do this, because His beloved Son has accomplished eternal redemption by His death on the cross. In this way those who believe are delivered from the world and redeemed to God. Those who are not redeemed to God must be condemned with the world.

The believer then is no longer of the world, though in it, but is chosen out of it and made nigh to God. Instead of being of the world, he is supposed in scripture to be suffering with and for Christ in it, and hated by it. "If ye were of the world, the love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19.)

On receiving Christ as his Saviour, man's position is entirely changed. He is in Christ; He is delivered from his old position of enmity and distance from God, he is reconciled to God, has peace with God, and is made nigh to God. By the blood of Christ he has not only been delivered from the guilt and condemnation of sin, fear of death and hell, but he is redeemed to God. So that after we have been caught up to meet Christ in the air, and are taken to the actual enjoyment of heavenly glory, we shall be forever conscious that the blood of Christ has been our sole ground of access into it. We shall, therefore, while gazing on the Lamb as it had been slain, sing, "Thou art worthy, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. 5:9.) Hence also it is that we are told that "Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world (age), according to the will of God and our Father." (Gal. 1:4.) We are never taught in Scripture that God's purpose by the gospel is to improve the world, or to convert the world, but that God is now calling out of—mark out of—the Gentiles a people for His name; and after that He will turn again in blessing to His humbled people Israel. (Acts 15:14-16.) Well might our Lord say that we are not of the world, even as He was not of the world.

Nothing then can be plainer than the fact that the Christian is rescued from this present evil world (age), chosen out of it—not of it—and made nigh to God on the ground of an already accomplished redemption. No marvel then that such are exhorted by the Holy Ghost not to be conformed to this world, not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, but to come out from among them and be separate. No wonder either that to hate our life in this world, deny self, take up our cross daily and follow an earth-rejected Christ, should stand so prominently among the essentials of real Christianity.

In fact the cross of Christ has forever snapped every link that connected us with this great system which is under condemnation. That the heart is slow enough to admit it is quite true. The selfishness of nature would hold this present world, and fellowship with Christ in the heavens too, if it were possible. But sooner or later it must learn that "no man can serve two masters."

Carnal reasoning will utterly fail to deliver souls from a spirit of worldliness; and those too who exhort most warmly on the subject are often deeply disappointed as to the result. But when the heart grasps by faith the divine reality of our new position, new relationships, and new life, as now made nigh to God in Christ Jesus, and through His precious blood, then the pleadings of time and sense are utterly silenced, and the glitter of a moment's sensual gratification completely outweighed by these eternally blessed considerations.

It is not merely that we have no abiding city here—who has?—but though, as a matter of fact; we are in the world, we have been delivered from it of it, chosen out of it, are not of it; but as children of God sent into it, not to do our own will, but the will of our Father in heaven. (John 20:21.)

How unfaithful to God, then, it is for a Christian to be contending for a position in it, or for the glory of it! How unfaithful, too, to the ungodly around, not to bear witness to the doom to which they are so rapidly hastening! How it dishonors God! How it deceives souls! Were our hearts more tender, our eyes would surely weep over many around us thus acting. Though not enemies to Christ, such are surely enemies to the cross of Christ. It is easy to plead the hackneyed excuse of "usefulness," or to gain popularity by mingling with the ignorant and unsaved in their delusive cries of "progress" and "advancement;" but is it true to Christ? Does it suit Christ? What saith the Scripture? The

Pharisee's aim was usefulness; but what marked Christ was, that He was "the faithful witness," and it was His meat and drink, not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. We need to look well into this point, and see whether our own wills are guiding us, or whether we are really set on doing the will of God our Father. We shall then be ministers of blessing to those who are of the world, and expect nothing from it but what Christ had.

The world has its varied departments, and presents a religious as well as an irreligious side; but who can help on either in true love and faithfulness to God or men? It is easy to see others pandering to the allurements of the age; but the question for each heart is. Am I doing it? or, Am I practically siding with Christ, who has been crucified and cast out by it? Nationalism may go to the world for money, titles, honor, and patronage, and securely hold them by Act of Parliament; and dissenters may go also to the world for money, titles, honor, and patronage, without an Act of Parliament; but where is the moral difference? Nothing can be more plainly taught in Scripture than that the Christian's place is to go forth unto Christ without the camp, bearing His reproach; and servants of God in a former day so faithfully trod this narrow path, that we are told in Scripture that "they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles for His name's sake." Nothing can be set in wider contrast in Scripture than the moral position of a saved and of a lost soul; one who is in Christ, and the other who is of the world. It is well to remember that we are called, not only to believe, but also to suffer for His sake.

The world's comfort and joy, such as it is, is based on the endeavor to obliterate in entire forgetfulness the fact, that the Son of God has been wickedly put to death by it. The delusive hopes of the world's religion are vainly cherished by the false idea, that man is not so sunk but that he is capable of being raised; which is quite contrary to the divine verdict, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. 8:7, 8.) No doubt the reason why so many Christians have so pandered to the world is, losing sight of God's revealed mind as to what it really is, and what the value of the cross of Christ is in giving everlasting deliverance from it, and failing also to enter into the blessed fact of the new and eternally blessed position God has given us outside the world—the other side of death—in His beloved, risen, and ascended Son. Thus the waters of death and judgment roll between us and the world, as truly as the waters of the Red Sea rolled between Israel and Egypt, while their feet were standing on the dry ground, and they saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore.

Christians formerly rejoiced at being counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. Some, however, will tell us that was in a dark age of the world's history, as if "the world" had ceased to be "the world," or had grown into something of a Christian community. But what saith the Scripture? When Paul describes prophetically the state of Christendom in the last days, the Holy Ghost carefully adds, not only that "seducers will wax worse and worse," but that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus"—not may perchance suffer — "shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3) The soul too must feel this, who knows that he is linked with a rejected Christ. Paul keenly felt both the privilege and the smart when he exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6:14.)

The great cause of spiritual leanness among so many Christians in our day is, doubtless, much to be ascribed to worldliness of spirit and action; for this not only dishonors the Lord, but so grieves

the Holy Spirit that dwells in us, that the soul cannot enjoy the Lord's presence, and the power of His precious truth. A discontented spirit, and worldly lusts, encouraged instead of being denied, spoil the soul of that peace and blessing it would otherwise enjoy. Those are happy Christians who are content with such things as they have; for the Scripture tells us that "Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things." (1 Tim. 6:6-11.)

Nothing, therefore, can be more antagonistic than vital godliness and the world; and nothing be more contrary to God's mind, or unfaithful to men than the attempt to hold the both positions. The two are so incompatible, that we are told that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God; whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.) Can anything be plainer? Surely to maintain honest callings, or to work with our own hands to live honestly in it, is not being of it, but obedience to the Lord's word. A single eye can easily detect the difference.

Before concluding, let me ask, What was our state when the gospel found us? We were surely "dead in sins," "ungodly," and linked with a world under judgment. We were therefore under condemnation: first, as having a sinful nature; secondly, as transgressors of God's truth; and thirdly, as of the world. How then has God righteously met us in this triple condemnation? By the death of His beloved Son on the cross; "for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3.) Thus Christ died for us—in our stead, so that "our old man is crucified with Him." This shows our deliverance from the condemnation of a sinful nature. As to transgressing, we are told that "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree," and that "He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." Thirdly, as to the world "He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Thus the cross of Christ doses our history as "of the world," "under law," and "in the flesh." We are born again by the Spirit and word, and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts; crying, Abba, Father. Children of God now by faith, sealed, and united by the Holy Ghost to Christ Jesus in the heavenlies—our Life, Righteousness, and Head—we are left for a little while in this doomed world as pilgrims and strangers, to abstain from fleshly lusts, to serve Christ faithfully, and to wait for His return from heaven.

Do you then, dear Christian reader, take this place practically, as not of the world but as of God? In a former time Christians could say, "We know that to are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John 5:19.) Elsewhere scripture speaks of separation even from religious persons and things that dishonor the Lord, but it is the world in its broad aspect that we are here considering, as calling for separation from, standing in heart and conduct outside it with Christ, whom it has rejected, and still rejects.

"Before His cross we still are left

As strangers in the land.

“O leave us not in this dark world,
As strangers still to roam;
Come, Lord, and take us to Thyself,
O Jesus, quickly come!”

A Thought on the Lord's Supper

An Extract.

"IT is the remembrance of Christ Himself. It is that which attaches to Himself; it is not only the value of His sacrifice, but attachment to Himself. The apostle then shows us, if it is a dead Christ, who it is that died. Impossible to find two words the bringing together of which has so important a meaning—the death of the Lord. How many things are comprised in that He who is called the Lord had died! What love! what purposes! what efficacy! what results! The Lord Himself gave Himself up for us! We celebrate His death. At the same time it is the end of God's relations with the world, on the ground of man's responsibility, except the judgment..... We show forth this death until the rejected Lord shall return to establish new bonds of association by receiving us to Himself to have part in them. It is this which we proclaim in the ordinance when we keep it. Beside this, it is in itself a declaration that the blood on which the new covenant is founded has been already shed: it is established in this blood.....The object of the Spirit of God here is not to set before us the efficacy of the death of Christ, but that which attaches the heart to Him in remembering His death, and the meaning of the ordinance itself. It is a dead, betrayed Christ whom we remember."

Luke 5:27-28

Who would not follow Thee, blest Lord?
Constrained, like him of old, to rise and leaving all
His heart was centered in, his hoard,
It may be of ill-gotten wealth, at Thy kind call
To follow Thee, through weal or woe,
E'en to the cross, on which Thou didst
Thy loving soul pour out to death,
For all who follow Thee.
Fain would we follow at Thy gracious word,
"Faint yet pursuing," though it be,
Do Thou the strength impart, dear Lord,
Still would we follow on, for none can lead like Thee.
How solemn the resolve to follow Thee below
Through scenes from which thine absence
Makes a blank that naught can fill—
Forward! we'll follow Thee.
Hast thou not sent the Comforter to dwell
Within all those who follow Thee along
The path which Thou Thyself from hall
Hast traced, with loving purpose firm and strong;
Swiftly we'll follow soon when Thou, O Lord,
By the Archangel's voice and trump of God,
Shalt shout our summons to the air!
Gladly we'll follow Thee.
A. M. H.

Where Will You Spend Eternity?

MY reader, let me affectionately ask you where you will spend eternity? It must be either in glory and happiness with God and the Lamb, or in darkness and misery with Satan and his angels. Now do consider the question which I again ask, Where will you spend eternity? You may say, perhaps, I do not like to think of such things; it only makes me gloomy and sad. Why is this? Can it be from any other cause than your having a guilty conscience? Look the matter fully in the face, I beseech you! If you knew that God had forgiven your sins, and that Jesus had gone into the Father's house to prepare a place for you, could it make you unhappy to think where you will spend eternity? Impossible!

Dear reader, beware lest you lose your own soul—lest your present trifling be suddenly stopped by the word going forth, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee!" Only consider what God has done to save sinners; what wonderful love He must have for guilty, ruined sinners, to give His Son, His only begotten Son, to come into this world, and die upon the cross to save them! Yes, dear reader, Jesus died for such sinners as you and I. Instead of punishing us for our wickedness as we deserved, God loved us, and sent His Son to atone for sin by His death upon the cross. So that this work having been accomplished, God can now freely and justly forgive all those who avail themselves of the sin-cleansing value of the blood of Jesus!

Take refuge then, dear reader, in Jesus, who once died upon the cross to save guilty and lost sinners, whom God raised from the dead, and has seated at His own right hand in the heavens. Consider that it is God, against whom you have so sinned, who says, "Through this man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts 13:38-39.)

Oh, dear reader, why not believe? Why not believe now? Why not take God at His word now, who says that, if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you are justified from all things? Believe then, and rejoice, because God says, through the blood shedding and death of Jesus He justifies you from all things. Then you will be able truthfully to say, I shall spend eternity with Jesus in glory!

Beware of Men

I HAVE heard of a butcher who had great trouble to get his sheep into the slaughter-house, on account of the passage leading to it being very narrow, until he succeeded in so training a black sheep to go through the passage, that, whenever he wished to slaughter a flock, he brought out the black sheep, which they all unsuspectingly followed through the narrow passage; thus they were beguiled and killed, without any difficulty, while the black sheep was spared to repeat his enticing ways to the destruction of vast numbers of others.

And, I ask, do we not see something very similar to this practiced all around us in reference to the souls of men? Can anyone fail to see, that much of the religious excitement of the day consist in following the precepts and opinions of men? Is it not one of the cunningly devised stratagems of the great enemy of souls, to draw men to perdition through the instrumentality of false guides? People say, "Is he not a good man, educated, talented, eloquent, charitable," and the like? Thus they go onward, little thinking that, step by step, they are being led by a wolf in sheep's clothing in the way to enter darkness, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

Oh, my reader! if ever there was a day when the true servants of Christ were called on to cry aloud, "Beware of men!" it is now. Why? Because it is most manifest that the devil, who can transform himself into an angel of light, has His trained emissaries, whose business it is to lead those around them, (unwittingly perhaps,) by a false religion, downwards to eternal destruction.

Dear reader, Beware of men! God himself has marked out the only way of salvation. Christ crucified and risen is the only Saviour. The written word of God, the only standard of truth. The Holy Spirit, the only "Spirit of truth." The blood of Christ, the only sin-cleansing remedy. Nothing can be plainer. God's word is certain and decisive. He speaks of two, classes of persons—the saved, and the lost—believers and them that believe not. Oh! beware of men! "You must be born again." The Holy Spirit alone can make the Saviour precious to you. Turn ye, why will ye die? Hear, and you shall live. Acquaint now thyself with God, in Christ, and be at peace. Death and judgment are close at hand. Escape for thy life.

Take God at His word. Receive Christ. Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned. Oh! listen to the sweet words of Jesus, the Saviour of sinners: "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."

"Thine, alas! a lost condition,

Works cannot work thee remission,

Nor thy goodness do thee good;

Death's within thee, all about thee,

But the remedy's without thee,

See it in thy Saviour's blood."

Dear reader. Once more I say, Beware of men! for Satan's great object is to "blind the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them;" and, perhaps, this is never done so effectually as by a false shepherd. Consider this, I beseech you. Are you sure that you have no companion, or esteemed acquaintance, or so-called religious friend, by whom you are being led? Think of what I have told you about the black sheep. A true man of God does not wish you to follow him further than he follows Christ, nor to submit to him in anything not plainly in accordance with the New Testament Scriptures. He speaks to you of a full, free, present, and everlasting salvation in Christ alone—that His blood is the only ground of forgiveness of sins—that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth—that all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of, grass....but the word of the Lord endureth forever.

Again. Beware of men! for what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? May you at once turn to God with confession of your sins! Believe now on His crucified Son, and you have everlasting life.

"The moment a sinner believes,

And trusts in his crucified Lord,

His pardon at once he receives,

Salvation is full, through His blood."

A Few Thoughts on Psalms 32 and 33

THERE in a striking moral advance in the order of these two Psalms, and yet a very necessary connection. Indeed the ability to “rejoice in the Lord,” and to “praise the Lord,” can only be known by the man whose conscience and hearts have first been led through Psalm 32, and set in conscious blessedness with God by the knowledge of transgressions forgiven, and sins covered.

“Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity; and in whose spirit there is no guile,” become, then, the upper and lower chords (so to speak) of the sweet Psalmist of Israel’s melody. How beautifully note follows note, as He tells us of our security, and “that the floods of great waters shall not come nigh unto us,” yea, that in trouble the Lord is our hiding-place, and we “compassed about with songs of deliverance.” Our David sweeps his hand across the harp, according to this range, and bids us wake up the chorus for ourselves, and be glad in the Lord and rejoice: yea, louder still, to shout for joy.

The conscience and heart, as we have said, must needs pass through this thirty-second Psalm, that the confidence of the soul may take up these assurances to itself; and having done this, be free to get into another and a new place; and praise the Lord for what He is in Himself. This is the theme of Psa. 33, where we are told that “praise is comely for the upright;” and “earn the notes of our new song: and then bidden to play skillfully, and with a loud noise. He founds our new strains upon the fact that “the word of the Lord is right, and all His works are done in truth; that He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.” Such are the ascending scales of the man after God’s own heart; and the descending ones, though of another character, are necessarily equally exact. “The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. For the counsel of the Lord standeth sure, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.” In jealousy for the Lord, he looks round on the right and on the left, and sees the foremost man, of the world, but only to refuse him, “There is no king save” by the multitude of an host,” He glances at the pretensions of a mighty man, but only to say, the is not delivered by much strength.” “A horse is a vain thing for safety” with our Psalmist; and without reserve he blots out such notes as the king, the man of might, and the high-mettled horse; they have no place in the melodies of faith and of God.

Again, he turns his hand upwards, and says, “Behold the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, to deliver them, and keep them alive.” His last notes of confidence and repose of soul under such protection are, “Our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name;” and, “Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”

The Lord, in all that He is, thus overtops every fear of the conscience about sin, and brings the heart that knows Him to repose upon His sufficiency and love. May God keep His saints so near Himself, that they may make melody in their hearts to Him, singing with the Spirit, and with the understanding also. Conscious blessedness in the creature can only find its proper expression in

rejoicings and thanksgivings to the Blessed, and in the celebration of who and what He is!

Notes on an Address

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.”—Rom. 8:1-9.

“For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power.” Col. 2:9,10.

BY a Christian I mean a person who is “in Christ;” not a mere nominal professor of Christianity as contrasted with a Mohammedan, an idolater, or a Jew; but a sinner who has received the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God sent, as his Saviour. By being “in Christ” I do not refer to God’s eternal purpose, but to the blessed reality of being regarded by God as now standing before” Him in all the acceptability of His beloved Son. God purposed before the world was that all the saints of this present time should be “in Christ;” but, as Paul says, “we were in the flesh,” “all by nature children of wrath even as others;” and in the last of Romans he speaks of some being in Christ before him.

However men may classify the human family, Scripture now speaks of only two classes—those who are “in Christ,” and those who are “in the flesh.” All are naturally in the flesh. They may be moral, virtuous, amiable, kind or the reverse, educated or uneducated, religious in their way or irreligious; but being only in their natural state, they are far from God. “To be carnally minded is death.” In Rom. 8:7 we are told that “the carnal mind”—that is, the mind of man in his natural state— “is enmity against God;” quite contrary to and opposed to God. But, worse than this, it is lawless, and refuses to obey God— “is not subject to the law of God.” But worst of all, God says it is so bad that it cannot be subject — “neither indeed can be.” Thus the divine verdict as to the condition of every child of Adam is hopelessly bad. Hence God Himself does not propone to mend or improve an in the flesh, for He says it cannot be subject to Him; but He gives him life. Christ says, “I am come that they might have life.” He creates us in Christ Jesus. “If any man be in Christ—a new creation.” He gives us also the Holy Ghost to link us with Christ in the heavenlies. It is not true that God gives people His Spirit to help them in the flesh, or to improve the flesh; but having given those who believe in the Lord Jesus life, eternal life, and made them sous, He sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. It is a point of the highest importance in the present day, when man is so exalted, to see that God pronounces man in the flesh to be hopelessly and irremediably bad. It is God’s verdict of the natural standing, which

belongs to us all as “in Adam.” The whole nature is foul, utterly unclean, and incapable of being made fit for God’s presence. The whole history of man from the fall shows that nothing can be worse judgments, commandments, ordinances, even the personal ministry of Christ Himself failed to improve man in the flesh, and only brought out the evil of the heart. As to law, it is positively stated that “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” There was, therefore, but one way in which God could deal with man in the flesh; namely, judgment unto death. This God has done in a Substitute, His only-begotten, well-beloved Son, for all who believe in His name. Jesus, who knew no sin, was made sin for us. We are also told in Rom. 8:3— “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Thus we see that “sin in the flesh” has been condemned by God Himself in Christ crucified. It is also most blessedly true that Christ bare our sins, suffered for our actual transgressions, in His own body on the tree; but here it is rather the bad nature, what we were in the flesh. And after all this is the greatest plague of every true Christian. Many who have enjoyed the blessed reality of forgiveness of sins are so troubled because of lusts, pride, inward feelings, and selfishness within, that the question with them often is, “Am I a Christian?” It is most blessed, therefore, to see that God has dealt with this judicially for us in the death of Jesus. Hence we read in Rom. 6:6: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him.” This is what God has done. It is an accomplished fact, whether we believe it or not, that God has judicially set aside our old man in the death of Jesus. So that when contemplating Jesus in death upon the tree, we see how that God has not only dealt with Christ in judgment there for the transgressions we have committed against Him, but also that our old evil nature, our old man, is crucified with Him. Happy those who simply believe what God says about it. Paul did. It was, therefore, to him a blessed reality. He could say, “I am crucified with Christ;” and he could assert it also as a divine fact, that “they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” (Gal. 2:20, and 5:24.)

It is quite true that God’s children feel, and deeply feel, this evil nature; in fact, only those who are taught of God do; but accepting by faith the full value of what God has done for them in the death of His Son, they hearken to the divine injunction so to reckon. (Rom. 6:11.) “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Is this the way, beloved friends, that we reckon? The truth is most important both for peace and walk. How could we who feel the evil workings within be at full rest before God, unless we saw that He had dealt with it, and judicially set it aside in the death of Christ? When we have been sometimes ready to cry out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me (not who shall forgive my sins, but deliver me) from the body of this death?” we can surely then look up to God and say, “Thou hast delivered me from this old man by the death of Christ;” “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He is delivered from it by dying to sin in Jesus his Substitute. Quite true that” he still feels it, but he knows it to be a judged and condemned foe. He is therefore content to go on with these two natures, saying, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” (Rom. 7:24,25.) And he knows too something of the meaning of our Lord’s words, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

As to power in walk and conflict, he cannot now trust self, cannot look there for resources; for he knows that in him—that is, in the flesh—dwells no good thing; he knows that he has died to sin; he therefore looks only to Christ risen and ascended for everything, and this is the great secret of

spiritual power.

It is then most blessed to see how graciously God has delivered us in righteousness from “our old man” by the death of Christ, and given us life in Him risen; thus are we freed from the standing in sin and death which we had when “we were in the flesh.”

The way being now cleared, let us look a little more particularly at what Scripture teaches as to our position and hope.

In Rom. 8:9 God says, “Ye are not in the flesh,” and the first verse speaks of us as “in Christ Jesus,” and the second verse of “life in Christ Jesus making us free from the law of sin and death.” What a wonderful thing it is to be “free from sin”— “free from the law of sin and death;” but how can it be otherwise if God regards us now as not in the flesh, but in Christ, who is at His own right hand? What an exalted position! Christ our life, our peace, our righteousness, yea, blessed with “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” Can anything be plainer? We see by the death of Christ that our fleshly standing is gone, that before God we are not in the flesh, but that we have another life and standing “in Christ.” Well, then, might the apostle say, “the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

What a position the grace of God has brought us into! Could we be higher than in Christ risen and ascended? as the apostle expresses it in Ephesians, quickened together, raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. All of God’s rich and abundant mercy, the fruit of His own creative power. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” All of grace and to the praise of His glory. We do not hope to be a new creation, for it is a present reality— “If any man be in Christ, a new creation.” A Christian then is not a man mended up in the flesh, but a person who has a new nature, has life in a risen Christ, is a new creation. He does not wait to die in order to have this, for he is now in Christ, created in Christ Jesus. It is quite true that he will not have the redemption of the body till Christ comes; but Scripture speaks of us now as “in Christ,” that Christ who is in the heavenlies is our life, that we are a new creation, filled to the full in Christ, fully blessed in Him— “Ye are complete in Him.” What depths of divine grace, what everlasting consolation, what sources of joy and gladness God thus sets before us!

Observe that in Colossians 2:9 the person of Christ is most blessedly set before us. The man Christ Jesus is in heaven. The Nazarene is glorified— “crowned with glory and honor.” The man is there who once trod Jerusalem’s streets, sat on Sychar’s well, and wept tears of deepest sympathy with sorrowing ones at Bethany. But now He is in glory. When here He was God manifested in the flesh, and there He is no less God; for “in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” And all this divine glory shining brightly in the risen and ascended man, is brought to bear on the subject we are “considering;” or the next words are, “And ye are complete in Him.” Where am I then? What is my position now before God? I’m told it is “in Christ,” “in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” and who is the Head of all principality and power— “complete in Him.”

Can anything, I ask, exceed the dignity, the holy and exalted character of the position God has given us in Christ? Could anything be added to warrant the heart’s fullest confidence? Could we have more perfect security? or could anything else be wished to constrain us to devotedness of heart and life to Him who has so loved us? It is not future blessings we are now contemplating, but

present possessions. Have we entered upon them, and are we living upon them as present realities? Some Christians seem like men who have been saved from drowning by a life-boat, and are fearing as to whether they will ever reach the land. They do not see their present standing in Christ. It is true that we are not yet bodily in heavenly places, but it is true that Christ is there, and that we are in Him. "Ye are (not shall be, but are) complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power." All that we need for happy and solid enjoyment of these wondrous truths is to credit what God has said. It is a work worthy of God, which He has accomplished for us in Christ Jesus, and by His precious blood; and to Him be all the glory. This is the record, that God hath given eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. (1 John 5:11,12.)

But more than this; we are united to Christ risen and ascended by the Holy Ghost, "for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12:13.)

A few words as to the Christian's hope. We must not confound our hope with the Jewish hope. The Jews are taught to look for the Messiah to come to the earth and set up the glories of the kingdom. We look for Christ to come into the air and catch us up to meet Him. The Jews wait for the day of the Lord, and their scriptures abound with instruction concerning it. We wait for the morning-star which comes before the day. The coming of Christ to meet us in the air is not found in the Old Testament Scriptures, but was a revelation made to Paul to communicate to the church, as we find in 1 Thess. 4:15. Israel's glory will be ushered in with judgment, the Christian's glory will be ushered in with a shout.

What can the Christian hope for but Christ's coming? He does not hope to be a child of God, he is one. He does not hope to be in Christ, he is in Christ. What can his hope be, then, but the coming of the Lord Himself to take him to glory, and surely it is a blessed hope, a comforting hope, and a soul-purifying hope. Well might the Thessalonian believers turn from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, and well might the apostle Paul say, "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

CHRIST came to earth to put away my sins; He is gone into heaven, and is occupied about my infirmities and temptations.

Behold, He Comes!

“Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus....Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” (Rev. 22:20, 12.)

BEHOLD, behold, the Bridegroom comes!

Go forth, ye saints, to meet Him;

Rejoicing, such a hope becomes,

With joy, then, may we greet Him.

Soon shall we see Him face to face,

Behold Him in His glory;

Then, taken to His home, retrace

His love's delightful story.

Oh, now may we His will perform

Where grace has made us strangers;

In cloud and sunshine, calm and storm,

Through trials, toils, and dangers:

And, when the race of faith is run,—

The heart kept firm and fervent,

What joy to hear Him say, well done,

My true and faithful servant.

The seat He grants us on His throne,

The crown each brow surrounding,

The hidden manna, name on stone,

All flow from grace abounding.

Such precious gifts, who can but prize

As tokens of His favor?

This gives them value in our eyes,

And, to the heart, their savor.

But, oh! His deep, unbounded love,
Enduring, sweet, eternal,
Unites the heart to Him above,
And keeps it fresh and vernal.
Enchain'd by love, we do not swerve,
Our steps are true and steady;
In Him abiding, Him we serve,
For His blest coming, ready.

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