

THE EVANGELIST VOLUME 7 1873

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89 Chapters

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The Evangelist Volume 7 1873

Saved, or Lost!

ANOTHER year has passed, and gone forever! Another year begins, and where, dear reader, does it find you as to your precious, immortal soul? Does it find you rejoicing in the Lord Jesus, because He loved you, and washed you from your sins in His own blood? If so, it is well; but if the beginning of another year makes you manifest to the eye of God as yet in your sins, unbroken in heart, unrepentant, unforgiven, then it is not well — your case is sad indeed. And why is it, we would lovingly ask, that you are still indifferent to the sweet voice of Jesus, who calls from heaven, and bids you hear His word? Why is it that you are still wandering from Him? Why are you still refusing to bow the neck to His yoke? Why do you choose to walk on the broad road which leadeth to everlasting destruction? Why still prefer to follow the inclinations of your own will, and to form your own opinion, instead of hearkening to the gracious voice of the Son of God, and bowing to Him, thankfully receiving Him as your Saviour, and owning Him, with adoring gratitude and praise, as your Lord? (See John 1:12, 13.)

Is it not well, dear reader, at once to consider how matters really stand between you and God? Has He, who alone can search the heart, not declared you to be hopelessly undone, and inevitably lost? Does He not say that “the heart of man is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things;” and that “they that are in the flesh cannot please God”? (Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 8:8.) How foolish and fatal, then, it is to flatter yourself in your own eyes! How hazardous the idea of postponing looking this matter gravely and solemnly in the face! What madness, in the light of such Scriptures, for you to suppose you can do anything in the least degree to save yourself! How busily, and craftily too, the great enemy of souls works to deceive, and, by any, and every artifice, seeks to keep you from receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as the alone Saviour of sinners! Do think of these things, and consider well Acts 13:37-41.

Dear reader, there is no time to be lost. The end of all things is at hand. You have delayed long enough. Your danger is imminent. Further procrastination may be eternally fatal. Time rapidly flies. Eternity is near. The Lord Jesus is quickly coming from heaven. Your case is bad, hopelessly, incurably bad, and do what you will, go where you may, you cannot mend it. God alone can save you. He has loved the world. He has sent His Son into it to suffer for sins, to die for sinners, to save the ungodly. And now from heaven He calls and preaches the forgiveness of sins, and present and eternal peace with God to everyone that believeth. Not everyone that doeth, or feeleth, or hopeth, or trieth, oh, no! but to everyone that believeth. Dear soul, God calls by His gospel to you. He bids you hear His sentence, that by nature and by practice you are a sinner, that they that are in the flesh cannot please Him; but that in pity He will save you at once, in believing on His beloved Son. In deep, deep mercy He sent His own Son into the world to purge sins, put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and thus forever save the sinner, to the praise and glory of His grace.

How solemn, eternally solemn, dear reader, this is! Give up at once then, this very moment, all idea of goodness in yourself, all vain hopes of getting better, all attempts to save yourself by your

works, and now, just as you are, look to the Son of God now in the glory, who was on the cross, and bled, and suffered death there to save sinners. Dear soul! look to Him! Look clean out of yourself, your doings, and feelings. Look straight to the Lord Jesus, who “was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,” and who there died that every one who believeth in Him might live forever. Look by faith to Him, and then the language of your heart, dear soul, will be■

“I can see Him even now,

With His pierced, thorn-clad brow,

Agonizing on the tree:

Oh, what love! and ALL FOR ME!”

Again, look to the Son of God, now at God’s right hand, who died on the cross to save sinners. Consider that love. Dwell on the fact that God, instead of justly condemning us for our sins, put the condemnation on His beloved Son. Look to Him, and may your heart be fixed on Him until you are melted before such deep, unutterable mercy, such divine love. Surely it was —

“For love of us He bled,

And all in torture died;

‘Twas love that bowed His willing head,

And op’d His gushing side.”

Do you not see, dear reader, that you need such a Saviour; that He delights to save the lost; that He bids you come to Him, and promises to give you rest? Thus may it be with you! May you know this personal intercourse with Christ Himself, until you see and know that you are “justified by His blood,” through faith; and, “being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The Clergyman and His Gardener

“IN the hey-day of my prosperity,” says the clergyman, and in the success of my sacramental ministrations, while I thought the church (the so-called Church of England, ED.) was the Ark, and no salvation could be had out of the church, except by some uncovenanted mercy, one of my most promising disciples, a regular communicant and zealous churchman, was taken seriously ill, and was pronounced to be in ‘galloping consumption.’ The man was my own servant, a gardener, and one to whom I was much attached; not exactly my spiritual child in the gospel, but my ecclesiastical child in churchmanship, and a strong adherent, Who, with many others, upheld me and encouraged me, in a place abounding with ‘gospel men,’ against Dissenters of various kinds. This man’s heart failed him in the prospect of death. His views and religious practices did not comfort him in the hour of need, or give him assurance. He heard of others who could say their sins were pardoned, and read their title clear to mansions in the skies; whereas with his, as he thought, superior teaching, he was yet afraid to die. He ventured to send for some Dissenter to talk to him, and pray with him, who went to work in a way just the reverse of the priest. Instead of building up and comforting, the man plainly showed him he was a lost sinner, and needed to come to Jesus for salvation and pardon. The man was confident. ‘Pray for yourself,’ said he, and he set before him the finished work of Christ as the sinner’s substitute. The gardener was brought under deep conviction, and eventually found pardon and, peace through the blood of Jesus. This was a great disappointment. Instead of rejoicing with Christ over a lost sheep which He had found, I was angry with the sheep for being found, and deeply mourned over what I considered a fall into schism! Grieved as I was, however, I loved my disciple, and went to see him, though not till after several urgent invitations to go. I endeavored to reclaim him, but the man was too firmly persuaded to be shaken from ‘the truth as it is in Jesus.’ Instead of lying on a bed of suffering, he was walking about the room, praising God in a most joyful state.

“Ah, John, you are excited! You have been taking wine.’

“No, master,’ said the man; ‘I have not touched a drop of it. No, dear, no; that’s not it, dear master. I know you love me, and I love you. You don’t know this joy and peace. I am sure you don’t, for you would have told me of it. Oh, master, pray the Lord to give it you! I will never rest praying for you. Don’t be angry with me. The Lord bless you and convert your soul. You have been a kind, good friend to me. I cannot forget or leave you. I will pray for you while I live for the Lord to save your soul.’

“I could not stand this pleading, and fled from the house in a tumult of disappointment and confusion.”

A visit to another clergyman deepened his convictions; for he plainly told him, that “if he had been converted he would have rejoiced at that man’s salvation, and praised God with him, and that he would never do any good in his parish till he was converted himself.” So deep became his distress that, when the bell tolled for service on the following Sunday morning, he trembled and feared to preach; but while preaching on the words, “What think ye of Christ?” the Lord showed him so

clearly that Christ was the true and only foundation — “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” — that his soul was filled with joy — as full of joy as it had been with misery. He now preached “a present salvation,” which caused a general cry for mercy, and many of his parishioners were saved. — An Extract.

Make Haste

“WHY distrust the Saviour, sinners?

Has He ever souls deceived?

No; beyond all others, Jesus

Worthy is to be believed;

Give thou to the winds thy doubting,

Take the gift His hand bestows;

Haste! accept the offered mercy,

Soon the day of grace will close.”

God is Satisfied; Are You?

THE whole question of our salvation depends upon whether, first, God is satisfied with the price paid; and secondly, whether we also are satisfied of our own need of a Saviour, and of Christ's fitness and completeness for the work and office.

That God is satisfied is proved by the resurrection of Christ. God raised Him from the dead: When Christ "had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:3.) Christ, as our substitute, undertook the ransom of our souls, the purging of our sins. He went into death and the prison of the grave for us. How do we know that our debt is paid? Because our substitute who undertook to pay it is free. Having purged our sins, death had no more claim upon Him. "Knowing this, that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him; for in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." (Romans 6:9, 10.) God can now be just, and the justifier of the sinner that believes in Jesus. (Romans 3:26.) Christ's death and resurrection took place eighteen hundred years ago. The value of Christ's work is as fresh today as it was then, and it will be of no avail in the day of judgment to the sinner who has not trusted in it, and found his rest in it now. A Christian indeed is one who, being justified by faith, has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and who has joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom he has now received the reconciliation. (Romans 5:1, 11.)

Law and Grace

FEW things can be more opposed to each other than “law” and “grace.” Law demands; grace gives. Law says, You must love God; grace says, God loves you. Law says, Do and live; grace brings life to do. Law says, Work in order to be righteous; grace brings righteousness without works. Law works condemnation; grace brings salvation. Those who are of the works of the law are under the curse; those who are objects of divine grace are blessed for evermore. It spoils both law and gospel to endeavor to mix them, and the mixture is poisonous to souls. The “grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ” is very distinct from “the law which was given by Moses.” Hence it is said of believers, “Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” (Rom: 6:14.)

As another has said, “The law gave to man a perfect and divine rule for his conduct upon the earth. But it never took him up into heaven..... The contents of the law are perfect in their place, and for their object. It tells us what the right state of a creature is, and it forbids the wrong that flesh is inclined to.... To command a person to do a thing supposes that he is not doing it, nor about to do it, without a command. If we add to this, that nine out of the ten commandments forbid positive sins and evil dispositions, because men are disposed to them, or there were no need to prohibit them, we shall find that the very nature and existence of a law, which prescribes the good on God’s authority, supposes the evil in man’s nature which is opposed to it This is a deplorable truth, take either aspect of the case. You cannot command love, that is, produce it by commanding it, and you cannot put out lusts by forbidding them to a nature which has them as nature. Yet this is what the law does, and must do, if God give one. It proves that what is forbidden is sin, and that it is in man to be forbidden; but it never takes it away. It prescribes good in the creature, but does not produce it. It shows what is right on earth in the creature, but how far is it from taking man into heavenly places! It can have no pretension to it....

“Further, it shows no good in him as an object before his soul. I repeat, to make the distinction clear, it requires good in him — loving God and his neighbor, for example; but it presents no good to him. There is no revealed object to produce good, nor be man’s good in him in’ living power. It works, therefore, wrath. Where no law is there is no transgression.

“Now, grace works quite otherwise; it does not require good where it is not, though it may produce it. It does not condemn the wicked, but forgives and puts away their sin. It presents to us an object, God Himself; but God come near to us in love. It does more. It communicates what is good. It is not a law. I repeat, it does not require good where it is not; it produces it. It does not condemn the wicked, but it forgives and puts away their wickedness....

“The death of Christ has closed for faith the existence of the ‘old man,’ the flesh, the first Adam — life in which we stood as responsible before God, and whose place Christ took for us in grace. ‘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.’ (Romans 8:3.) ‘In that He died, He died unto sin once; in that He liveth, He liveth unto God.’ (Romans 6:10.)

“... Upon the grounds of its responsibility (the old man) we are wholly lost.... But the whole thing is done away with for the believer on the cross. He is crucified with Christ, nevertheless lives, yet not he, but Christ lives in him. If the cross has proved that in flesh there is nothing but sin and hatred against God, it has put away the sin it has proved. All that is gone. The life is gone. If a guilty man die in prison, what can the law do more against him? The life in which he had sinned, and to which his guilt attached itself, is gone. With us, too, it is gone; for Christ has died, willingly, no doubt, but by the judicial dealing of God with the sin which He bore for us. If we are alive, we are alive now on a new footing — before God, ALIVE IN CHRIST. The old things are passed away; there is a new creation; we are created again in Christ Jesus.”

“Rise, my soul! behold 'tis

Jesus,

Jesus fills thy wondering eyes;

See Him now, in glory seated,

Where thy sins no more can rise.

“There, in righteousness transcendent,

Lo! He doth in heaven appear,

Shows the Blood of His atonement

As thy title to be there.”

Service

JESUS said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4); and those who love Him will seek to follow His steps. It was the present time that Jesus so perfectly filled up. It was His Father's will then, the all-important now, in which He constantly glorified His Father on the earth. We sometimes weaken our hands, and spoil our service for the present, by looking back upon the past, or being too much occupied with the future. But with the Lord there was no unevenness. He bore fruit constantly in the right season; He did always those things which pleased the Father. It was His delight to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work, so that at the close He could say, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

The Lord's saints now are His servants. United to Him in the glory by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, our hearts are set free to serve Him. He said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." We are, therefore, kept here, for the little while of His absence, to serve and honor Him in a world that has hated and rejected Him, in hope of His coming again to receive us unto Himself, and introduce us into those mansions of glory where there is fullness of joy, pleasure for evermore, and endless rest. The Lord, too, has given to each of us His work, and says, "Occupy till I come." Then He will reward each according as his work shall be.

We are, therefore, to be faithful servants; for the question now is, not so much one of usefulness as of faithfulness. Jesus was "the faithful witness," and He says to us, "Be thou faithful unto death." "The same commit thou to faithful men;" and by and by it will be, "Well done, good and faithful servant!" The distinction between usefulness and faithfulness is of immense importance now; for many, apparently sincere souls, are spending their time, money, and energies, in doing not only what has not the sanction of the New Testament, but in helping forward what is entirely opposed to its teaching, and all under the attractive plea of usefulness. This was not like Jesus. He said, "I must work the works of Him that sent me." Hence every step of His path was marked with obedience, doing the Father's will, standing for the authority of Scripture, and faithfulness at all costs — "obedience unto death, even the death of the cross." And faithfulness, too, should mark our ways, if we would be true followers of Christ. "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing." (Matthew 24:45, 46.)

His word to us still is, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." It is not that work which has merely the sanction of human authority and approval, but "the work of the Lord" which He enjoins. How important it is, then, to remember that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams;" for what blessing can there be in doing that which will not have His sanction when He comes again? True service, then, will be not only for the Lord, but "in the Lord," and done to the Lord, and will not, cannot be in vain.

The great danger of the present day is being actively engaged in service in order to have salvation, or to make salvation more secure. This is a fatal mistake, one of Satan's commonest snares to catch unwary souls, and thoroughly mislead and deceive them. Salvation is plainly declared to be by grace, and not of works of any kind, not even by the deeds of the law; but simply and only through the redemption-work of the Son of God. The believer, therefore, works because he has eternal life, and is saved. "We love Him because He first loved us." He owes, therefore, all his salvation to the Son of God, who died for Him, and rose again. Hence he says —

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

Those who choose to work for Christ in obedience to His word, with a single eye to His glory, will find themselves with a loving heart in a narrow path. Few will sympathize with them. Many will disapprove. Much, too, there may be in circumstances to cast down and humble them; but they will have the Lord's presence, and the consciousness of His approval. They will find themselves associated with the Lord, which is always most blessed; but it is the Lord whom the world has cast out, and still refuses to own. We may well, therefore, encourage our hearts in Him, and go forward, and, as another has said■

"Go labor on; spend and be spent,
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went, —
Should not the servant heed it still?
"Go labor on; 'tis not for naught,
Thy worldly loss is heavenly gain;
Men heed thee, love thee, praise thee not;
The Master praises — what are men?"

Ezekiel

EZEKIEL was in captivity in Babylon. He tells us that he was by the river Chebar, when the “heavens were opened,” and he “saw visions of God.” Most likely he went out with Jehoiachin, when he and others were carried to Babylon. (2 Kings 24:12, 25:4, and Ezekiel 1:2.) It was not till eleven years after that Zedekiah was carried into captivity. During the interval Ezekiel prophesied, and particularly concerning the city of Jerusalem. Judgment characterized his ministry. He was instructed concerning the siege, famine, and ruin of Jerusalem. He calls it “the bloody city;” declares that she maketh idols against herself to defile herself; and foretells Zedekiah’s captivity. His prophecies include Israel as well as Judah. As usual with all God’s servants, he is remarkably made to feel the real state of His people, and has blessed thoughts given him of their future blessing in their own land. The first section of the book may be said to include the first seven chapters. First of all, the prophet had a vision of the likeness of the glory of God, not in the city, but out of the north, which caused him to fall upon his face, when he heard the voice of one that spake. (chapter 1) He is then sent to a rebellious and stiff-hearted people. (chapter 2) He is commanded to eat the roll which he saw; and the Spirit takes him up, and lifts him up, for he must thoroughly enter into the true character of things before he utters his prophetic testimony. He is to hear the word at God’s mouth. (chapter 3) He is then told to portray on a tile the siege of the city of Jerusalem; to lie on his left side 390 days (a day for a year), to bear the iniquity of Israel; and on his right side forty days for Judah’s iniquity lie is to make bread and bake it; for God will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment. (chapter 4). The prophet is then commanded to cut off hair from his head and beard, and divide it into three parts; and is told that “a fire shall come forth into all the house of Israel.” “This is Jerusalem.” A third part shall die with pestilence and famine; a third part fall by the sword; and a third part be scattered to the winds. (chapter 5). Judgment, however, is to extend beyond Jerusalem, to all the high places on all the mountains of Israel, and against all their altars, images, and works; and their bones shall be scattered round about your altars. He that is far off shall die of pestilence, and he that is near shall die with the sword. Nevertheless, God will have a remnant. (chapter 6). The desolations of the whole land are then described. (chapter 7).

The next four chapters may be read together. Ezekiel is sitting in his house with the elders of Judah before him. He sees in the vision of the chambers of imagery the wicked abominations of the people, what they “do in the dark,” for they say, the Lord seeth us not; and at “the door of the temple of the Lord” (not then destroyed) he saw “about five and twenty men, with their backs turned toward the temple of the Lord, worshipping the sun.” (chapter 8). Therefore unsparing judgment follows, and all are slain except those who “sigh and cry for all the abominations” in the midst of Jerusalem. (chapter 9). The glory of the Lord now filled the temple with a cloud, and then departed from off the threshold of the house. (chapter 10:4,18.) The mischief of the princes of Israel in giving wicked counsel to the people is now exposed, and they must be judged by the sword in the border of Israel. But to the prophet’s inquiry, “Ah, Lord God! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?” God says “He will be as a little sanctuary” to those already scattered

among the heathen, and that they shall be gathered back to the land of Israel; that they shall have one heart; that He will put a new spirit within them, and then they shall walk in His statutes, keep His ordinances, &c. The glory of the Lord then went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east of the city, which, on comparing with Zechariah 14:3, will be found to be the mount of Olives, whence the Lord ascended, and on which His feet shall stand again, when He comes to establish Jerusalem, and make it a praise in the whole earth. (chapter 11:23.)

In chapter 12 Zedekiah's captivity is foretold. In chapter 13 Ezekiel pronounces judgments upon the lying prophets who had made the hearts of the righteous sad. (verse 22.) In chapter 14 the elders of Israel again sit before him, whom he calls on to "Rent," and pronounces the most terrible judgments upon Jerusalem and the people of Israel for their sins; yet he regards every righteous person, and declares there shall be left a remnant. (verse 22.) Is not "the vine" only fit for burning unless it bear fruit? (chapter 15) Then the prophet is called to "cause Jerusalem to know her abominations." God's compassionate ways and dealings are rehearsed in detail, and Jerusalem's sad ways; nevertheless, God says, "I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant, that they may remember and be confounded, and never open their mouth anymore, because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord." (chapter 16)

But judgment must fall on Zedekiah for his deep sin against God, in breaking the covenant, and despising the solemn oath he had made with Nebuchadnezzar. God will spread His net, and bring him to Babylon; all his fugitives shall fall by the sword, and they that remain be scattered toward all winds. (chapter 17) The next chapter shows that the people are judged according to their own conduct, and not according to the iniquity of their fathers. (chapter 18) The fall of the kings of Judah, and ruin of the royal family of David, are there parabolically set forth. (chapter 19)

The next four chapters give us another section of this prophetic book. The prophet is reminded that God had redeemed Israel out of Egypt. But they rebelled against Him in the wilderness, so that He thought to have consumed them; but He wrought for His name sake, His eye spared them, and He also warned them. And when He brought them into the land, they polluted themselves with idols, and so continued to rebel, that He must deal in fury with them. (verse 33.) But the outcasts of Israel, the ten tribes, shall yet be gathered out of the countries wherein they are scattered, and be brought into the wilderness, caused to pass "under the rod," that "the rebels" among them may be purged out, and not enter the land of Israel; for all Israel shall yet serve God in His holy mountain, and He will accept them with their savor of rest, when they shall loathe themselves in their own sight for all the evils that they have committed. (chapter 20)

But now against Jerusalem the sword of vengeance is drawn out of its sheath, and God will pour out His indignation. The king of Babylon shall come and cast a mount, and build a fort against the city, and carry off profane, wicked Zedekiah. God "will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until He come whose right it is." (chapter 21) The sins of the idolatrous and bloody city are then rehearsed (chapter 22); also the sins of Samaria and Jerusalem in committing whoredom with Egypt, and the children of Babel (verse 17, margin); so that terrible punishment and abasing from God must follow. (Chap. 23.) The great wickedness of Jerusalem is described in the parable of the boiling pot, and the summary judgment of God upon it will be like the death of the prophet's wife. (chapter 24)

Various nations who have either despised or oppressed God's people are now threatened; viz., the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, Tyre, Sidon, Egypt, and those in league with them, which occupy the next eight chapters 25-32) It is blessed to observe how the prophet's heart is sustained by knowing that when God shall have executed judgment upon all those who despised Israel, He will bring Israel again in blessing into their own land. (chapter 28:25, 26.)

After stating that God will deal with His people according to their individual state, and again declaring that He will lay the land desolate, because of their abominations (chapter 33), he exposes the evil conduct of the shepherds, at whose hands God will require His flock; for He will yet save His flock, and "will' judge between cattle and cattle," and "set up ONE:SHEPHERD over them," and make the place round about His hill a blessing. (chapter 34) The fall of Mom for their perpetual hatred to Israel occupies the next chapter. (chapter 35)

God's love and compassion for Israel, gathering them out of all the countries whither He had scattered them, and bringing them into their own land, cleansing them from all their filthiness, giving them a new heart, putting His Spirit in them, and making them a holy flock, are then touchingly set forth (chapter 36), and followed by their national restoration, or resurrection, the two sticks, Judah and Israel, being made one in God's hand, and one king over them all. (chapter 37) Then we have the judgment of Gog for coming against the land of Israel, when God's people were thus dwelling safely. (chapters 38, 39)

The last nine chapter give us "the visions of God" which Ezekiel saw concerning Israel's land and temple in millennial times. The whole plan of the house was given him, and he saw it filled with the glory of the Lord. Holiness was the law of it. He speaks, too, of "the Prince" which God will raise up in Israel, as also of the sacrifices which will then be offered, the feasts to be observed, the division of the land among the twelve tribes by straight lines drawn from east to west, and the priest's portion; also the waters issuing from under the threshold of the house, and the trees, with unfading leaf, on either side of the river, showing the overflowing character of living blessing God will then give. The name of the city will be Jehovah-Shammah, "The Lord is there."

It is interesting to notice, as to the sacrifices then offered, there will be the burnt-offering, meat-offering, peace-offering, trespass-offering, and sin-offering; for, as the psalmist tells us, "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar." (Psalms 51:19.) With regard to the feasts, the Passover will be observed, because redemption is the basis of all their blessing; the Sabbath, for it will be emphatically a time of rest; and the new moon, because it is a renewed and reflected glory that they will enjoy. (See Colossians 2:17.) We learn from Zechariah, that the feast of tabernacles will also be kept, for it will be a time of peculiar joy. We have not Pentecost here, type of the gift of the Holy Ghost on the fiftieth day to form the Church, the body of Christ, for obvious reasons. All here is Jewish. With all their wondrous blessings, they will not know, as we do, what it is in spirit to go inside the wail. "The miry places and the marishes" seem the exceptions to blessing; for they are "not healed," but "given to salt."

Why Did He Die?

WOULD nothing else suffice to save me from the wrath to come? Must I have been forever banished from God's presence, had not Jesus died? Could no one but the Son of God Himself — the Word made flesh — have been my Redeemer? Was no one able to bear my load of sin and guilt, and expiate it all before the eye of God, but His only begotten Son? And must the unutterable sorrows of Calvary have been gone through, ignominy, desertion, wounding, bruising, and death itself — even the death of the cross? Oh, yes. No one but Jesus could accomplish the work of my redemption; no one else pass under all the waves and billows of Jehovah's bruising; no one but "the Prince of Life" could die such a death; no one but "the Lord of Glory" endure such shame. And death itself, death too as the bearer of sins, and substitute for the ungodly who believe, death under divine judgment when "God condemned sin in the flesh," He did suffer, that we might live forever, and be forever with Him and like Him in glory. "The wages of sin is death," and its wages He fully met for us when He bowed His head in death upon the cross. Had He not died, all must have been lost; not one of Adam's race could have been in glory with Jesus; and this the loving Saviour fully knew. He said, "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.) No words could more fully teach the absolute necessity of the death of Jesus for the salvation of sinners. And in richest, divine, perfect love, He willingly laid down His life. "He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He "came into the world to save sinners." He "died for the ungodly." And now "to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4. 5.) What ground of praise and worship, then, is the death of the Son of God! Bless the Lord, O my soul!

But He who was dead is alive again. God raised Him from the dead, and thus publicly shows how fully Jesus had atoned for sin, how completely He had finished the work, how thoroughly He had vindicated God, glorified God, satisfied all the infinitely-holy claims of God, magnified the justice of God, and endured the judgment of God for us when sinners, so that God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

But more than this. Jesus is ascended. He has entered into heaven itself with His own blood. He lives for evermore. He is crowned with glory and honor. He is enthroned at God's right hand; and now, in Him, and through His precious blood, all that believe are made nigh to God, have eternal life, are made the righteousness of God in Him, and shall never perish. It is "in Christ Jesus" the believer now stands, in Christ he is preserved, in Christ he is complete, in Christ he is accepted and blessed, and ever appears in Christ before the eye of God. All this, yea, all our present and eternal blessings are founded on the blood-shedding and death of the Son of God. As to forgiveness of sins, we read, "without shedding of blood is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22.) As to peace, He "made peace by the blood of His cross." (Colossians 1:20.) As to reconciliation, "we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." (Romans 5:10.) As to justification, we are "now justified by His blood." (Romans 5:9.) As to sanctification, "Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." (Hebrews 13:12.) As to redemption, it is "through

His blood.” (Ephesians 1:7.) As to communion and worship, we have “liberty to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” (Hebrews 10:19.) Well may our hearts rejoice in the Lord always, and by Him offer unto God continually the sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.!

Well might an old writer, when contemplating the death of Jesus the Son of God, exclaim■

“If I were lost in misery,

What was it to Thy heaven and Thee?

What was it to Thy precious blood

If my foul heart called for a flood?

What if my faithless soul and I

Must needs fall in

With guilt and sin?

What did the Lamb that He should die?

What did the Lamb that He should need,

When the wolf sins, Himself to bleed?

If my base lust

Bargained with death, and well-beseeming dust,

Why should the white

Lamb’s bosom write

The purple name

Of my sin’s shame?

Why should His unstained breast make good

My blushes with His own heart’s blood?

O my Saviour! make me see

How dearly Thou haat paid for me.

That lost again my life may prove,

As then in death, so now in love.”

The Death's Head; or, Resistance unto Death

SOME eighteen years ago the writer became acquainted with an old French gentleman who had been in Napoleon Bonaparte's army, and who, like too many Frenchmen of that period, was an avowed atheist. He called himself a "materialist," and professed to believe that there was nothing in existence but what could be seen or otherwise taken cognizance of by the senses. Happening one evening to be in conversation with a lady, in the writer's presence, this Frenchman said to her, "There is nothing, madam, after death. The last breath is the soul, and" (suiting the action to the word) "puff! it is gone." This remark called forth a reply on the writer's part which resulted in some discussion, after which the Frenchman left.

Some weeks passed away, and the writer received an urgent message requesting him to visit "monsieur," as he was called. Monsieur was an aged bachelor, and lived alone in one room, which he kept in order himself, being too poor to afford an attendant. On entering, the writer was both surprised and shocked at his appearance. His face, usually sallow, had become as "yellow as a guinea;" his cheeks and eyes were so sunken that his high cheek-bones gave him a most ghastly appearance, which was greatly increased by a habit he had of dying his gray hair black. A more deplorable-looking person it would have been hard to find, and the first impression of the visitor was that, although not in bed, he was dying.

"Monsieur," said the Frenchman, "I have one favor to ask of you."

"What is it, monsieur?" inquired the visitor, hoping that, as the aged man was evidently very ill, he had sent for him to speak about his soul.

"Monsieur, I believe I am dying. I would be decently buried, but I have no friends, only one. When I am dead, will you look behind that glass?" (pointing to a small mirror on the mantelpiece) "and you will find a letter addressed to my friend, who is a barrister, and who will take care to have me buried."

"Is that all you have to say, monsieur? I hoped you had sent for me to speak a word or two about things of more importance. If you are dying, and you certainly look like it, what is to become of your soul? You know 'the last breath' is not the soul —"

"Ah, monsieur," exclaimed the Frenchman, raising his hands in a deprecating manner, while his hollow eyes expressed the utmost consternation. "Ah, monsieur, do not say anything more. It is that which has made me so ill. I have never slept since that evening when we discussed about the soul. It is more than one month ago, and I cannot go to sleep. All night, monsieur, all night I keep awake. I sit in my chair, I walk about, I lie on my bed, I am very tired, but I cannot get one sleep," and the poor haggard old man settled his hollow features firmly to restrain his tears.

"And you still resist conviction, monsieur? You know —"

"Pardon, monsieur," cried the Frenchman, interrupting; "please do not say any more. See, I want to show you something," and tottering to his feet the old gentleman (he was eighty years of age)

picked up a dingy white duster which was hanging on his chair, and threw it into a corner of the room.

“Look, monsieur,” he said, laying his trembling hand on the writer’s shoulder, “will you tell me what that looks like?” pointing to the duster.

“Well,” replied his visitor, “it looks more like a skull than anything else.”

Without uttering a word, and with an air of deep solemnity, the old man went and took it up. Then shaking it out, and catching it up carelessly in his fingers, he threw it on to his little bed. Again he said, “Look, monsieur, what is it like?”

“A skull decidedly,” his visitor was constrained to reply; for the duster, in falling on the bed, had assumed the exact shape of the upper part of a human skull.

There was the rounded frontal-bone, the hollow eyeless sockets, the nasal orifice, and the upper jaw, all so exactly modeled by the cloth, that the nicest effort of art could not have formed a more complete imitation of a human skull. The lower jaw was wanting. It was broad daylight, the sun was shining into the little room, the distance at which the cloth lay was not eight feet, yet there, without any effort of the imagination, lay, as it seemed, a veritable “death’s-head” on the couch. Again, for a third and a fourth time, the Frenchman took up the duster and threw it into a corner; now in this direction, now in that; but always with a like result; then, turning to the writer, he said in hollow tones, while his face blanched, if possible, more than before, “That has happened to me, monsieur, ever since that night” (referring to the evening of our conversation about the soul). “When I came home that night I did use that cloth for to dust something, and then threw it down in a corner, as I always do. I did not sleep all night, and when there was a little light in the morning I did sit up in my bed, and happened to look in that corner. Ah, monsieur, what did I see? What you English call a death’s-head was staring at me in the corner. I did shut my eyes till it was a little more light, and then I did get up. But it was there still. Then at last I went to it so” (walking cautiously towards the duster, and picking it up with all the demonstrative action of a Frenchman), “and I found it was only my cloth! ‘Foolish man,’ I said to myself, ‘how superstitious!’ But, monsieur, when I did throw it down again, it was a death’s-head once more! I hang it on my chair now; but if I happen to forget it, ah, monsieur, I am made miserable!”

“Well, monsieur, and what do you think of it?”

“I believe it is an omen, monsieur,” replied the Frenchman deliberately.

“Of what?”

“That I must die, monsieur.”

“But you do not believe in the existence of anything beyond this material world, monsieur? Now the cloth cannot know you are going to die. If, then, it be an omen of your coming death, who sends it?”

To this inquiry he replied only with a shrug of his shoulders and a shake of the head.

“Monsieur, will you do me the one kindness to send that letter when I am dead?” he asked.

“I will; but —”

“Pardon, monsieur,” he cried, bowing with true French politeness, but at the same moment putting a finger into each ear. “I thank you much,” and then, with a glance and a step towards the door, he stood in a waiting attitude, as if to say, “Which of us is to leave the room?”

The visitor left. The old man did not die then. Medical skill gave him sleep at last, and his life was spared a little longer. The last the writer saw of him was in Drury Lane, London, a few months afterward. He was wandering the streets, without a home, and penniless; his hair (which he had once told the writer was naturally quite white) still dyed as black as jet, and under his arm all the property he possessed in the world; viz., the few articles of his toilet in a little case, which with characteristic vanity he still clung to. His black, threadbare clothing was scrupulously neat; but his aged form was bent and worn with age and suffering. He had not been in a bed, he said, for many weeks, but had slept in coffee-houses, or wherever he could find shelter for the night. Oh, how true is it that “the way of transgressors is hard!” In the hope that he might yet be won, the writer invited him to a place where he was going to preach that evening, intending then to get him some temporal aid. The poor old gentleman promised to attend; but his manner of doing so showed but too plainly his object, which was merely to escape importunity. He never came, and was never seen again. How he died, or where, is known only to the Lord; but a more awful instance of determined and persistent rejection of the gospel of the grace of God in spite of conviction has perhaps never been met with. He was the son of parents in a respectable position in France, had been well and even religiously brought up as a Romanist, had been compelled to serve in Bonaparte’s army as a conscript, and had seen several campaigns, associating with the notoriously infidel soldiery of the old empire. “Evil communications corrupt good manners,” and he had become thoroughly indoctrinated with their atheistic principles. His brief, sad history is a solemn warning to all who despise the truth. We read of some, “God gave them up” (Romans 1:24); and when once a man is given up to what he is in himself, repentance is impossible. What the mental anguish must have been which kept him sleepless day and night, aged, worn, and weary, “seeking rest and finding none,” the reader must judge; yet neither the agony of conviction, nor his own persuasion that that strange “death’s-head” (however it might be accounted for) was specially sent as an omen of his own decease, could bring him to repentance. “Hardened through the deceitfulness of sin,” NOTHING would move him.

Dear reader, how is it with you? Have you listened to the truth of the gospel until it has become as “an oft-told tale” in your ears, powerless to move? Do you know that you are resisting the Spirit, and despising Christ? How often and how long have you been doing this? What if God gave you up? Were He to do so tomorrow, NOTHING would move you to repentance; no, not even “though one rose from the dead,” much less the apparition in your very bed-chamber of a “death’s-head.”
K.

“Behold, Ye Despisers.”

“BEHOLD, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.”

How solemn this sentence, pronounced by the Lord!

The portion of all who in faithlessness cherish

Contempt for the Saviour, His work, and His word.

“His own” once despised Him; the Son they rejected;

In scorn cast Him out, and in enmity killed;

Their King, the Messiah, the One long expected;

Yea, He who the words of the prophets fulfilled.

Jehovah’s full glory, the Father’s own brightness,

In Him could be witnessed by those who could see;

But they who were blind held His glory in lightness,

Reviled Him, condemned Him, and nailed to a tree.

Oh, love all surpassing, that He as the victim

Should suffer from God all the judgment of sin!

Oh, mercy amazing, that God should afflict Him,

That He for salvation such scanners might win!

Now raised from the dead, and in glory ascended,

He sits on the throne, who for sinners was slain;

But soon shall return, by His angels attended,

To bind all His foes, and in righteousness reign.

Oh dare not despise Him, or soon ye must perish,

Eternity spend in the anguish of hell!

But honor Him, trust Him, and you He will cherish,

And soon have you with Him forever to dwell.

An Extract

MAN was not made like the beasts of the field, but formed out of the dust of the ground; and when He has done that (and there one sees what death simply is, “dust thou art,” and death is going back to it), then I get something that is not dust, something directly from God, and this makes all the difference.

The beasts were formed out of the earth; and the man is formed into shape first, and then God says, “I am going to connect this with myself,” and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life. By “connect” I do not mean that man might not fall away from God in will, for he could; but the breath of life which made him a living soul was directly from God. He was capable of dying, but still he had the breath of life, which was a distinct thing.

“A living soul” means anything that lives by blood and breath. I say this because it says, “Whereinsoever was the breath of life died.” All animals were living souls. Man was, and the animal was; but the essential difference was that God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, and so man became a living soul. This might be separated from his body, and the body return to the dust. That is what is referred to in “for we also are His offspring.” As I said to an Annihilationist, “Do you mean to call a pig God’s offspring?” Neither would he have died if he had not eaten of the forbidden fruit. His body is formed first without life, and the way he gets life is by God’s breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. He receives it as a creature, but direct from God. Adam was not made as other animals were. (See Genesis 2:7.)

“This mortal,” or “mortal body,” leaves the soul by implication immortal. “Mortal” is always used of the body, and it is clear that death does not touch the soul; for you have the wicked man in Hades after death. I am quite satisfied that it is true to say “immortal soul.” The opposite thought is founded on the words, “who only hath immortality,” spoken of God, of course (that is, who only hath it in Himself); but this does not mean that He cannot communicate it. So the angels are only immortal by God’s making them so, and we the same. If I were immortal in spite of God, then I am to do as I like without fear of death. In the rich man and Lazarus is a perfectly clear ease — the one goes to torment, the other to Abraham’s bosom, after death.

But they say, “These are only figures.” “Yes,” I reply; “but figures of what?” I am not going to Abraham’s bosom, but I am to Christ’s. I asked them this, “Could God give eternal life to a dog?” “Yes.” “But would the dog be answerable for, what he had been doing while he was a dog?” and if he would not be, Christ had not to die for him, and so they destroy atonement. Put it in another way. If I am a mere brute, only a clever brute, until I get Christ as my life, my responsibility is gone.

Well, man was put in his place of responsibility not to eat the forbidden fruit, a thing in which there was no evil, save that it was forbidden.

And you get a striking thing here, one which has been a question even with heathens, and it is also a ground of discussion between Calvinists and Arminian: the tree of life, which is free gift; and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which is responsibility. Man has been trying to undo this in

himself, and never can. Man did take the responsibility tree, and was lost. Then the promise came to Abraham to show that grace was really the thing after all — the tree of life; and then came the law, the other tree. People have made the life dependent upon the responsibility tree, which is utter folly. But we find in Christ the two united; for He is the man who charges Himself with our responsibility, as He is Himself the life. If I have Christ for my life, with whom also I have died, I can bring the two together; but if taken out of Christ, it is impossible to unite the two things, any more than they were one in the garden.

A Narrative especially commended to Infidel objectors

ONE morning, the late Dr. F — received a letter from a friend stating that a neighbor of his, an intelligent man, but professedly a skeptic, was apparently very near his end; and, though he refused to see any other Christian visitor, was willing, he could scarcely say wishful, to see Dr. F —, whom he had seen and once heard, and whom he thought a sincere man. He went, as requested, and on entering the chamber of this apparently dying skeptic, he beheld the attenuated form of one who had been, a tall, athletic man, struggling under the ravages of a disease at once the most painful and incurable. Dr. F — made some kind inquiries respecting his disease, and, after suggesting some means calculated to soothe his pain, alluded to the sufferings of Christ, who died for us, and gave Himself a ransom for sinners—who, equal with the Father, and one with Him, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that through His blood we might have peace with God. Hearing this, the dying man said, “Sir, I don’t believe that. I wish I could, as my dear wife does: she believes all you say.” “Well,” said Dr. F—, “but you say you wish you could, and that is a great point towards attaining it, if you are sincere. Now what do you believe concerning Jesus Christ?” “Why,” said he, very inarticulately, “I believe that such a man once lived, and that he was a very good, sincere man; but that is all.” It was a principle with Dr. F—, when reasoning with unbelievers, if they acknowledged the smallest portion of truth, to make it a position from which to argue with them. This mode he adopted in the present case, and said, “You believe that Christ was a good man—a sincere man; now do you think that a good man would wish to deceive others, or a sincere man use language which must mislead?” “Certainly not,” said he. “Then how do you reconcile your admission that He was a good man with his saying to the Jews, ‘I and my Father are one?’ When the Jews took up stones to kill Him, because He made Himself equal with the Father, He did not undeceive them, but used language confirmatory of His Godhead; and He further said, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life.’ How could any mere man say, ‘I give unto them eternal life?’ Could any angel even, however exalted— “Stop!” cried the dying man, with an excited voice. “Stop, sir; I never saw this before; a new light breaks in upon me—stop, sir!” Holding up his emaciated hand, as if fearing that a breath might obscure the new light breaking in upon his benighted soul, and with a countenance lighted up with a sort of preternatural expression, he fixed his eyes intently upon Dr. F—, and after a short, but most solemn pause, he exclaimed, the big tears rolling down his face, “Sir, you are a messenger of mercy, sent by God Himself to save my soul. Yes, Christ is God, and He died to save sinners—yes, even me.” His feelings were so excited as to be almost too much for the wasted body; and Dr. F—was so powerfully affected as to be only able to conclude the interview with prayer, and a promise to renew his visit next day, referring him before he left to some suitable portions of Scripture on which to rest his faith and hope.

The next day he found him propped up in bed, literally “a new man,” with all the eagerness of a hungry man seeking to be fed with the bread of life, and yet, with all the simplicity of a child, trusting in the promises of God, which are “yea and amen in Christ Jesus.” He candidly confessed that though he had rejected the gospel as unworthy of credit, he had never before read it—a

painful fact, which, however, is not unfrequently found to be the case with infidel objectors. The mind of the dying man seized upon each successive truth, as it was unfolded to his view, with an avidity indescribable. He seemed almost to forget the severe sufferings of his body in the absorbing impression left upon his mind by the great and glorious facts of the gospel. The more clearly he perceived the certainty that Jesus was a divine person, the more overwhelming was his sense of His condescension and love. He spoke as though he felt that on such a Saviour his confidence could not be misplaced; and in proportion as his bodily frame decayed, his faith triumphed. He gave his eldest child a copy of the New Testament, with all the passages marked by his own hand which had been especially useful to him in the way of instruction or consolation, and he desired her, as the last request of her dying father, to read it daily, never to part with it, but to make its blessed contents her guide through life, that they might prove her comfort in death. He lived but a brief space longer to enjoy the light which had been by the Spirit of God caused to shine upon his heart. And then he departed, bearing an affecting testimony to the fact that “great,” in its power of relieving the conscience, of removing the dread of condemnation, and of inspiring a holy confidence in prospect of eternity, “is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.”— An Extract.

No. 1

THE book of Daniel gives us “the times of the Gentiles,” and also many important revelations concerning Daniel’s own people—the Jews—especially at the end of those times. Details of the millennial age are not entered into; but we have the termination of “the times of the Gentiles” by divine judgment, followed by the kingdom of Messiah being established in the earth, when Israel will enjoy their long-promised blessing.

The book, therefore, opens with the account of the removal, in divine displeasure, of the kings of Judah, the people, and the vessels of the Lord’s house to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, head of Gentile power, which God had raised up in consequence of His people’s sin. Certain of the royal house—the king’s seed—highly accomplished and unblemished youths, were also taken to the palace at Babylon, among whom was Daniel.

Daniel was a God-fearing Jew—a Nazarite. Though in the luxurious palace of the greatest potentate on earth, he did not forget whose he was. Accordingly, we are told, that he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king’s wine and meat. (Comp. chapter 1:8 and Numbers 6). Thus he honored God, and God honored him—an important principle at all times, of which this is a striking instance. Hence the knowledge of the “God of heaven,” and of His ways, were specially with Daniel and his companions. (chapter 1.)

But Daniel, like all God’s servants, having proved God in retirement, is now fitted for honoring God in public. Accordingly the unreasonable demand of the heathen king, that his dream, which he had wholly forgotten, should be made known to him, and also the interpretation of it, under penalty of being cut to pieces, and their houses made a dunghill, led Daniel and his companions to cast themselves in earnest prayer on the mercy of “the God of heaven” to reveal it to them. Then the thing was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, for which he blessed God. But before he makes known either the dream or the interpretation, he confesses to the king, that all the glory of this revelation is due to “God in heaven.” The king’s dream comprised the whole course of the Gentile powers, gradually deteriorating in quality, and ending in judgment by the coming of the Lord from heaven—the stone cut out without hands—and the establishment of the kingdom of the heavens on earth. (Chap. 2)

But Nebuchadnezzar soon showed what man was when brought into responsibility to God. He made an image of gold, and used the power entrusted to him to command all nations to fall down and worship it, or be cast into a fiery furnace. His blasphemy also comes out in defying that God who should deliver out of his hand. But those who feared God could not obey the king in this. Hence three God-fearing Jews refused to bow to the image, were thrown into the furnace, found the Lord’s presence with them, and received no hurt. No doubt this scene is a striking type of the faithful during the time of the antichrist in the great tribulation. (Chapter 3) No marvel, then, that such willfulness, pride, and blasphemy are so soon followed by such deep personal humiliation, until the king knows that “the heavens do rule.” (chapter 4)

Belshazzar's impious feast closes the history of the Babylonish empire. It was worse for him, because he knew the deep humbling his grandfather had received of God. God's handwriting upon the wall greatly troubled him, and Daniel alone could interpret it. In that night was the king slain, and the kingdom passed into the hands of Darius the Mede. (chapter 5)

No sooner is the Medo-Persian power set up than shocking impiety and blasphemy are wrought by Darius and his princes. The king signed a decree, that whoever asked a petition of any God or man, save of him, for thirty days, should be cast into a den of lions. What daring arrogance and infidelity! Daniel, however, was faithful, and prayed at his open window to his God as heretofore. He was therefore cast into the den of lions; but he received no hurt, "because he believed in his God." (chapter 6)

We now come to the second part of this book—Daniel's visions. In chapter 7. he records the vision of the four empires—and especially the Roman—under the similitude of wild beasts. The lion with eagle's wings being the Babylonian empire; the bear, the Medo-Persian; the leopard, the Grecian; and the fourth beast, or Roman, dreadful and terrible, having great iron teeth, which devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and it had ten horns, among which another little horn came up, speaking great things, and it plucked up three other horns by the roots. The prophet beholds till the thrones are set, and the Ancient of days sits. It is a throne of judgment. The great words which the little horn spake are considered, the beast is slain, and his body given to the burning flame. The rest of the beasts had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. Then Daniel sees One, like the Son of Man, receive from the Ancient of days everlasting dominion, and glory, and the kingdom. The interpretation of this vision occupies the remainder of the chapter.

We have here evidently the closing days of the times of the Gentiles, and their relation to God's people at that time—the period when the ten kingdoms are in existence, and "among them" another little horn comes up. We are told that this little horn is characterized by three things: 1. Speaking against the Most High; 2. Wearing out the saints; 3. Changing the feasts and laws, or setting aside Jewish ordinances, which are given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time, or three years and a half. But his dominion is taken away and destroyed. The saints of the Most High—high places, heavenly saints—have the judgment given to them— "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world" (1 Corinthians 6:2), and it will be then known that "the heavens do rule;" but the saints, or the people of the holy ones—the Jews—take the kingdom. Observe, then, that this little horn is seen in connection with the horns of the fourth beast, or Roman empire, who comes up after the existence of the ten kingdoms. Can there be, therefore, any doubt that this little horn answers to the first beast of Revelation 13?

That there will be saints upon the earth at that time—Jewish saints—is clearly taught in Scripture. In Matthew 24:22 they are called "the elect." They will own God, and, in some measure, Jesus also. Hence we read in Revelation 14:12: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." This "little horn" will be their great oppressor for three years and a half, till the Lord comes out of heaven to execute judgment.

It is remarkable that the book of Daniel, from an early part of the second chapter to the end of the seventh, which particularly gives us the four Gentile monarchies, was written in Chaldee; the remainder of the book, which especially gives details of the Jewish people "at the time of the end,"

in the Hebrew language.

“Repent.”

“God now commandeth all men every where to repent.” Acts 17:30.

No statement could possibly be clearer. There is not the least ambiguity about it. Nothing could be more plainly set forth. It is impossible to be mistaken by any honest mind. All are addressed. Not one can escape its application. Every human being is included. There is no exception—not one. In whatever part of the world they are found, or to whatever nation they belong, the voice of God loudly calls—commands them to REPENT. Not some men, but “all men;” not English people, or French, or German only, but “all men every where.” Thus all are included, and none are exempt from this universal command of God to REPENT. And no marvel that it is so; for if all are His offspring, if all are partakers of that immortal principle which came from God when He breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, then each member of the human family has a precious, immortal soul, a never-dying soul, a soul that must be either in everlasting glory, or everlasting misery. Who, then, can wonder that God calls so earnestly, pointedly, and imperatively to all? Did not Jesus, who knew all things, and could most truly estimate the priceless value of an immortal soul, say, “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?” Did He not also most faithfully declare to those who came to ask Him a question about others, “Except ye REPENT, ye shall all likewise perish”? (Luke 13:3.)

But if God now calls upon all men everywhere to repent, is it not clear that “all have sinned,” and that all are guilty before Him? And so it is; for we are not only all sinners by nature, but by practice too “all under sin.” Oh, my reader! it is easy to talk about religion, and it may scarcely be considered respectable not to be active in religiousness of some sort, but “repentance toward God” is a very different thing. To be taken up with Bible questions, to be versed in creeds and opinions, to be members of denominational institutions, or clever in theological discussions, are all far short of repentance toward God. Persons may be highly intellectual, their heads crammed with high-flown theories and doctrines, have a burning zeal for sectarian distinction, be diligent to a degree in outward observances, and yet have never bowed to God’s call on “all men everywhere to REPENT.” The Jews attended to their ceremonial observances, kept periodically the feasts of Passover and tabernacles, attended strictly to synagogue engagements; but alas! alas! instead of hearkening to the call first of John, then of the Lord Himself, and lastly of the twelve apostles, to repent, they crucified the Lord of glory, that they might keep their own dead and formal religion. But they must repent—for in such a state alone could they be true before God—ere they are brought into their promised blessing; for Jesus said, “Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Our Lord commanded, after He rose from the dead, that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations;” and Paul informs us that He preached “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;” and again, in the Scripture before us, he declares that “God now commandeth all men every where to REPENT.”

No doubt in repentance there is change of mind. The natural mind at enmity against God, the heart without God, refusing His sweet words, and despising His matchless love manifested in the gift and death of His beloved Son, the repentant one sees the evil of this course, and his mind is changed toward God. To define repentance as sorrow for sin, would be far from the truth; for many a thief has been sorry for having so acted, because he feared it would be discovered, and he would be punished; yet, on the other hand, we cannot suppose that any sinner, taught of God's Spirit, can think of how his sin appears in God's sight without peculiar soul-distress. But is it not the characteristic of true repentance, that the soul is before God as a sinner in self-judgment? Surely nothing less can be "repentance toward God;" for then he takes his only true and becoming place of a guilty, hell-deserving sinner in His sight. His heartfelt utterance is, "I have sinned against heaven and before thee." And can this be without distress and brokenness of heart? How is it possible that a sinner can thus think of himself in God's sight, without a terrible sense of being justly exposed to God's wrath? He knows, too, that his sinning has been against Him who sent His Son into the world to save sinners. And the thought of God's abundant mercy in Christ Jesus, and through His precious blood, gives hope, and the more the stoning work of the Son of God is pondered, the more the future is lighted up before his soul; for God becomes known, not only as a just God, but a Saviour—the present and eternal Saviour of all that believe on His only-begotten Son. This surely is "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21.)

For more than eighteen hundred years God has been sending forth the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ, and commanding "all men everywhere to REPENT;" and so attractive in heaven is it to see one soul on earth thus taking his true place as a guilty, hell-deserving sinner before God, that our Lord assured us that there is "joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." What blindness and folly it is, then, for men to talk of "making their peace with God," "trying to get better," "turning over a new leaf," and the like, when "God commandeth all men everywhere to REPENT!" Have you, my dear reader, thus repented toward God? for not only are you a sinner, guilty and helpless, but judgment is coming, and will soon overtake every unsaved person. "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from among the dead." (Acts 17:30,31.) What say you then, dear reader, to God's command? for "God NOW commandeth all men everywhere to REPENT."

Is Christ Precious to Thy Heart?

An Extract.

DRAR READER—Art thou a believer in Christ Jesus? Is He precious to thy heart? Couldst thou not live without Him even in this world? Is He necessary to thy daily peace and happiness? Is everything worthless to thee that has not His stamp upon it? And is everything empty to thee which He does not fill? A Christian is united to Christ now, and one with Him. His sins are all forgiven, he has eternal life, and is accepted in the Beloved. The Holy Spirit dwells within him as the Spirit of adoption, and communicates to his soul a fuller knowledge of Christ and His finished work. Thus he is enabled to live above the world, though diligently attending to his duties in it. The Lord looks for separation from the world in all who are associated by faith with Him in heaven. This is true Christianity, and fills the soul with heavenly peace and joy. Is it thine, O my dear reader? Think not that the picture is drawn too high; it is within the plain statements of Scripture, and we have no other standard. Nothing less will suit God, and nothing less will serve thy soul. True, Christ may be possessed and not enjoyed; pardon may be possessed and not enjoyed; and so many other blessings of Christianity; but the heart of a true believer, even amidst all its darkness and unbelief, will turn instinctively to Christ Himself, under a sense of need, and cleave to Him alone. This is the surest evidence of the work of God's Spirit in the soul. Doubts and fears are lamentable, and dishonoring to Christ; but the grace of God will outlive them all. Is this then, my friend, more like the picture of thy state? Or—what? No Christ at all? God forbid! This would be awful indeed! It is bad enough to see Christ only through the errors and darkness of man's theology; but to have no interest in Christ at all, is to be forlorn and desolate beyond all conception. No language could picture this state, no figures could sum up its misery. It is to be Christless and godless—a hapless wreck on the shores of the lake of fire.

Dost thou own to this state? Is it really thine? Be honest about it; if so, confess it. And think not that a little human religion can meet thy need. The work of Christ alone can meet it. He died on Calvary for sinners the chief. Blessed be His name! All praise to Him! But oh, do thou believe it, and be thankful for it! Love the Lord that died for thee on Calvary. Surely He deserves thy love, and the deepest devotion of thy heart. A seat, a throne, beside Himself is ready for thee, if thou but truly turn to Him. What grace! what love! to die for us on the cross, and share His throne and glory with us forever! But oh, what must hell be to those who reject such love and glory! The very remembrance of a Christ rejected, and a salvation despised, in that place of hopeless woe, must be the worm that never dies, and the fire that shall never be quenched.

“The tick of the clock of hell,” as one said, “sounds ever—never; ever—never; everlasting woe—never—ending misery.” How awful, how overwhelming, the thought! Imagine its dreary, monotonous sound falling on the wearied ear of lost souls. As they lie in dark despair, its pendulum swinging from side to side, and muttering unceasingly the doleful, heart-sinking sound, “Ever—never; ever—never,” it must be like a mockery of their agonies, which is too dreadful to think of.

Once more, my friend, look at the bright side. Jesus died for lost sinners. God gave His Son for lost sinners. The Holy Ghost pleads with lost sinners. Resist not His pleadings, I pray thee; despise not the grace of God, I pray thee; despise not the blood of Jesus, I pray thee; there is pardon for thy sins nowhere else. But hear, O hear, the blessed truth, "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin!" Have faith in Him who shed that precious blood, and thy sins, however many, shall the same moment be forgiven. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Bow at His blessed feet, confess thy sins, and receive from His own lips of grace a plenary pardon, salvation, and peace. Read carefully Luke 7:36-50.

Eternity

Count the gold and silver blossoms
Spring has scattered o'er the lea;
Count the softly-sounding ripples
Sparkling in the summer sea.
Count the lightly-flickering shadows
In the autumn forest glade;
Count pale nature's scattered tear-drops,
Icy gems by winter made.
Count the tiny blades that glisten
Early in the morning dew;
Count the desert sand that stretches
Under noon-tide's dome of blue.
Count the notes that wood-birds warble
In the evening's fading light;
Count the stars that gleam and twinkle
O'er the firmament by night.
When thy counting all is done,
Scarce ETERNITY'S begun.
Reader! pause! Where wilt thou be
During thine ETERNITY?

“This is the Saviour, I Need.”

MIRANDA N—, says a Christian minister, was about eighteen years of age, much distinguished for personal beauty, but more for uncommon sweetness of disposition and great amiability of deportment. There was not, perhaps, amongst all the people of my charge one whose case would have been more promptly cited, and perhaps none so effectively, to disprove the doctrine of the entire sinfulness of the natural heart. She was deservedly a general favorite. She seemed to entertain the kindest affection toward all, and everyone who knew her loved her. One evening, at an inquiry meeting held at my house, I noticed in a full room a female in great apparent distress. Her loud sobs were a frequent and painful interruption of the silence of the room.

On coming to her seat, I was not a little surprised to find myself by the side of Miranda. The first enquiry I put to her was this: “What has brought you here, Miranda?” With emphasis she replied, “My sins, sir.” With a view to test the reality and depth of her convictions, I then said, “But what have you done, which makes either your heart or your life appear so heinously sinful?” At the second question she broke out into a voice that reached the extreme part of the room, and thrilled through every heart, for she was known and loved by everyone present, “I hate God, and I know it. I hate Christians, and I know it. I hate my own being. Oh that I had never been born!” As she uttered this acknowledgment, she rose and left the room in irrepressible agony. A few minutes after this, while walking the adjoining room in great distress, her eye lighted upon a copy of village hymns which lay upon the sideboard. She eagerly caught it up, and read at the first page to which she opened these words—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.”

As she finished this verse, she dropped the book, and exclaimed, “I have found my Saviour! This is the Saviour I need! O precious Saviour!” and many other expressions of the same kind. Her enmity to God was gone, her burden was removed.

Glimpses of Jesus' Ways

No. 1.

“As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, He saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.”— MARK 5:21-36

POOR Jairus! It was his only daughter, you see (Luke 8:42), and she lay a dying when he left the house. He had tried all means, you may be sure, and all had failed; but there was one hope left. What was that, do you think? If he could but find Jesus, Him of whose wondrous power he had heard, his beloved one might yet be saved. And he had found Him, and had fallen down in his deep distress at His feet, and had “besought Him greatly” to come and heal his child. Ah, he didn’t know Jesus! He needed no pressing. Jairus had but to tell his sorrow, and He was ready at once; nay, I doubt not He had crossed the sea on purpose.

What the poor father felt as he hastened on towards his home with the Great Deliverer beside him, a father’s anxious heart alone can tell. How glad he must have been! how grateful to Jesus for coming so readily! how anxiety and hope would in turns fill his soul, as he pressed on through the thoughtless crowd which “thronged” his gracious Companion! But, alas! just when the hope of seeing his dear child once more made well begins to cheer his drooping spirit, the terrible message comes, “Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?” How cruelly abrupt! What a heart that messenger must have had who could speak thus to a father, without a soothing word to prepare him for the sudden blow! And I think you may see also, that although the man speaks with seeming respect of “the Master” (or teacher), as he calls the Lord Jesus, there is secret contempt and opposition towards Him in his heart. It is as if he would say, “It’s of no use to bring Him any further; He can’t help you.” Poor Jew! he didn’t know Jesus, did he? He seems in such haste to hinder Jesus, if he can, from coming to the house at all, that he utters his hard, cold message as abruptly as possible, quite unconscious, it appears, that he has stabbed the poor father to the heart. Depend upon it, he had no liking for Jesus’ miracles of love and power. “But as soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken,” before the stricken father could well feel the crashing force of the message, or utter a cry of pain, His precious sympathy, like a fountain welling over, is instantly in action. How beautiful is this! Quick to feel another’s woe, He anticipates the pang, and the ear, which had hardly yet drunk in the meaning of that bitter news, hears the gentle, loving voice of Jesus say, “Be not afraid, only believe;” and so, breathing words of comfort on his stricken heart, He goes with him to deliver.

“Thy sympathy, how precious!

Thou succourest in sorrow,

And bidet us cheer while pilgrims here,

And haste the hopeful morrow.”

Do you know what sympathy means? It means to feel with a person; not simply to feel for them, but so to enter into their sorrow or their joy as to feel as they feel. Thus we read, “Weep WITH them that weep.” (Rom. 12:15.) You see, it doesn’t say merely, “Weep for those that weep”— the hired mourners could do that (verse 38)— but “with them.” That is sympathy, and in the blessed Jesus you see it to perfection. Now every believer, young and old, has “the Spirit of Christ” (Romans 8:9, 10), and therefore can sympathize (feel) with another if he will; and if he does not, it is because that blessed Spirit is hindered or grieved. One may therefore well be sorry for a believer who shows little or no sympathy for others. There is something wrong, you may rely upon it. How is it, dear reader, with you?

K.

Comfort in the Dark Hour

“THERE never was such affliction as mine,” said a poor sufferer, restlessly tossing in her bed in one of the wards of a city hospital; “I don’t think there ever was such a racking pain.”

“Once,” was faintly uttered from the next bed.

The first speaker paused for a moment; and then, in a still more impatient tone, resumed her complaint—“Nobody knows what I pass through; nobody ever suffered more pain.”

“One,” was again whispered from the same direction.

“I take it you mean yourself, poor soul! but—”

“Oh, not myself; not me!” exclaimed the other; and her pale face flushed up to the very temples, as if some wrong had been offered, not to herself, but to another. She spoke with such earnestness that her restless companion lay still for several seconds, and gazed intently on her face. The cheeks were now wan and sunken, and the parched lips were drawn back from the mouth as if by pain, yet there dwelt an extraordinary sweetness in the clear gray eyes, and a refinement on the placid brow, such as can only be imparted by a heart-acquaintance with Him who is “full of grace and truth.”

“Oh, not myself; not me!” she repeated.

There was a short pause; and then the following words, uttered in the same low tone, slowly and solemnly, broke the midnight silence of the place■

“And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews. And they spit upon Him, and took the reed, and smote Him on the head... And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha... they gave Him vinegar to drink mingled with gall.... And they crucified Him.... And they that passed by reviled Him, wagging their heads.... And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

The voice ceased, and for several minutes not a syllable was spoken. The night-nurse rose from her chair by the fire and mechanically handed a cup of barley-water, flavored with lemon-juice and sugar, to the lips of both sufferers.

“Thank you, nurse,” said the last speaker. “They gave Him gall for His meat, and in His thirst they gave Him vinegar to drink.”

“She is talking about Jesus Christ,” said the other woman, already beginning to toss restlessly from side to side; “but,” added she, “talking about His sufferings can’t mend ours—at least, not mine.”

“But it lightens hers,” said the nurse.

“I wonder how?”

“Hush!” and the gentle voice again took up the strain.

“ ‘Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.... He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed.’” The following day as some ladies visiting the hospital passed by the cots, they handed to each a few fragrant flowers.

The gentle voice was again heard: “ ‘If God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith.’”

A few days passed slowly away, when on a bright Lord's-day morning, as the sun was rising, the nurse noticed the lips of the sufferer moving, and leaning over her, she heard these words, “Going home. ‘I have fought the good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me at that day...’” Her eyes closed, and the nurse knew that the hand of death was grasping the cords of life. A moment more and all was over—the soul had gone to dwell in that city where “there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain....” E. C

The Name of Jesus

O FOR a harp to sound His worthy name,
On the vast surface of this spacious globe,
So loud and sweet, that every ear might hear,
And every heart might feel what Jesus means!
No name in heaven pretends to vie with His:
Its awful sound inspires celestial hearts
With blissful rapture, and, with reverence deep,
Fills their adoring powers. Though uttered oft,
Chief note in every strain, it never cloy;
Such mines of rich instruction, and such mines
Of rich delight, does Jesus' name contain.
Daniel.

No. 2

Two years after, Daniel sees another vision, which he was to understand to refer to “the time of the end.” (chapter 8:17.) Here also he sees a “little horn,” only it is connected with the Grecian empire, or rather one of the four kingdoms which sprang out of Greece, (10:9, 22, 23.) The power of the ram—the Persian empire—was great; of the goat—the Grecian empire—was very great; but this little horn waxed exceeding great. His conquests extended toward the south, the east, and “the pleasant land”— Palestine; and it waxed even to the host of heaven, cast the stars down to the ground, and stamped upon them—referring, perhaps, to persons in exalted places among God’s people, the Jews. It cast down the truth to the ground, and practiced, and prospered. This little horn is also spoken of as a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences; his power mighty, but not by his own power; who will destroy the mighty and the holy people—the Jews—stand up against the Prince of princes—no doubt the Lord Jesus—and shall be broken without hand.

Thus we see that the “little horn” of the eighth chapter is a mighty potentate—infidel too, standing up against the Prince of princes; that he prospers in conquests, which extend to the pleasant land; he besieges Jerusalem, destroys the people—the nation of the Jews, not the saints; and, as we have seen, springs out of the Grecian empire. He cannot therefore be identical with the “little horn” of the seventh chapter, whose connection is with the Roman empire, and whose hatred is especially to the saints, and who sets aside Jewish ordinances. Nor is his diabolical arrogance and pride equal to “the king” of the eleventh chapter, against whom he wages war. Who, then, can this little horn of the eighth chapter be?

Accepting, as we do, the judgment of some of the best Hebrew scholars, that the whole of the eleventh verse and former part of the twelfth is a parenthesis (hence it is said “he,” and not “it,” as we find in the tenth and latter part of the twelfth verses), and knowing that Scripture repeatedly speaks of another mighty potentate that will come against the Jews at the time of the end, we can easily see why Daniel prophesied of him. Is he not emphatically the desolator, or king of the north, of chapter 11:40-45? See also Psalms 74; 79.; Isaiah 29:1-3; Micah 5:5, 6. Isaiah speaks of the Assyrian, of whom God declares— “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger... I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.” Though he so prospers at first, yet “through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod;” or, as Daniel says, “he shall be broken without hand.” (Isaiah 10:5, 6,12, 25; 30:31.)

The ninth chapter opens by Daniel referring to Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning his people; an important point (and we noticed the same thing in Jeremiah), as showing how highly he valued the word which God had already given. He knew in this way that Jerusalem would be in desolation seventy years. This brings him, in deep humiliation, confession, and prayer, before God. The angel Gabriel is therefore sent to assure him that he is “greatly beloved,” and to give him

intelligence in detail about the seventy weeks, at the end of which Daniel's people should be established in blessing.

The seventy weeks are divided into seven, three score and two, and one. The period of seven weeks—a day for a year—for the restoration and building of the city and wall of Jerusalem; and at the end of three score and two weeks after this, making together sixty-nine weeks, “Messiah shall be cut off,” and, instead of taking the kingdom, “have nothing” (margin); which brings us down to the crucifixion of Christ. This was followed, as we know, by “the people of the prince” (the Romans) destroying “the city and the sanctuary.” Ever since which Jerusalem has been in desolation, and trodden down of the Gentiles.

The last, or seventieth, week is still in abeyance; but he speaks of it at once, omitting any notice of the present period of the calling out of the Church, which has already extended over eighteen hundred years, because Daniel's scope was that of the Gentile times, and his own people the Jews. The Church of God, we know, was not revealed, but kept secret, hid in God, till made known to the apostles. (Ephesians 3:5,9; Romans 16:25.) In Daniel's prophecy therefore we look across all this present period, from Messiah's being cut off, and the destruction of Jerusalem, to the seventieth week, the end of the age, which will not begin till after the heavenly saints have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, when Jew and Gentile will again have their distinctive places of action on the earth.

We are told, as to this last week, that he—i.e., the coming head of the people that destroyed the city—shall “confirm covenant with many,” the mass of the Jews, “for one week”— that is, professing to establish them in Jewish ordinances, &c.— “of the week,” or at the end of three and a half years, “he will” set aside the Jewish religion, and “cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” In this way he will lead the Jews, except a faithful remnant, into thorough apostasy. “And for [because of] the over-spreading of abominations [or idols] he shall make it desolate [or there shall be a desolator], even until the consummation, and that [judgment] determined shall be poured upon the desolate” [city]. At the close of these seventy weeks, Israel shall then be established in righteousness and blessing, through the redemption-work of Him who died for that nation. (chapter 9:24.)

Again, Daniel is in deep exercise of soul, in the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, which was two years after some of the Jews had gone up from the captivity. (See Ezra 1:1.) He mourned and fasted for three whole weeks; and in the twenty-fourth day of the month he beheld a certain man, who spake most touchingly to him, strengthened him, and told him what should “befall his people in the latter days.” (chapter 10) He is then led again to the time of Alexander, and the division of his empire—the Grecian—into four kingdoms, and to consider the acting's of the “king of the north,” the Assyrian, and of “the king of the south,” the Egyptian; for both these kings have yet to play an important part before “the end of the indignation.” Accordingly, the former part of the eleventh chapter chiefly sets forth the ways and conflicts of these two kings. The king of the north succeeds against “the glorious land.” (verse 16.) The account of the “vile person,” from verse 21 to 35, may be Antiochus Epiphanes, whom history informs us did actually set up an idol in the temple; but that could not be “the abomination which maketh desolate” to which our Lord referred, for He spoke of it as then future. (Matthew 24:15.)

“The king,” or the Antichrist, is described from verse 36 to 40. He is in “the land,” which he divides for gain. He exalts himself, magnifies himself above every god, and speaks against God. He shall not regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of woman—i.e., being connected with the Messiah, nor regard any god; but he will prosper only “till the indignation be accomplished.” But both the king of the north and the king of the south shall come against him, and he, the king of the north, shall enter into the glorious land; but he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

At that time, we are told, Michael the great prince shall stand up for the children of Daniel’s people; and though it be a time of unparalleled sorrow, yet every one of Daniel’s people that is written in the book, the elect Jews, shall be delivered out of it. (chapter 12:1. See also Jeremiah 30:7; Matthew 24:22.) Besides these, the ten tribes, or the many or mass of them, who have been outcasts, where no one knows, asleep, as it were, in the dust of the earth, shall be brought forth, and, according to Ezekiel 20, judged and purged of the rebels before they enter the land. They shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. There will be some wise ones in those days, who shall instruct the many in righteousness—the remnant who shall seek to draw the people from the seducing power of the Antichrist, who shall shine as “the stars forever and ever.” (10:2, 3.) But Daniel is to seal the book till the time of the end; and he tells us that none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand. (verse 10.) Daniel is assured that he shall stand in his lot at the end of the days (verse 13), which may refer to his being in the reign with Christ.

Christ Is Precious

A REAL believer, when he, so to speak, examines Christ, acquiesces and delights in every view of Him. He is precious, says he, in His person, precious in His character, precious in His relations, precious in His offices, precious in His life, precious in His death, precious in His doctrines, precious in His promises, precious in His commands; yea, He is altogether lovely, supremely precious.

“O fix our earnest gaze

So wholly, Lord, on Thee,

That, with Thy beauty occupied,

We elsewhere none may see.”

Realities

Is it not a reality, dear reader, that you have an immortal soul? The body may die and be buried, but your soul is undying; for after death is the judgment. The soul of the rich man was in hell, though his body had been consigned to the grave with funeral pomp and ceremony. It is the soul, then, that has such paramount importance. Hence our Lord inquired, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" What could he give for what is of priceless value? No doubt, God is "able to destroy both body and soul in hell," and punish with "everlasting destruction and eternal fire." What a reality it is then, dear reader, that you have an immortal soul, as well as a mortal body? Where, then, would you be if it were now said, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee"?

But is it not a solemn reality that every natural man is a sinner against God? Not only now and then a sinner, as a kind of exception, as many suppose; but that he is living in sin before the all-seeing eye of God. Have you thought of this reality, dear reader, as your state before God? That He who searches all hearts, and knows all things, always beholds you as "a corrupt tree which cannot bring forth good fruit"? That whatever educational or religious advantages you may have, until you have a new life, a new nature, by being born of God through faith in Christ Jesus, you cannot please God? Have you ever seriously pondered the Scripture— "They that are in the flesh cannot please God"? What say you? Is this a reality, that as a child of Adam, however virtuous and refined, and even diligent in religious duties, that you are incurably bad, and cannot please God? Indeed, it is a most solemn reality. Then, say you, "I am undone, unclean, utterly unclean, totally sinful, both in nature and practice. Well then may my heart exclaim, What must I do to be saved?"

But is it not a precious reality that God gave His Son, sent forth His Son into the world to save sinners, not to amend sinners, or to improve an old depraved nature, but to save? That by bearing sins, suffering under the hand of God's unsparing wrath for sins, and thus judicially purging sins, and dying for the ungodly, being on the cross a substitute for the old Adam nature under divine judgment, that both the old man might be thus crucified, and all his evil fruits purged by the death of the Son of God upon the tree. Thus every claim of divine justice and holiness was fully and righteously met, and redemption accomplished in Christ, and through His precious blood. Is it not a precious reality that God now says of all believers, in virtue of Christ's redemption, their "old man is crucified with Christ;" "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"? Does not the Holy Ghost declare that "by Christ all that believe are justified from all things;" and that "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"? Can anything be clearer? That, by faith in Christ Jesus, I, once a totally unclean, depraved sinner, and an enemy to God, am now reconciled to God through the death of His Son, have forgiveness of sins, am a child of God, am justified from all things, and shall never perish? Are not these solemn, eternal, unchanging realities? And is not the Holy Ghost sent into my heart to bear witness to me of these things, and as the seal and earnest of the inheritance? Most assuredly they are realities. The word of the living God, who cannot lie, tells me so, and I may well hold fast my confidence in His word; for He is faithful that promised!

Is it not also a reality, that he that believeth not shall be damned? Does not God say so? It must, then, be true. It is an awful, an eternal, reality! No doubt those who depart this life in their sins feel at once that where Jesus is they cannot come, that there is an impassable gulf between the lost and saved, and that torment is immediately known. Was it not the picture of a dread reality the blessed Saviour drew when he represented Dives in hades, asking that Lazarus might be sent with one drop of water to cool his tongue, because he was tormented in that flame? his body lying, it may be, in the family vault, and his soul in torments, longing for a drop of water from the tip of the finger of one whom he had known on the earth only to despise and neglect. Oh, dear reader, is it possible that thy steps are hastening toward this awful reality? But more than this. Are not all that are in the graves yet to come forth? Must not the body of Dives yet be raised and join the miserable spirit? Must not the body and soul of the whole human race yet appear before God? Is not the Lord Jesus the raiser of the dead? And did He not say, "All that are in their graves shall come forth"? Most assuredly He did. And all sinners must yet appear before the great white throne, and be judged one by one, "every one according to his works." What an awful reality! The graves, the sea, giving up the dead in it; death and hades, the place of departed spirits, delivering up the dead in it; all the dead, both small and great, brought thus to stand before the great white throne; and "whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Oh, eternal reality, thus forever shut into the second death, forever shut out from God's happy presence; no rest forever; no change from the never-ending, ceaseless agony of torment in the lake of fire! Dear reader, do lay this word of divine truth to heart— "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life (that is, never received the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour) was cast into the lake of fire." What an awful, an eternal, reality! Oh, dear reader, flee now to the Saviour! Escape for thy life! Delay not! Haste at once; for the Saviour says, "Come, come unto me, and I will give you rest." Oh, I beseech you, hear His voice, and turn Now! for, "how can you escape if you neglect so great salvation?"

Again, is it not a precious reality that Christ is quickly coming for His own, that all that are "Christ's at His coming" will be caught up to meet Him in the air, and so be forever with the Lord? Oh, how blessed to be with Christ, and like Christ, forever! that even if any of His die before He comes, or rather fall asleep in Jesus, their spirits go at once into His most blessed presence; for "to die is gain," "to depart and be with Christ far better," "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Now loved, cared for, preserved in Christ Jesus, and blessed abundantly by Him, and then to be forever with Him, and like Him, and, if He is judging and reigning, to be judging and reigning with Him. "forever with the Lord." What a sweet reality! What a glorious prospect! How very soon we who are Christ's may know this glorious change and translation!

“Yet a Little While.”

“Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”

“Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

YET a little while of toil

On this earth’s most thorny soil;

Then the mounting in the air,

And the meeting Jesus there:

Fellow Christian,

This the joy we soon shall share.

Yet a little while of strife

In this wearing mortal life;

Then the day of rest and peace,

When our labors all shall cease:

Fellow Christian,

Endless then shall be our peace.

Yet a little while of hate

From the world for Christ’s dear sake;

Then the fellowship above

With our Lord, and those we love:

Fellow Christian,

This the joy we’ll have above.

Yet a little while of shame,

And the cross for Jesus’ name;

Then the welcome, and the crown,

And the Conqueror’s renown:

Fellow Christian,

‘Tis not long the world will frown.

Yet a little while away
From our Jesus we must stay;
Thee that ever loving Friend.
Will the summons for us send:
Fellow Christian,
With what joy shall we ascend.
R. C.

The Death Rattle

“IF I can’t believe, I can’t.” Such were the last words which the writer ever had the opportunity of hearing from the lips of a man who was an avowed infidel, and with whom he had frequently discussed the question of the divine authenticity of the Scriptures, which, however, is no question at all, but a fact. At the moment of uttering these words he was lying on his sofa, suffering, though not very severely, from bronchitis, which at that time (some twenty years ago) was epidemic in some parts of London, and had been remarkably fatal in several instances. They had been speaking together on the old subject, and the infidel finding all his arguments worthless, and having had all his objections met, fell back upon what afterward proved to be a direct falsehood—“If I can’t believe, I can’t.” Meaning that he could not believe the Bible to be God’s word, although he could bring forward no reason or ground for his opinions than what had been already proved fallacious. After some further attempts to convince him of his folly, his visitor left, but warned him of the dangerous nature of his disease, which had carried off several, both young and old, in that neighborhood.

About a week or ten days afterward, the writer learned one morning that a woman had called between eleven and twelve o’clock the night before at a house where he was known, to inquire for him, saying that her husband was dying, and earnestly wished to see him. She was told that he resided too far off to be sent for at that time of night, and was advised to go and get someone else. But sometime after midnight, she came again, saying that her husband had insisted on her doing so, and after describing a terrible deathbed scene, she added—“The death-rattle is in his throat, but he dare not die as he is.”

“If that is the case,” was the reply, “it is too late—too late to fetch any one to him, especially from such a distance.”

As on each occasion of calling she had forgotten in her distress to say whence she came, while the housekeeper, aroused from his bed in the dead of the night, forgot to inquire, some weeks passed away before the writer knew who it was that had sent such urgent messages. But one day wishing to learn how the infidel was, and whether he had yet seen the folly and wickedness of his pretended disbelief of the authenticity of the Scriptures, he called at his house. On knocking at the door, it was opened by a woman in a widow’s cap, whom at a glance the writer knew as the wife of the infidel. He was dead! It was he that in his dying agony had sent for the writer, because in his inmost soul he knew the Bible to be God’s holy word, and vainly hoped that something could be done or said that would save him from “the judgment to come,” just as the poor benighted Romanist sends for the priest to administer “extreme unction” in his last moments. And now the true ground of his infidelity came out. The poor widow had a sad tale to tell of long years of cruel neglect from her husband, who, having taken up with another woman, adapted infidel views by way of quieting conscience, and persuading himself that it was not true that “it is appointed unto men once to die, and AFTER THAT THE JUDGMENT.” And so long as any chance or hope remained of being able still to go on in his iniquity, he persisted in clinging to and asserting what

after all he felt in his own soul to be false. But when all hope of life was past, when death and judgment stared him in the thee, when the last moment was come, and he was sure he could not live, when “the death-rattle was in his throat,” and not before, he let go the wretched prop with which he had sustained himself in evil, and wanted to be saved in his sins.

But the unhappy man had gone too far. He had been convinced again and again of the authenticity of Scripture, had willfully belied his own convictions, had persisted in that which even natural conscience told him was sin, had mocked God, and despised His offers of mercy until it was too late.

Reader, have you accepted the gracious message declared by the Holy Ghost, sent down from a risen and glorified Christ— “Be it known unto you... that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things”? Or are you still neglecting and deferring the subject on various pretenses to some future time, that you may still “enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season”? Oh, be persuaded before it is too late! Let that midnight message sink into your ears, and touch your heart with a sense of the terrible consequences of procrastination from any cause! “The death-rattle is in His throat, but he dare not die as he is.”

K.

“The Wrath to Come.”

How appalling is the thought that multitudes of human beings are every day drawing nearer and nearer to “the wrath of God!” And yet how few seem to be alive to the fact! How many go on day by day with their accustomed duties, seeking, it may be, to come up to their usual standard of moral propriety, and perhaps also of virtue and refinement, without for one moment crediting the truth, that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness!” Now God is preaching peace, and delivering souls from condemnation, in the exceeding riches of His grace; for “the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth,” so that “He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (John 3:36.) It is impossible that any language can be plainer, and yet how awfully solemn the fact, that the wrath of God abides on them that believe not! Those, then, who do now receive the Son of God as their Saviour are safely sheltered from coming wrath, and are enabled to worship and rejoice before God in virtue of the peace-giving, sin-cleansing power of the blood of Jesus. It was so with those who believed the gospel at Thessalonica— “they turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

It is when a soul is bowed by God’s love and truth ix judge himself wording to it, that soul-distress woes eerily becomes known; for how can anyone make the solemn discovery that he is going on to “the wrath to come,” and contemplate its everlasting misery and woe, without his whole heart crying out, “What must I do to be saved?”

We have lately read of one who was thus bowed before God by His truth. He says, “I was out that awful night, the fifteenth of December, when the hand of God so visibly rested on the congregation, and when so many souls were given to Christ. I cannot tell you what I felt. I have been in all sorts of danger, by land and by sea, but I never found myself a coward till then. My knees smote together, and I trembled, every limb. It seemed to me as if God had written down in letters of fire all the sins I had ever committed, from my youth up, and had set them in order before my eyes. There they were in all their terrible minuteness. Circumstances which I had forgotten for years came up with all the freshness of yesterday. The mouth of hell seemed to open under the pew in which I sat; and I had no expectation of leaving the place alive. How I reached home I cannot tell, for of that I have no recollection. But this I can testify, that day and night the burning thought which racked my brain was, ‘The wrath to come!’ ‘The wrath to come!’ And yet, amidst it all, it was not the fear of hell that frightened me; it was the thought of having so ill-treated so good a God, and so gracious a Saviour. Last Sunday week, as I was at prayer, it seemed to me as if someone standing by addressed me by name, and said, ‘You may as well give over praying, for God will never answer your prayers.’ I rose and said, ‘No, never! no, never! Now that I have once learned to pray, I’ll never give over praying, if I die upon my knees.’ Still, all was dark, and I could see no hope. Things went on from bad to worse, and I began to fear that my reason would give way. But at length deliverance came. Last Thursday evening, as I was reading about cutting off a right hand and plucking out a right eye, it struck me that there must be something which held back

my soul from God, and so I entreated Him to show me what it was, and to dispose my mind to any service or any sacrifice He might require, even to the cutting off of a right hand, or the plucking out of a right eye, when all at once I had such a view of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, that the whole mountain of my guilt melted away like snow in the sunshine, and I arose from my knees with a heart large enough to lay hold of the whole world, and bring it to the feet of Christ.”

Dear reader, what say you to these things? Is it not high time to be aroused to the heartfelt consideration of the safety of your own soul? Lovingly we would ask, Are you sheltered by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save sinners from the coming wrath? Why not? Is not God worthy to be believed, His word to be credited, the atoning work of His beloved Son to be trusted? Flee then, at once, to the Saviour’s outstretched arms; take Him at His word; think of the sin-cleansing virtue of His blood; and, while looking up to His dear face, rest in His faithful word, that “whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Glimpses of Jesus’ Ways.

No. 2.

READ Mark 5:22-24, 35-43. “And He commanded that something should be given her to eat.” How very kind and thoughtful was this of our precious Lord Jesus! and how strikingly it illustrates His own gracious words, “Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him.” Here, then, we get a little “glimpse” of one of those many “ways” in which He “declared the Father.” (John 1:18; 17:6, 26.) The poor girl, you know, had been ill of a fever, and no doubt had suffered much; and when people suffer they can’t eat. But she had not only suffered and been sorely weakened by the fever, but it had killed her outright. Then came Jesus, and with that word, “Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise,” He gave her life again. His word sufficed. “He spake, and it was done.” And if in thus speaking the dead into life He showed His power, a power greater than that of death itself—if thus He would show that He was the life, and His word life, how tenderly, how humanely, He does it! He “took her by the band,” all unconscious as she was; for He would befriend the very DEAD. Nor was this all “He commanded that something should be given her to eat.” Wonder, amazement, and joy unspeakable, might have caused the parents and friends to forget at such a moment the need of the poor child; but Jesus forgets nothing. How calm He is in all the turmoil and excitement of this scene; how conscious of power! yet how He stoops to think of giving a poor girl “something to eat.” What tender pity for a little one! As the beautiful curtains of the tabernacle were all of “one measure” (Exodus 26:2), so the precious features of Jesus’ character were all equal. His tenderness was as deep as His love, His pity as great as His power. No doubt this little scene shadows forth a glorious future, when the daughter of Judah shall be “taken by the hand,” raised from “death in trespasses and sins,” and fed on the meat that endureth forever. But just now I want you to think over the tenderheartedness which could care for the need of a child just raised from the dead by His own almighty word. God and man stand before us in one person, and in one little scene. The resistless power that can raise the dead is united to a compassion not less tender and thoughtful than that of a mother for her little one. Love was the spring of it all; and He is love, for He is God; but, blessed thought, He is man too, and His pity is equal to His power. What a Friend to have forever! Is He yours by faith? Do you know Him as your own precious Saviour, whose blood cleanseth from all sin? Only such can have Him for a Friend, and to all such He is “a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” But to know Him as a friend you

must walk in obedience and communion. (John 15:14; 13:23-26; 19:26, 27.)

K.

“READER, this year may bring to thee

A summons to eternity!

If welcome thou would'st have it be,

To Jesus come.”

The Cruse That Faileth Not

Is thy cruse of comfort wasting? rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine it shall serve thee and thy brother:
Love divine will fill thy storehouse, or thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often make a royal feast for two.
For the heart grows rich in giving; all its wealth is living grain;
Seeds, which mildew in the garner, scattered, fill with gold the plain.
Is thy burden hard and heavy? Do thy steps drag wearily?
Help to bear thy brother's burden; God will bear both it and thee.
Numb and weary on the mountains, wouldst thou sleep amidst the snow?
Chafe that frozen form beside thee, and together both shall glow.
Art thou stricken in life's battle? Many wounded round thee moan;
Lavish on their wounds thy balsams, and that balm shall heal thine own.
Is the heart a well left empty None but God its void can fill;
Nothing but a ceaseless fountain can its ceaseless longing still.
Is the heart a living power? Self-entwined, its strength sinks low;
It can only live in loving, and by serving love will grow.

Hosea

Hoses prophesied in the reign of several kings, and contemporaneously with Isaiah. (Compare Isa. 1:1 with Hosea 1:1.) He deeply felt the corrupt condition of God's people, distinguished between Judah and Israel, he prophesied perhaps over the space of fifty years, and gives us a very enlarged account of the ways of God with His people. The wife he was ordered to take, and the names he was commanded to give his children, show how feelingly he must have entered into the fallen and depraved state of the people. Jezreel, the name of the eldest, means seed of God; Lo-ruhamah, not having obtained mercy; Lo-ammi, not my people.

Still, bad as the people were, sovereign mercy would come in, and bless the children of Israel—the ten tribes—and unite them in one head with the children of Judah; and blessing also would be extended to the Gentiles. "It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall it be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." (Compare Hosea 1:10 with Romans 9:25.) Peter, who writes to converted Jews, only quotes chapter 2:23. The prophet is therefore instructed to say unto his brethren, Ammi, that is, my people; and Ruhamah, that is, having obtained mercy; and that God will bring her into such blessing that she shall sing as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt: "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord." (chapter 2:19, 20.)

The present state of God's ancient people, as well as the goodness in store for them, is plainly set forth in the third chapter: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."

The terrible sins of the people are then pointed out—swearing, lying, killing, stealing, adultery; and no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. They are destroyed for lack of knowledge, and likened to a backsliding heifer; and, according to the old proverb, it will be, "Like people, like priest." "The pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them." God declares that He will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah, and adds, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they shall seek me early." (chapter 5)

The next three chapters are principally taken up with the prophet's lamentations over Judah and Israel, calling for the judgment of God for sin. "They sacrifice flesh for the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat it; but the Lord accepteth them not; now will He remember their iniquity, and visit their sins: they shall return to Egypt. For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities: but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof." (chapter 6, 7, 8.)

The people are then solemnly called on to consider their sinful ways. Even the watchmen had corrupted themselves. They shall not dwell in the Lord's land, but shall return to Egypt, and eat unclean things in Assyria. "God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations." (chapter 9)

Israel is likened to an empty vine, bringing forth fruit to himself, and as having sinned from the days of Gibeah. But God loved His people, and He taught Ephraim, taking them by their arms; He drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love; and He says that he shall not return to the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king. But, notwithstanding their sin, God's compassion for them comes out most touchingly every now and then. He says, "My people are bent to backsliding from me... How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repenting's are kindled together... They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt, and as a dove out of the land of Assyria: and I will place them in their houses saith the Lord. Yet Ephraim compasseth me about with lies; he feedeth on wind, and followeth after the east wind..... The Lord also hath a controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob... therefore turn thou to thy God... But Ephraim provoked Him to anger most bitterly." (chapter 10, 11, 12).

The sinful and self-destroying ways of Israel, so loudly calling for God's interference in judgment; the frequent utterances of God's compassion for them, and promise yet to be their help and king, are touchingly set forth in the thirteenth chapter. While the book concludes with a fine description of their restoration and blessing when they really have a repentant mind toward Jehovah, and return unto Him, in heartfelt need saying, "Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously."

This book reads us most solemn warnings against pride, self-confidence, and departure from God; while we learn much of His governmental ways, His faithfulness, and patient grace toward His own. As usual, the prophecy concludes with a bright prospect of blessing yet in store for the nation of Israel.

Joel

HERE we have the ushering in of the day of the Lord, and what immediately precedes it. The prophecy is especially in reference to Judah and Jerusalem, although we are told that the Spirit will be poured out upon “all flesh.”

God calls the swarms of locusts, the cankerworm, caterpillar, and palmerworm, His “great army,” which He sent among them (chapter 1:4 and 2:25); and the dearth and barrenness thus caused is used by the prophet to call the people’s attention to their sad condition, the judgments of God, and the coming day of the Lord.

As to the scarcity caused by the insects, the prophet says to the drinkers of wine, “Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the new wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.” The priests are called on to mourn because the meat offering and drink offering, is cut off from the house of the Lord; and because of this the ministers of the altar should howl, and lie all night in sackcloth. The husbandmen and vinedressers are to howl because the harvest of the field is perished, the vine is dried up, the fig-tree languisheth. The beasts also groan because there is no pasture. All the inhabitants of the land are called upon to sanctify a fast, and call on the Lord. All this precedes the day of the Lord; for the prophet exclaims, “Alas for the day! the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.” (chapter 1)

But more than this. Though the prophet sounds a trumpet of alarm because the day of the Lord cometh, and is at hand, a terrible army— “His army”— invades the land. They are a great people, and strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall there be any more after it for many generations. A fire goeth before them, &c. (chapter 2:11, 20.) Under a heavy sense of this, and knowing that the day of the Lord is near, the prophet calls on the people to deep and universal repentance. He assures them that, if they truly repented and turned to the Lord, He would be jealous for His land, and pity His people. He would give them corn, and wine, and oil, and no more make them a reproach among the heathen, and remove far off from them “the northern army”— the Assyrian, who will devastate the land in the last days. They shall eat plenty, be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord their God that hath dealt wondrously with them; they shall never be ashamed, and shall know that Jehovah is in the midst of them. There shall be an outpouring of His Spirit upon “all flesh,” and their sons and daughters shall prophesy; there shall be wonders in the heavens and in the earth before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes, and whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; “for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.” (Chap. 2).

But while Judah will be delivered from captivity, God will bring down all the nations into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and plead with them there, for scattering His people among the nations, and parting His land. The prophet says: “Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of

decision. The Lord shall roar out of Zion.... but the Lord will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am Jehovah your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.” This day of the Lord will be a time of marvelous blessing to Israel, and of abasement to their enemies. “In that day the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk... Egypt shall be a desolation; and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah.... But Judah shall dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation. For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed: for the Lord dwelleth in Zion.”

The Authority and Value of God's Word

"THE word of God, which liveth and abideth forever," is the alone authority for faith; for faith believes God, and rests upon His word because it is His word. It is this that gives reality to souls—the certainty of the truth of Scripture; so that the constant watchword of those who live and walk by faith is, "It is written." Whatever be the appearance of circumstances, or how varied the feelings of the believer, he knows that "heaven and earth will pass away, but His words will not pass away." His heart and mind thus sweetly rest on God's faithfulness to His own word. He looks to Jesus risen and ascended, and is at peace; for his faith and hope are in God. He knows that He is faithful that promised; that He cannot deny Himself. It is well, then, to distinguish between the opinions and doctrines of men, and the unfailing authority of the written Word. And those who really love souls, and seek to win them for Christ, and to rescue them from the wrath to come, look well to it, that what they set before their hearers is the unalterable word of the Lord. It was so with the apostle Paul. He tells us that his preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power; that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. He was jealous lest they should rest in anything short of the word of God. Hence we read of the Thessalonians, who, after hearing Paul's preaching, shone so brightly, that they received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. Hence, when the apostle afterward wrote to them he said, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13.) How important, then, is it that those who preach should set forth the authority and value of the word of God, and that those who receive it should do so as receiving divine truth! The apostle Paul enjoined Timothy to "preach the word;" and James says, "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth;" and we know that that Word testifies of Jesus, who "made peace by the blood of His cross."

It is recorded of a poor cobbler, when he preached in front of a neighbor's cottage, that he began to read passages from the Bible, but in a tone of belief and depth of pathos which awoke a tender feeling in every villager's heart.

"I will tell you why," he said in a trembling voice, "why I read from this book, rather than say any poor words of my own. I was a young man before many of you were born. We had not so many Bibles then as we have now; and in this old valley, which seems old enough to have been made by Noah's flood, I grew up without any religious instruction. When I hear the gospel now, I think how glad I should have been to have heard it forty years ago.... My first bit of the Bible I got from an old peddler, who treated the few leaves he gave me for a drink of milk with contempt. But after many days I got a whole one for myself. Here it is," he said with a radiant smile, holding up a well-worn book, "and from that alone I learned to know my need of a Saviour, and to know also that God in His mercy had provided one equal to my need. Oh, dear friends and neighbors, you will need no human teacher, however clever, if you will make that best of books your chief and most prayerful study!"

It was his conviction of the infinite superiority of the word of God to all human teaching that led him, whenever he had an opportunity, to read it to young and old. I have heard him reading it to little children who were waiting to have their boots mended. I have heard him read it to sick and aged men and women, finishing up a chapter or a promise with the simple words, made eloquent by his own deep faith and feeling, "Isn't that good? Isn't that grand? And mind, it's all true."

Two Aspects of the Death of the Lord Jesus

An Extract.

THERE are two aspects of the death of the Lord Jesus in His atoning sacrifice which have to be distinguished. The glory of God in respect to sin had to be established; the divine rights vindicated; the moral glory of God, and all appertaining to His Majesty, made good. At the same time propitiation had to be made for the sins of His people, propitiation also for the whole world. (1 John 2:2.) The door opened for God, the God of all grace and mercy, to deal with man according to the value of the blood of Jesus.

This has all been perfectly done on the cross by the death of the Son of God. God in His moral glory and being has been perfectly, everlastingly glorified. His truth, holiness, justice, righteousness, every attribute of the majesty of God has been manifested in perfection by the work and death of His Son, such as never could have been manifested in any other way. At the same time that blessed One, having borne the wrath of God, the judgment due to sin, and having died upon the cross, the salvation of those who trust Him, believing in His name, is complete and final.

Mercy flowing down to us as sinners, the value of the blood of Christ in cleansing the guilty soul and meeting the deep need of conscience, would be all-engrossing to the convicted sinner; and to help such the truth as to atonement is more generally applied to man's side, if one may so speak; but the true ground of peace lies in what God has found in the atoning blood of His Son.

God alone knows what sin really is, and abhors it. He alone can value, and does fully value, the sacrifice which has put it away. It is His estimate of the atoning blood that is worthy of it, not that of the awakened, quickened sinner. Doubtless there would be reality in that, but it would be his estimate, his feelings, whereas faith sees with God.

Peace is founded on His word, which has divine authority over the soul. Many a distressed one looking into himself, and judging according to his knowledge of the cross of Christ, fails in realizing the peace he longs for; whereas, looking to Jesus crucified, and to Jesus glorified, and God's love in giving Him, and God's delight in Him, and resting in His work, he may soon taste, not only peace with God, but the peace of God.

The Wicked cut Down as the Mown Grass

A DREAD reality indeed for a man to die in his sins. “If ye believe not that I am He,” said Jesus, “ye shall die in your sins.” (John 8:24.) Think, dear reader, what it must be to appear before God “in your sins”— before Him who hates rebellion and iniquity with infinite hatred! And yet, if you refuse God’s great salvation, despise the gospel of His grace, turn not to the Lord Jesus Christ, choose rather to do your own will and walk in your own ways, you must appear before the Lord Jesus to receive a just and eternal judgment according to your works. This is the record of divine truth. But the haters of God’s truth and His people are sometimes suddenly cut off “suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy.” They are cut down as the grass, and wither as the green herb. We subjoin a couple of narratives to warn any who may be persecutors of God’s children.

“One man in particular,” said W. H., “was a most dreadful enemy to me. He at times uttered such blasphemies that I have been obliged to leave the garden and go into the fields, like a pelican of the wilderness, or owl of the desert.... But that same man, sometime after, fell sick; and, as God had delivered my soul out of trouble, I was determined to visit him, which accordingly I did; and as soon as I saw him, this noble champion of Satan was dissolved into many tears at the sight of him on whose head he had formerly showered so many heavy curses. I stood astonished to see a person so depressed and bowed down under the heart-felt dart of all-conquering and triumphant death, who, in his health, could boast of his strength, of his excesses, and of his disdain of all thoughts of God and of futurity. I asked him if I should pray for him. He wept, and said, Yes. I did so, but the answer returned to my own bosom; for, before I departed, he cursed the limb of his own body, where he saw that death had made its first attack, and soon after he closed his eyes in sorrow.”

“At E. there were two men who had been very bitter enemies to the gospel. One of them frequently assaulted me on the high road, made very wry faces, or, as his insolence termed it, looked me out of countenance, and used every effort to provoke me to anger. His wife frequently attended my ministry, which circumstance gave him great offense, and for this he often beat and abused her. At one time in particular he took her out of bed, beat her in the most cruel manner with a large staff, and afterward turned her out of doors naked on Ewell Common, and thus exposed her to the rigor of a frosty night. In the morning following he went in search of her, and was under some apprehension that she had perished through the severity of the weather. At length he found the poor suffering woman, who had taken shelter in a hovel among some straw, scarcely alive, where in all probability, had she remained a little longer, she would have fallen a victim to his brutality. But an all-seeing God suffered him not long to reign; he was soon after visited with a long and severe fit of illness, during which time he desired to see me. I accordingly attended him once or twice. He seemed much distressed, read and wept continually, but appeared very ignorant of the way of salvation to the last moment of his life.”

“Thus man giveth up the ghost; and where is he?” (Job 14:10.) What an awful thing it is to be a hater of God’s truth, and a persecutor of His people! Well hath the apostle said, “Behold, ye

despisers, and wonder, and perish!”

In Christ

MANY dear people, who are in earnest as to the conscientious discharge of their so-called religious duties, labor under the unscriptural idea that it is right to have doubts and fears as to their present and eternal acceptance in Christ. Such well-meaning but mistaken souls are not established in grace. They do not appropriate the precious promises (addressed To BELIEVERS) in the Epistles, &c., and must necessarily be always groaning in bondage, the more so as they learn by experience “that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing,” &c. (Romans 7:18.) The seventh of Romans represents the experience of a quickened soul not delivered until the last verse. It is well to estimate truly the flesh or old Adam nature. (See Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Galatians 5:19-21.) Right thoughts as to the believer’s standing in Christ must at once dispel the darkness.

At the cross, the end of man in the flesh came before God. The more God extended grace, the more did man display his innate and desperate wickedness, and hatred of God. This was brought out at the cross ■ the final test! “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” (Acts 2:23.) “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but HAVE everlasting life.” (John 3:16.) Truly God is love! and that love was thus so perfectly expressed! Why doubt it for a moment?” Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love: in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. And He is the Head OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.” (Colossians 1:13-18.) Again, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (the Word) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5.)

This blessed One, then, was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21.) The sixth of Romans shows how the believer is dead with Christ and risen with Him; also 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1-5, &c. How it takes us away from self, when we consider our standing in Him who died for us and rose again! “For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.” (Ephesians 5:30.) He of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30.) And ye are complete in Him, &c.. (Colossians 2:10.) Thus being in Christ, I have everything in Him! Not what I am by nature, but what He is for me; and being in Christ, I am a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17.) Dead with Him, and risen! Oh, that souls were simple, so that the Spirit of God could take of the things of Christ and show them unto them! The feeblest believer is necessary to complete the body of Christ; hence Christ must perish before I can! “As He is, so are we in this world.” (1 John 4:17.) Until I knew my

relationship as a child— “holy and without blame before Him in love”— how can I act as one? After showing the believer his standing (Ephesians 1, 2, 3.) the apostle beseeches to walk worthy. (Ephesians 4:1.) The more I learn of the grace and love of my Father, the more will I distrust myself, and abhor that which is of nature. My joy will be to keep in the place of death that which God considers as dead with Christ—viz., the flesh. Until I thus apprehend, in some measure, that for which I am apprehended, I cannot be said to be upon Christian ground. Until I take God at His word (see Mark 10:15), through faith in the person and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, I cannot be sealed with the Spirit. (1 John 5:13; John 3:36.) “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of His Son.” (1 John 5:10.) How can the Spirit of God reveal to me the deep things of God when I have not received His testimony? thus setting to my seal that God is true. It is unbelief, and nothing else, to refuse to accept what God in His great love so freely offers TO ALL. “The truth shall make you free.” And again, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” (John 8:32, 36.) None but one in the conscious relationship of a child can appropriate such a Scripture as Philippians 4:6, 7. The writer has met with many who say they have got “religion,” but who are not established in grace, and know nothing of that peace which passeth all understanding! Many put works in the place of Christ, and although they may have what they call “religion,” they know little of what it is to have Christ! “To him that worketh not,” &c. (Romans 4:6) does not seem to be understood. When one knows what it is to be in Christ, and thus a worshipper, it is then only that “acceptable” works flow spontaneously. (Hebrews 9:14.) Abraham proved his faith by his works. (James 2:21-23.) “Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? BECAUSE HIS OWN WORKS WERE EVIL, and his brother’s righteous.”

The sixth chapter of Romans should give an earnest, “guileless” soul clear views as to deliverance from sin, law, and death, and show him his standing in Christ. Oh! why do people swallow every doctrine of men, and refuse to accept God’s own word?

“Unto Him Be Glory!”

An Extract.

I FOUND him (an Irishman) deplorably ignorant, and I had difficulty in making him understand the most simple language. All he could do was to repeat a few Ave Marias. He had never had a copy of the word of God; but after a few visits he consented to accept one; and he had it read to him, and the Spirit of the Lord applied its truth to his heart, and the most pleasing of all enquiries was heard, “What must I do to be saved?” He became a Christian; left the Romish Church, and attended where he could hear Christ and Him crucified preached. Affliction overtook him, and being in adverse circumstances, he was obliged to go to the workhouse. He recovered, but kept in the house. He was permitted to have a holiday. I called to see him, and was rejoiced to find him in such a happy frame of mind. He said, “I am happy. Oh, what a treasure Christ is! Strange that I should have been ignorant of Him for so many years. And what wonderful love His must be to have mercy on one who for seventy years had no love for Him!” “Are you happy in the house?” “Yes, with one exception. There are so many wicked characters, and their bad language grieves my very soul. However, I do what I can to show them their error; but they say I am too quiet a man. But, poor things, they don’t understand why I am different.” “God’s grace has done it.” “Well, sir, I can’t do much by argument; but I hope what few days I have to remain on earth to live for Christ. And do seek out those poor creatures who are deluded like I was. I know the difficulties you have to contend with, and the enmity there is in the hearts of all Catholics against the Bible and the simple truths of the gospel They are taught it. I know I was. Well, here am I, a sinner plucked out of their clutches, and out of the clutches of the devil, thanks be to God and to you.” A few weeks elapsed; the old man was taken suddenly ill, and soon expired. His last words were, “Unto Him that loved me, and washed me, &c., be glory forever and ever.”

Lift up Thine Eye to Jesus

LIFT up thine eye to Jesus!

The sorrows of the way

Are only placed there by His love,

Lest thou shouldst wish to stay.

And He would have thee watchful be,

Waiting till He shall come,

And listening for the welcome call,

“Rise up, beloved one.”

Lift up thine eye to Jesus!

Why should it downcast be?

Each treasure which He guards on high

He keeps in store for thee.

And while He gathers precious fruits,

And lays them at the gates,

‘Tis for His own beloved He thinks,

And ‘tis for her He waits.

Song of Solomon 7:13.

Lift up thine eye to Jesus!

Though He has gone before,

‘Tis but to get a place prepared

For those whose sins He bore.

And thou’rt so precious in His sight,

He’ll never, never rest,

Till He has brought thee to His lime

With Him, supremely blest.

Then lift thine eye; for Jesus,

“The Morning Star,” is nigh;
The night is nearly past, and soon
Thou’lt see Him rend the sky.
And through that day of endless bliss
Thou’lt share His glorious throne,
His longed-for presence, and His joys;
Yea, He Himself thine own.

R. C.

Glimpses of Jesus’ Ways.

No. 3

(Read Luke 7:11-15.)

“And He delivered him to his mother.”

Do you wonder how He did it? I think it not unlikely that He lifted him from the bier in His own arms of almighty love, and placed him on her bosom. It was but like Himself to do so; for those gracious hands of His could not be still when the helpless were before Him. (Mark 1:31; 6:5; 10:16.) But we do not know, and I do not believe, that if anyone had asked the widow herself at the very moment, she could have told them. That sudden bound from depths of utter desolation into full deliverance must have been overwhelming; her joy and amazement would utterly deprive her of all other consciousness than that her only son was alive again, and in his mother’s arms. You may rely upon it, that if the same precious sympathy, love, and power, which had given the young man back to life, had not sustained her in that wondrous hour, the joy, too big for any human heart, would have killed her outright; for joy, you know, can kill as well as sorrow. Was he not “the only son of his mother, and she a widow”?

Alone in a crowd, and desolate, she was following the bier to see her last prop buried. It is not said that she wailed or lamented aloud (as is the custom in the East), or uttered any sound. Her heart was broken, and broken hearts make no noise; her hopes as “a mother in Israel” had perished forever; the strong arm that had been her stay was withered in death; the warm heart where she had found a refuge was cold and still. That that son had loved and honored his mother you may be sure, or Jesus would never have done what He did. It was this that made her anguish too deep for words—the light of her eyes was gone. But there was One at hand who came “to heal the broken-hearted;” and though she knew Him not, nor asked mercy at His hands, His sympathy with sorrow, ever welling over, and needing but an object, is instantly in action. “He came and touched the bier;” for He will be one with her in all the sorrow that it tells; He will identify Himself with all that that sad scene declares, whether as to her or that which it shadows forth; for without a doubt Israel’s future and sudden deliverance from utter desolation are pictured here; but that is another matter. It is the blessed Jesus, “you lovely Man,” now glorified, and yet “the same yesterday, today, and forever,” I want you to contemplate now. He takes up that heart-wrung widow’s anguish unasked, and for Him to take it up is her deliverance and the young man’s too. The onward movement to the grave, the tomb of the widow’s help, and hope, and heart’s affections, is at once arrested, as it will be when He comes again, the Great Deliverer of His never-forgotten people, widowed now and desolate. “They that bare him stood still,” and the voice of Jesus speaks him into life! That same voice had but just before breathed balm into her broken heart, and so prepared and fortified that heart for all that was to follow. Who does not wish he could have heard that gentle whisper, “Weep not,” uttered in tones of such compassion as must have sent a thrill into her inmost soul, hushing to rest an agony of grief, and waking withered hope into life again! And when the astounded widow, her face yet wet with tears of sorrow, clasped her only son to her breast once more, do you think she knew who had done it all? Not she, much less why; for if the tender

heart that moved the blessed Jesus to that deed of pity could not bear unmoved the sight of that widowed mother's re-union with her child, He did not stay to tell her. Precious Jesus! He could but "deliver him to his mother," and pass on where other hearts were aching.

K.

Amos

THE prophet Amos was a herdman, raised up of God to prophesy concerning Israel in the reign of Uzziah king of Judah, and of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel.

In the first and second chapters he pronounces judgment concerning Judah, and Israel, and the surrounding nations, introduced by the declaration that “the Lord will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem.” The terrible judgments of Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, are each recorded, and then the sins of Judah, and especially of Israel, are more particularly detailed.

In the third chapter the whole family of Israel, which God brought up from the land of Egypt, is addressed as the only family on earth God had known, and therefore He must punish them for their iniquities. Having been brought out of Egypt, by redemption, into relationship with God, He governs them, and therefore must judge evil. He asks, therefore, “Can two walk together, except they are agreed?” Their sins are very grievous; “they know not to do right; they store up violence and robbery in their palaces;” therefore God must bring down their strength and spoil their palaces. Nor will the idolatrous altars of Bethel be forgotten; yet a few shall be delivered, as a shepherd takes out two legs, or a piece of an ear, from the mouth of a lion.

But though God had visited them with famine, smitten them with blasting and mildew, the palmer-worm, pestilence, the sword, and death, and so overthrown some of them that they were as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning, “yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.” The prophet therefore exclaims, “Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.” (chapter 4)

The virgin of Israel is deeply fallen, and again and again the word of the prophet to them is, “Seek the Lord, and ye shall live;” seek good, and not evil; to so judge themselves as to hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate; for it may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph; for God hated and despised their feast days, and would not smell in their solemn assemblies. They must go into captivity. (chapter 5)

But woe to them who are at ease in Zion, who are living in luxury, and not grieved for the affliction of Joseph! They shall be the first to go into captivity; for the Lord God of Hosts will abhor the excellency of Jacob, deliver up the city and all therein, and bring a nation against them to afflict them. (chapter 6)

Though judgment had long been delayed, it can be so no longer. The prophet sees a plumbline, and the sanctuaries of Israel must be laid waste, and their cities made desolate. Amos is told that Bethel is the king’s chapel, and is forbidden to prophesy there again; but he asserts his authority as from God, and that he was speaking the word of the Lord. An important principle to be observed at a time when God’s people had so departed from Him. (chapter 7)

In the vision of “the summer fruit” he learns that the end is come, judgment can no longer be delayed. There shall be, moreover, a famine of the word of the Lord. They shall no longer have

divine guidance and instruction. (chapter 8)

They cannot escape God's terrible judgments; for all is under God's ordering; and though He would destroy the kingdom from off the face of the earth, yet He will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob. He will sift the house of Israel like corn in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. He will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, close up the breaches, raise up his ruins, build it as in the days of old. The plowman shall overtake the reaper, the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. "And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, with the Lord thy God." (chapter 9)

Obadiah

THE vision of Obadiah is especially concerning Edom. The Edomites were the descendants of Esau. Having been lifted up with pride, saying in their heart, Who shall bring us down to the ground? Jehovah must bring them down, because of their constant hatred of the house of Jacob. Esau's things are searched out. His confederates have deceived him. God judges him. The mighty men of Teman shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter. The prophet then rebukes them: "For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off forever." Moreover, he censures them for their sympathy with Jacob's enemies, and rejoicing at Judah's affliction and calamity, and for delivering up those of his that did remain in the day of their distress. He declares that the day of the Lord is near, that upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions. Then the house of Jacob, instead of being despised and oppressed by Esau, shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it. And Saviour's shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and "the kingdom shall be the Lord's." See also Isaiah 34:6; 63:1-3; Jer. 49:10-13; Ezek. 35:11-15.

Jonah

WE have in this book God's governmental ways with a servant, whose disobedience to the plain word, and displeasure with the divine ways toward others, called for direct interference in discipline.

The prophet was commanded by Jehovah to go to Nineveh and testify against it— "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come before me." (chapter 1:2.) Instead of obeying, he fled from the presence of the Lord, and finding (as some might say, most providentially) a ship going to Tarshish, and having means at his command to meet the expenses, he paid the fare, and went to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

But he cannot flee from the region of God's government; for all things serve Him. The wind, sea, mariners, fish, worm, gourd, sun, are all brought forth, as each is required, in dealing with His servant. While the prophet was fast asleep in the sides of the ship, God sent out a great wind, made a tempestuous sea, filled the mariners with such alarm that they roused Jonah from sleep, called upon their gods, cast lots to know the cause of the storm, and the lot fell upon Jonah. Then they so press him that he confessed that he had departed from the presence of the Lord, assured them that the tempestuous sea would not subside unless they cast him into the deep; which they reluctantly did, and the sea ceased from her raging. (chapter 1)

But, throughout, God is with His servant, and disciplining him. He therefore prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah, where he remained for three days and three nights. Here, in the fish's belly, he effectually learned deep and precious lessons, and especially the vanity of having fled from the presence of the Lord—the lying vanity, because it was impossible to get away from the eye and hand of God. He also learned that "salvation is of the Lord," so that, when the discipline was no longer needed, "God spake unto the fish, and it vomited Jonah upon the dry land." (Chap. 2)

Having now passed through, in his own experience, death and resurrection, he unhesitatingly obeys the divine direction. Hence we read, "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord." The effect of his testimony, that Nineveh would be overthrown in forty days, was that the people believed God; so that the king proclaimed a fast, put on sackcloth, and said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent," &c. "So God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them, and He did it not." (Chap. 3).

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he said it was fearing that God would thus act that induced him at first to flee to Tarshish. It was with him, then, a question of his own reputation, not of God's glory. Pride was thus wounded. He therefore asks God to take away his life; for it is better to die than to live. He sits in a booth on the outside of the city, that he might see what became of Nineveh. But while God reproves him for his anger, He graciously prepares a gourd, and made it to come up over his head to deliver him from his grief. But while the prophet rejoices in the gourd,

and not in the giver, God prepares a worm, which smote the gourd, and it withered. God then prepared a vehement east wind, which caused the sun so to beat upon his head that he fainted, and again wished to die. Again God reproves Jonah for his being angry; but he justifies himself, saying, "I do well to be angry, even unto death." The book concludes with the Lord's appeal to the prophet's conscience as to sparing Nineveh, that great city.

No doubt Jonah is a type of the Lord in His death and resurrection—calming the furious tempest only by his death, and bringing in blessing consequent upon his resurrection from the dead; but he may be also an illustration of Israel's moral condition—God's governmental discipline for their disobedience, and then saving Gentiles. But, withal, it reads us searching lessons as to service, and shows how much of self may come in to hinder true communion with the Lord in it. Having to do with Him, as risen and ascended, and thinking only of His glory, is the true secret of happiness.

“Caught up.”

AND is this really Scripture? Are those who are Christ's thus divinely taught to expect to be “caught up to meet the Lord in the air”? Indeed they are, and the Scripture cannot be broken. So hopeless is the condition of this poor world, that, without holding out the least prospect of its improvement, or of men getting better, or of there being anything on earth for His people to hope for, the blessed Saviour, when He was leaving the world, said, “Now is the judgment of this world:” and to His own He added, “I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 12:31; 14:3.)

But though His own disciples were thus plainly led to look forward with joy to His coming again, it was not known till it was afterward revealed to Paul, and by him made known to the saints at Thessalonica as to how this would be accomplished. He there informs us that, by His coming again, we are to understand that “the Lord Himself will descend from heaven.” It is not therefore any mere spiritual manifestation of Christ, but the descent of Christ Himself from heaven. It is, then, “the Lord Himself” we are called on to look for. Hence the apostle elsewhere said, “We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” But we are further told that His coming then will be with “a shout (an assembling shout), with archangel voice, and with trump of God:” and the effect being, that the dead in Christ are raised, and the living in Christ changed; all the saints will then “be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord.” (1 Thes 4:16-18.)

It is therefore impossible that anything can be more plainly stated than that we are to look for a personal coming of the same Jesus whom the disciples saw go into heaven—a coming again of the Lord Himself; that those who are raised then are only Christ's—not one unbeliever is included, the action being limited to “those who are Christ's”— and, being first changed, they are then “caught up,” translated to meet the Lord Himself in the air, and then will be forever with the Lord. No marvel, then, that it is elsewhere called the believer's blessed hope; for how full of unmixed blessing! It is also a purifying hope; for “he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.” It is a comforting hope; hence the saints are told to “comfort one another with these words.” What a soul-stirring prospect! How soon it may be a precious reality, that we hear His voice, see His face, and are caught up into His very presence, and then to be forever like Him, and with Him! And how sweet is the thought, that however men may try to explain away this blessed hope, we are told that the Holy Spirit teaches us to look up to Him now by faith, and say, “Come!” “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.”

“Caught up! caught up!” no wing required;

Caught up to Him—by love inspired,

To meet Him in the air!

Spurning the earth with upward bound,

Nor casting a single glance around,
Nor listing a single earth-born sound—
Caught up in the radiant air.
Panting with rapture and surprise,
“Caught up,” our fond affections rise,
Our coming Lord to meet;
Hearing the trumpet’s glorious sound,
Soaring to join the rising crowd,
Gazing upon the parted cloud,
Beneath His pierced feet!
O blessed, O thrice blessed word,
To be “forever with the Lord,”
In heavenly beauty fair!
Up! up! we long to hear the cry;
Up! up! our absent Head draws nigh;
Yea, “in the twinkling of an eye,”
“To meet Him in the air.”

But how appalling is the thought that many will be left behind for judgment. Professors of religion they may be, but not possessors of Christ as their Saviour. How dreadful will be their agony in finding the Lord’s faithful ones gone—those who have with the heart believed unto righteousness, those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour—and themselves shut out. Now it is sometimes scarcely possible to distinguish between a mere professor and a real possessor of life eternal, through faith in the Son of God. But then each will be truly manifested. And how eternal will be the separation between the believer and the unbeliever—the one taken to glory, to be forever with the Lord; the other made to feel the dread reality of the Saviour’s words, “I know you not!”

Dear reader, if the Lord Himself now descended from heaven, would you be caught up to enjoy unmingled and eternal rest and blessing with the lord Jesus? or would you be left behind for judgment? Of what vital importance are these questions! Do lay them to heart! You may dwell peaceably with your neighbors, enjoy life as people say for many years, die quietly, and be buried respectably; but be raised again from the dead you must, either at “the resurrection of life” with the saved, or at “the resurrection of damnation” with the lost, to be judged according to your works, and cast into the lake of fire. Oh, the blessedness of having fled to Jesus, the Son of God, for safety! of having Him as your life, righteousness, and glory! Is it not written, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”?

“Nobody Ever Told Me.”

Whilst driving out near an encampment of gipsies, I went in amongst them. After buying some of the skewers they were making, I learned that one of their number was ill. I begged to be allowed to see him. The father asked■

“Did you want to talk about religion to him?”

“No.”

“What, then?”

“About Christ.”

“Oh! then you may go: only if you talk religion I’ll set the dog on to you.”

In the caravan I found a lad alone, and in bed, evidently at the far end of the last stage of consumption. His eyes were closed, and he looked as one already dead. Very slowly in his ear I repeated the Scripture, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” I repeated it five times without any apparent response; he did not seem to hear even with the outward ear. On hearing it the sixth time, he opened his eyes and smiled. To my surprise he whispered■

“And I never thanked Him; but nobody ever told me! I ‘turn Him many thanks—only a poor gipsy chap! I see! I see! I thank Him kindly!”

He closed his eyes with an expression of intense satisfaction. As I knelt beside him, I thanked God. The lips moved again. I caught “That’s it.” There were more words, but I could not hear them.

On going the next day, I found the dear lad had died (or rather, had fallen asleep in Jesus) eleven hours after I left. His father said he had been very “peaceable,” and had a “tidy death.” There was no Bible or Testament in the encampment. I left them one of each. The poor man wished me “good luck,” and gave me a little bundle of skewers the dear “boy Jemmy” had made.

Dear reader, it was apparently the first time this dear boy ever heard of God’s salvation, and with unquestioning faith he took God at His word, and with his dying lips thanked Him that He had so loved the world as to give His Son for him, a “poor gipsy chap.” God is satisfied with the finished work of Christ. This poor lad was also satisfied, and this mutual satisfaction was instant and everlasting salvation. In eleven short hours he exchanged that wretched bed in a rickety, forlorn caravan for the Paradise of God, where he is tasting that God is as good as His word. — An Extract.

“Will I be Happy?”

“A RESPECTABLE Roman Catholic farmer, the occupier of considerable land, and owner of many cows, &c., was very ill, and likely to die. The priest was sent for, and came; he received the poor man’s confession; helped him in the disposal of his property—a part given in alms to the poor, a part left to the church to say ‘masses for the repose of his soul;’ the residue to his wife and children. Then followed absolution, the last rites of the church, extreme unction, &c. ‘Is all done now?’ said the sick man. ‘All,’ said the priest. ‘Nothing more to be done?’ said the dying man. ‘Nothing more can be done,’ said the priest. ‘Where will I go when I am dead? Will I be happy?’ said the man. The priest was obliged to explain that he would go to purgatory. ‘A place of torment?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Fire?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Can you do nothing to save me from purgatory?’ ‘Nothing, you must go there.’ ‘For how long?’ ‘I cannot say.’ The priest could only tell him that he must be purified by fire, but that ‘masses’ said for him would bring him out the sooner, but how soon he knew not. The priest left. There was no one to speak of ‘the Lamb of God;’ no one to tell of Him who was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. No one to speak of JESUS as ‘the Way, the Truth, and the Life.’ The poor man went out of his mind as soon as he felt there was no hope. He lived three days, but the only word he uttered after the priest left, and that he uttered continually, was ‘Murder! Murder! Murder!’” (Extracted from an old number of the Irish Church Record.)

“Hast thou admitted, with a blind, fond trust,
The LIE that burned thy father’s bones to dust,
That first adjudged them heretics, then sent
Their souls to heaven, and cursed them as they went.
The LIE that Scripture strips of its disguise,
And execrates above all other lies;
The lie that claps a lock on mercy’s plan,
And gives the key to you infirm old man,
Who, once ensconced in apostolic chair,
Is deified, and sits omniscient there;
The LIE that knows no kindred, owns no friend
But him that makes its progress its chief end;
That having spilt much blood, makes that a boast,
And Canonizes him that shed the most.

Away with CHARITY THAT SOOTHES A LIE,
And thrusts the TRUTH with scorn and anger by!
Shame on the candor, and the gracious smile,
Bestowed on them that light the martyr's pile;
While insolent disdain, in frowns expressed,
Attends the tenets that endured that test!
Grant them the rights of men, and, while they cease
To vex the peace of others, grant them peace;
But trusting bigots, whose false zeal has made
TREACHERY THEIR DUTY, thou art self-betrayed."

The Priest, the Bible Woman, and the Nurse

An Extract.

"I FOUND her (Mrs. J—) very ill in consumption. The Bible-woman had often visited her, and read and prayed with her; but she told me when first I went that she could not realize the love of Christ to her. She was sure God had sent the Bible-woman to her; but she was such a great sinner that she could not think there was mercy for her.

"While I was talking to her as she lay on her bed, there was a 'father' from the Ritualistic Church talking to the husband in another part of the room. I did not interfere with their conversation, but directed mine entirely to the poor woman, telling her of the 'blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin.' I stayed some time with her at this first visit. At length the 'father' rose, end, before he left, told me my visits were not at all required there, as the case would be attended to from the church; but as the poor invalid put out her hand in a beseeching way, I asked her if she would like me to come again.

"'Oh, yes,' she said; 'he's persuading my husband to go to confession in the morning; but I hope from my heart he will not go.'

"The 'father' then left, saying, as he went out, that he should call again in the morning, and they were not to mind what I told them, for I was leading them into error.

"I then directed my conversation to the husband, who listened attentively. I explained to him a little of my own experience of the love of Christ to me, and told him he would find Him just such a loving Saviour, able to save to the uttermost, if he would but come unto Him and believe in Him alone. He wept much, and said he was not happy in what he had promised to do in the morning.

"I left him with some texts of Scripture that seemed to come into my mind at the time, especially that one, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'

That word appeared to be blessed to him at that very time. He caught at it as at some new idea, and kept repeating it, and lifting up his hands in astonishment.

"The next morning when I went in the wife exclaimed, 'Oh, nurse, your prayers have been answered. He has not been to confession, and is not going'... At my next visit to the poor woman, she asked me to lock the door and pray with her, as she knew one of these 'fathers' would soon be up, and she did not wish to be disturbed. At another time she asked me, as a great favor, to stay a little while, as she knew they would soon be coming, and to ask them not to call again, as it only distressed her, and she was too weak to tell them so, or to argue with them. They had been exceedingly angry with her and her husband; but she said, 'I don't seem to care now; for I begin to feel the blessedness of having my sins washed away in the precious blood of Christ, and I care for nothing else. I could not feel this before; but you and the Bible-woman have explained it so to me, that I can never doubt again.'

“I was there again on Friday morning, and had some nice conversation with her, and she seemed very happy. As I was going for my holiday on the following day, she begged me to look in again in the evening. She then told us she could never thank us enough for our kindness in reading and praying with her, and leading her to Jesus.

“‘I don’t think I shall ever see you again,’ she said, ‘but I do hope to meet you in heaven.’

“ ‘Are your hopes bright now,’ I said, ‘in the prospect of death? And what do you rest them on?’
“She said, ‘I know that my sins are forgiven, for Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and I believe He has saved me. I am going to heaven, for He has washed me in His precious blood, and taken away all my sins.’

“When I left the room she called me back, and requested that I would not forget her husband, but occasionally look after him, which I promised to do.

“I never saw her again. She died happily the day after I left.”

Occasional Letters to Anxious Souls

No. 1.

The True Ground Of Peace.

My DEAR —, —From your friend's letter, I judge she is looking for a ground of peace with God in the state of her own heart. This she will never find. She must learn, not only that there is no good in herself, according to Romans 7:18, but that IF SHE COULD fairly reckon herself morally blameless, that would be no ground for peace, and would not really give it, because she is already a sinner. "He that judgeth me is the Lord," and the question for every soul is, How can a man be just with Him? To this end our goodness avails no more than our badness. It is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that made atonement more than eighteen hundred years ago; and faith in His blood is that which justifies, as it is written (Romans 3:25), "Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood." Faith is that which appropriates Christ, makes Him our own in all the efficacy and excellency that belong to Him; so that, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1.) It is not merely that the believer has it, but that in no other way whatever, either wholly or in part, can peace with God be known. Neither is peace yet to be made; for He made peace by the blood of His cross, and faith accept it.

The love of the world is a great hindrance to many souls; and wrong thoughts too about human nature. Man was made upright at the beginning, but he is fallen and corrupted. He has lost his first estate, and Satan, who effected his ruin, has blinded men's eyes to that terrible fact, and become himself the god of this world.

There are remaining traits of what man originally was, so that the apostle James can speak of him as being still made in the image of God; but in spite of these, man is at enmity with God, and does not like to retain the knowledge of God, and judging God by his own heart, he thinks it is God who is at enmity with him, than which no lie of Satan has taken a deeper root in men's hearts. This enmity to God is the condition of every unconverted human being; of the most refined and highly educated, the most sensitive, kind, benevolent, and self-denying, as well as of the most debased and immoral. The difference between the two is only like that between a lovely, placid, sweet looking corpse and a most revolting one: both are equally dead, dead in trespasses and sins. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ makes all the difference, and such as have it live. "If one died for all, then were all dead. And He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.)

Your friend needs in this way to realize her own personal ruin to be utter and absolute. I do not suppose she denies the doctrine of the fall; but like thousands of others, who are more conversant with current and defective teaching of Christendom than with that of the Scriptures, she does not seem to have apprehended that Christianity does not profess to repair and to restore man's sinful nature, but to give the believer A NEW ONE. The Son of God Himself "was made in the likeness of men," but sinless, in order that He might bear the judgment of God due to man's sin, and give to

the believer a new being in life eternal, in connection with Himself on the other side of death and judgment in resurrection. No training, educating, or reforming the nature we have from Adam can ever fit it for God, or bring the soul nigh to Him; but if any man be in Christ, it is a new creation; he is taken out of the old by being crucified with Christ, and belongs to the new. The old is passed away and all is new, and everything belonging to the new is of God. There is nothing of Satan. This is the standing that faith puts the believer into. All is brightness, all is peace. Peace with God, the peace of God, and the God of peace Himself are ours in Christ through faith in His blood. Let your friend know this, and I pray the Lord to give her the peace she needs.

“To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Romans 4:5.)

“My Beloved is Mine.”

(Song of Solomon 2:16.)

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” ■ 2 Cor. 9:15.

JESUS, Lord, I lie before Thee,
Low in dust I worship Thee;
Brightness of God’s awful glory,
Thou canst stoop to worthless me;
And, ‘mid seraph songs on high,
Bend to catch my breathed sigh:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Son of God! Thy Father’s treasure,
He yet gives Thee all tame;
Angels vainly toil to measure
What I have in having Thee.
Grace so vast bewilders heaven,
God to me His Christ has given:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Let life’s hours of joy or sadness
Come and go as Thou shalt please;
Earthly grief or earthly gladness,
What have I to do with these?
Creature comforts all may flee,
Thou art, Lord, enough for me:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Soul more lost ne’er lay before Thee,
Guilt has never louder cried;
Just the more in Thee I’ll glory,

Who for one so vile hast died.
Kissed me, cleansed me, made me whole,
Wrapped Thy skirt around my soul:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Not in heaven alone I deem Thee,
Lord, I feel Thy presence nigh;
Yea, Thy Spirit dwells within me,
Joins in grace's wondrous tie;
Joins us so that Thine is mine,
Joins us so that mine is Thine:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Lamb of God! I'm lost in wonder,
When I search Thy searchless love;
Praises meet I fain would render,
Fain would sing, like saints above.
There full hearts can only weep,
Drowned in mercy's glorious deep:
Jesus, Saviour, Thou art mine.
Glimpses of Jesus' Ways.

No. 4

(Read John 14:1.)

“Let not your heart be troubled.”

His own heart might well have been troubled (and was, but not for Himself, chapter 13:21), when He thought of the way that lay before Him, darkening now with every moment that flitted by—a way the terrible depths of which no heart but His own and His Father’s could understand. Who will ever know, as He knew it, the awful load then pressing on His loving heart? Had He “loved His own which were in the world” as never man loved? One disciple had gone out to betray Him (13:30); another, the most affectionate, was about to deny that he knew Him (verse 38), and that with oaths and curses; and the rest to forsake Him. Did He love His people Israel? Let the tears which, “when He beheld the city,” could not be restrained (Luke 19:41); the sigh that came spontaneously when forcibly reminded of His people’s sad condition by the deaf and dumb man (Mark 7:34); the groans He uttered as He approached the grave of Lazarus (John 11:38), whose very name means leprous, and whose sleep in the dark tomb shadowed forth the long night of death coming on His people; let these, and many another glimpse we get of what was ever near His heart, answer the question. Yes; He loved as neither Moses (Exodus 32:32) nor Paul (Romans 9) could love the people of Jehovah. Yet their voice it was, as He well knew, that should shortly “prevail” to send Him to a lingering death of agony and shame. (Luke 23:23.) Let a mother who has been stricken to the heart by the only child she ever cradled on her breast, a father whose gray hairs are going down in sorrow to the grave through the son of his love, comprehend, if ever they can, something of what Jesus felt on that night, and at that moment, when He said, “Let not your heart be troubled.” And beyond all this, and deeper far than any sorrow with which man could wring that tender heart, lay depths through which He needs must go, if God was to be glorified and sinners saved. But who shall tell them out? Who shall adequately describe the utter loathing of the HOLY ONE for sin, of the LIFE for death? who comprehend the crushing force of the foreseen forsaking of His God to that heart which had never known a moment in which communion the most blissful had not been enjoyed, and that in the full consciousness of being God’s delight? (Proverbs 8; John 1:18.) And was not all this pressing on His spirit? Were not the shadows of Gethsemane, and the Judgment Hall, and Calvary, closing round His path? Oh, heart of hearts! who shall mentally grasp thy weight of anguish then? Yet must we do so, if we would, try to fathom that depth of sympathy and love which, ocean-like, swallowing up all thought of thine own suffering, could be occupied about the sorrow of a handful of disciples, whose trouble chiefly sprang from disappointed, though rightly founded, hopes, and which, through faith in God, lay at the root and raised the conflict, had in it much of the element of self. (Mark 9:33; 10:37; Luke 24:21.)

What moral grandeur, what inimitable tenderness, what sweet sympathy, what love divine, find their expression in that short, simple sentence, taken in connection with all that lay around and pressed upon His blessed Spirit— “Let not your heart be troubled!”

May every “glimpse” we get of His perfections endear Him more deeply to our hearts, constrain us to more self-denying service, enhance our joy, raise the tone of our praises here, and enlarge our capacity for the eternal enjoyment of Himself hereafter. K.

Micah

THE prophet Micah lived during the times of Isaiah and Hosea. He declares that the Lord is speaking from His temple, and coming in judgment upon the earth because of the transgressions of Israel and Judah. (chapter 1) His people are therefore called upon to arise and depart because it is polluted—as usual, the faithful are to depart from iniquity. (chapter 2)

The heads and princes of the house of Israel should have known judgment, but they hated the good, and loved the evil, and did eat the flesh of His people; but they shall cry, and He will not hear them. The prophets also that bite with their teeth, and say, Peace, had made His people err; therefore Zion, for their sakes, shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem become heaps. We know how literally this has taken place. (Chap. 3) But the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem, and the chosen city and holy mountain shall yet be established in blessing by Jehovah. Yea, though many nations are gathered against her, and say of Zion, Let her be defiled, yet shall they be as the sheaves of the floor, which the daughter of Zion shall arise and thresh. (chapter 4)

Messiah is then prophetically announced, His place of nativity being Bethlehem of Judah. His divinity is alluded to as One whose “goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting;” His true Messiahship and exaltation referred to as “ruler in Israel;” His rejection— “They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek;” His present hiding from His people Israel— “He will give them up until she which travaileth path brought forth.” Then the future restoration of a remnant of Israel— “For the remnant of Messiah’s brethren shall return unto (not the Church, but) the children of Israel.” Then Messiah’s reign takes place, for “He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord; in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God; and they shall abide: for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth.” (chapter 5:1-4.) He will deliver His own from the Assyrian army, which shall yet come against Jerusalem. The remnant of Israel shall be a blessing to others, as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass. They shall be also in the place of power as a lion among the beasts of the forest, their hand lifted up upon their adversaries, and all their enemies shall be cut off. The Lord, however, will destroy their chariots, cut off witchcrafts out of the land, destroy graven images, pluck up their groves, and execute vengeance and fury upon the heathen such as they have not heard. (chapter 5)

The prophet having thus set before the people the blessings in store for them in the last days under Messiah’s rule, returns to the subject of God’s controversy with them because of their transgressions and idolatry, referred to in the opening of the book. He appeals to them on the ground of their redemption from Egypt, and of Balak’s ways and Balaam’s answer that they might “know the righteousness of Jehovah.” He assures them that God looks into the heart, and that He therefore cannot be pleased with mere ordinances; and bids them consider who it is that is now chastening them; for they had had wicked balances, and a bag of deceitful weights; they had also kept the wicked statutes of Omri, and walked in the ways of Ahab. (chapter 6)

Micah, as we have seen in other prophets, is in heart deeply affected with the people’s fallen and degraded condition, and his only relief is in looking to the Lord, and waiting for the God of his

salvation. He comforts himself also with the assurance that while the nations around shall be judged, yet that God will by and by have compassion upon His people, subdue their iniquities, cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, and perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, according to His oath and promise.

Nahum

NAHUM'S prophetic testimony especially refers to the judgment of God upon Nineveh. It is the Assyrian who has so often been brought before us by other prophets. Blessing, however, is held out to those who trust in Jehovah. "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him." (chapter 1:7.)

The prophet declares that "God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth;" and he looks forward to the execution of His judgments upon the world, saying, "The mountains quake at Him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at His presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein. Who can stand before His indignation? and who can abide the fierceness of His anger?" As to Nineveh, he speaks of her as one that imagineth evil against the Lord; but the one that will yet oppress His people shall be judged; for God says, "I will break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds asunder." "O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off." (chapter 1)

Nineveh must be judged and pass away. "Nineveh is of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away." (Chap. 2) No doubt the overthrow will be complete. "I will make thee vile... All they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste.... All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the first ripe figs.... Fire shall devour thee.... Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria. ...There is no healing of thy bruise," &c. (Chap. 3) Jehovah had humbled Jacob; for emptiers had emptied them out, and marred their vine branches. But the time will come for her oppressors to be judged, and the world also, while those who trust in Him find Him a strong hold, and prove His goodness.

God will not Acquit the Guilty

THIS is ever true, and of immense importance. God never holds the guilty for innocent. It is contrary to His nature. It would not be the truth. He may put away sin, and receive the cleansed sinner; but He cannot act as if it did not exist, when it does, nor be indifferent to it while He remains Himself. He may, for good, chastise, and so show His Government, i.e. deal with sin in this respect; or He may have it entirely put away and blotted out, according to the exigencies of His own nature and glory, which is salvation for us; and both are true. But He cannot leave it anywhere as not existing, or indifferent.

J. N. D.

Faith, Hope, and Love

FAITH, Hope, and Love were questioned what they thought

Of future glories which the gospel taught.

Now Faith believed all firmly to be true,

And Hope expected so to find it too;

Love answered, smiling with a conscious glow,

Believe! expect! I know it to be so.

Have Your sins Been Judged?

SINS must be judged. There is no alternative; for God is just. Nothing that defileth can come into His presence, for He is of purer eyes than to behold evil. He is a sin-hating God, for He is holy. Every sinner must therefore have to do with God about his sins. From this there is no escape; and sins cannot be hid from His all-seeing eye. Through God's unutterable mercy, sins have been judged on Christ for every one that believeth; but those who believe not must bear their own judgment, when every one will be judged according to their works. How solemnly true this is, and yet how few seem to lay it to heart!

We have been sorrowfully struck with the difficulty many have in replying to the searching question, "Have your sins been judged?" But how is it possible that a sin-convicted soul can have rest of conscience before God, who does not know that Jesus answered for all His sins in the death of the cross? It is true that some have accepted as a divine truth that Jesus did something by His death to save them from their sins, without understanding how it was accomplished. But many who speak about "pardon of sin," "forgiveness of sins," &c., seem little aware of the true ground and character of the forgiveness. Hence such have a difficulty in replying to the question, "Have your sins been judged?" or, "When were your sins judged?" And this difficulty is increased by their having received the popular, but erroneous doctrine, that there is to be one general resurrection, and then that everyone will be judged, and, as we have lately read, "acquitted or condemned according to their works;" and many add to this, that "until this great assize, no one can be sure of salvation." Perhaps few religious doctrines have been more damaging to souls; for the believer's assurance is undermined by being thus kept in a state of uncertainty as to his salvation; and the unbeliever is deceived by the thought that as no one can be sure till then, there may be, as he says, "some chance for him." But all this uncertainty, though many do not know it, denies the value of what Christ has done on the cross, and sets aside the divine authority of scripture, which so plainly shows the present blessings, new relationships, and perfect security in Christ and through His blood, of every one that believeth.

But while we have found many unable to reply to the question at the head of this paper, some have most readily and heartily responded. Such as, for instance, — "Have your sins been judged?"

"Oh, yes; I am thankful to say."

"When were they judged?"

"On the blessed Jesus, when He died on the cross eighteen hundred years ago."

"Then you now stand before God cleansed from sin?"

"Certainly; for the word says that He loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood."
(Revelation 1:5.)

This surely is the language of faith; for faith always cleaves to the authority of God's word, and rejects every other ground of confidence. And this word assures us that "Christ His own self bare

our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24); that "He once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18); that "God condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3); that "God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32); that "He was delivered for our offenses" (Romans 4:25); that when bearing our sins, and suffering the unsparing judgment of God for our sins, God forsook Him, so that He cried out, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34). We are also told that His blood was shed for many for the remission of sins (Matt. 26:28); and that He has "by Himself purged our sins." (Hebrews 1:3.) From these scriptures then it is plain, that on the Cross God really judged sins in the person of His spotless Son, and that He there righteously met all the claims of infinite holiness and divine justice, so that sin is put away, the conscience of the believer purged, and set at rest in God's most holy presence. The love of God's heart can now therefore freely flow out to justify by His grace every one who avails himself of the infinite value of Christ's finished work. God, too, declares that He is so fully satisfied with the atoning work of Jesus for us that He says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 10:17.) Thus it is that all God's attributes combine to justify the believer. If God forgave the sinner without judgment of his sins, there would be love, but to the sacrifice of righteousness and holiness. But "God is light," and "God is love;" He is also "righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works;" and all these divine characteristics have been manifested, in Christ putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The ground therefore on which God pronounces remission of sins to everyone that believeth is that their sins have been judged on the Cross. His own children, too, who confess their sins, are told that "He is faithful and just to forgive," no doubt in virtue of Christ's atoning work.

But, further, it is the believer, and the believer only, that is entitled to say he has remission of sins; "for to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10:43.) Observe, it is not simply pardon, but remission—sins completely blotted out from the eye of God. Nor is this all; for the believer is also justified from all things. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts 13:39.) All this is not said of him that worketh, or of him that feeleth, but of him that believeth; for when we are justified by His blood, it is only in the way of faith, which always ascribes all the glory to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and such, too, have present peace with God. (Romans 5:1.)

And yet more. If I know that my sins have been already judged by God on the Cross, and that I am now justified from all things, how can I be looking for what is called the general judgment, or great assize, before I know whether I shall be "condemned or acquitted?" The idea is preposterous. Nor does Scripture give us any warrant for supposing that any who are judged at the "great white throne" are saved. How could any be, if judged according to their works? Instead, then, of the believer being taught in Scripture to expect a general resurrection and judgment, he is instructed to "look for the Saviour," to expect to be "caught up to meet Him in the air, and to be forever with the Lord." Then there will not be one unbeliever raised from the dead, only "the dead in Christ." For the believer, after this, to be manifested at the Bema or judgment-seat of Christ, to receive reward, is another thing.

But, as we have said, sins must be judged. Such, therefore, as refuse the good news of sins being; borne by and suffered for by Christ instead of them, must have them judged by the Judge of all in their own persons. How dreadful is the thought, but how soon it may be an awful reality, that it is said, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

“The blood of Christ has spoken
Forgiveness full and free;
Its wondrous power has broken
Each bond of guilt for me.

“The blood of Christ is pleading
Its virtue as my own;
And there my soul is reading
Her title to the throne.

“O wondrous power that seeketh
From sin to set me free;
A precious blood that spoaketh■
Should I not value Thee?”

“Nothing Left for you to do.”

IT is but a few years ago that there lived in one of the towns of Northern Germany a young man who had been brought up in the Roman Catholic religion. He believed, however, neither in that nor in any other, but had long cast off all thoughts of God, and lived in sin so open and so terrible that he was remarkable amongst the ungodly and the depraved as one who outdid them all. How wonderful are the ways of God! Like him who slew the giant with his own sword, so God made use of the exceeding sinfulness of this young man to awaken in him the first desire after salvation. He became alarmed at his own wickedness. “I am worse than any other,” he thought. “If it is true that the wicked go to hell, and only the good to heaven, it is plain where I am going. If ever a man is lost eternally, I must be that man!” Night and day did this thought haunt the wretched sinner, his peace was gone, and he found no pleasure even in sin. “If only,” he thought, “it were possible to be saved!” What could he do? He had been told of penances and prayers, of convents where monks spent their days in works that might at last atone for sin, and he felt that no labor would be too great, no torture too severe, if only he might have the faint hope of pardon at last. He resolved to become a monk, but he wished first to know in what convent in the whole world the rule was the strictest and the penances the most terrible. If it were at the other end of the earth he would go to it, and then he would spend the rest of his days in penance and in prayer. He was told in answer to his inquiries that the convent under the strictest rule was a monastery of La Trappe, distant about 1500 miles from his home. He could not afford to pay the expenses of his journey, and he therefore resolved to walk the whole way, begging as he went. This alone would be the beginning of a penance, and might gain him one step towards heaven.

It was a long, weary journey, each day beneath a hotter sun and through strange lands. He felt scarcely alive by the time that he came in sight of the old building where he hoped to gain rest for his soul; for his body it mattered not. Having rung at the gate, he waited till it was slowly opened by an aged monk, so feeble and infirm that he seemed scarcely able to walk.

“What is it you want?” asked the old man.

“I want to be saved,” replied the German. “I thought that here I might find salvation.” The old monk invited him to come in, and led him into a room where they were alone together. “Tell me now what you mean,” said the old man.

“I am a lost sinner,” began the German. “I have lived a life more wicked than I can tell you. It seems to me impossible that I can be saved, but all that can be done I am ready to do. I will submit to every penance, I will complain of nothing, if only I may be received into the order. The harder the work, the worse the torture, the better will it be for me. You have only to tell me what to do, and whatever it may be I will do it.”

I would ask you who read this story, Have you known what it is thus to feel yourself a lost sinner? To know that you are in the road at the end of which there is but one place, and that place the eternal lake of fire? To feel that all toil, all suffering, all torture here, would be but an exchange too

welcome could you but gain by it the faintest hope of escaping from everlasting despair? If you are still without Christ, you are, whether you know it or not, in this dark road, with its one terrible end; and should God in His great mercy have awakened you, so that you know the danger and the hopelessness of your position, you will be in a state to welcome as a voice from God the wonderful words which were spoken in answer to the trembling sinner—spoken by the old monk of La Trappe. “If you tell me to do the most fearful pence, I am ready to do it,” the German had said, and the old monk replied, “If you are ready to do what I tell you, you will go straight home again; for the whole work has been done for you before you came, and there is nothing left for you to do. Another has been here and has done the work instead, and it is finished.”

“It is finished!”

“Yes, it is finished. Do you not know that God sent down His own Son to be the Saviour of the world? Did He not come? Did He not finish the work the Father gave Him to do? Did He not say on the Cross ‘It is finished?’ What was finished? He had undertaken to bear the full punishment of sin, and He had borne it, and God was satisfied with the work done by His Son. And do you know this—Where is Jesus now?”

“He is in heaven.”

“He is in heaven. But why is He there? Why is Jesus in the glory? Because He has finished the work. He would not be there otherwise. He would still be here, for He undertook to do it all, and He would not go back to His Father till all was done. I look up, and I see Jesus in heaven, and I say, ‘He is there because He has done it all, and there is nothing left to do. He is there because God is satisfied with His work.’ And, oh, dear friend, why should you and I try to do that work which the Son of God alone could do, and which He has done? If God had left it for us to do, we could never do it; were we to perform all the penances that ever have been or could be performed, they would be utterly useless to us. And as it is, they are more than useless, they are fearful sins in the sight of God. In doing them, instead of gaining anything, you would be but adding the crowning sin to your evil life. It would be as much as to say, Christ has not done enough. It would be to cast contempt upon the blessed, perfect work of the Son of God, and to dare to attempt to add to that which He has said is finished. Yes, in here Christ is insulted, and God is made a liar; and were it not that I am so old that I can scarcely walk to the gate, my escape should testify against the place. I would not remain here another day. As it is, I must wait till the Lord comes to fetch me; but you can go, and I beseech you to go, thanking God that His Son has done all for you, and that the punishment of your sins is forever past. And remember always that Christ is in heaven.”

What astonishing tidings for the poor weary sinner! Did he believe them? He did, and after a short time of rest, during which he learned more of the blessed gospel from the lips of the old monk, he returned to his own land, there to make known amongst sinners, lost as he had been, the news of that love and grace of which he had first heard in the monastery of La Trappe. There he was employed in this blessed work but a short while since, and probably is still there. May the voice from La Trappe reach the heart of some weary sinner here, and may the “good news of the glory of Christ” bring peace and joy to many who, instead of walking 1500 miles to hear it, have the gracious message brought to them! It is sent to you from the glory where Christ is, the message of the Father’s love made known in the person of His Son. May it be to you a light beyond the brightness of the sun, and in looking around on the world which charmed you, and the things

which were bright to you before, may you say, "I could not see them for the glory of that light!"

F. B.

Testimony, Conflict, and Walk

IT may be that many children of God have been struck with the varied exhortations by the Holy Ghost in the epistles to “put on;” or, if we may so express it, the different kinds of garments in which they should be found attired. They are addressed as “saints,” and recognized as “in Christ Jesus.” The apostle thanks God for the reality of their confession, owns them as having redemption in Christ Jesus through His precious blood; and, because they are saints, he earnestly enjoins them to “put on” certain moral or spiritual qualities. For it is plain that if God in His exceeding rich mercy has brought us into oneness with Christ, and into everlasting relationship with Himself, He must have a walk and testimony by us suited to Himself, and this must of necessity bring us into conflict with, or separation from, all that is contrary to His own mind. Loong into the epistles on these points, we find that the injunctions as to what we are to “put on,” are always based on the great principles which the letters in which they are found set before us. We may refer to 1 Thessalonians 5, Ephesians 6, and Colossians 3, as each giving different instructions as to what we are to “put on,” and, for the sake of distinguishing between them we may call them testimony garments, battle garments, and walking garments.

Testimony Garments.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:8-10 the saints are viewed not as in conflict, or as walking consistently with a new-creation standing, as we find elsewhere, but as sons of light and of the day in the midst of people who belong to the night and to darkness. The light therefore should be given out by them; hence they are called on to bear testimony to the realities of Christianity, the three essential characteristics of which are faith, love, and hope. It is this testimony, or bearing witness to our association with Christ, that often brings us into trial. It was so with the apostle John. He tells us that he was banished to desolate Patmos for “the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus.” If a light be set on a candlestick it is that all that enter into the house may see the light. A saint is a light-bearer; and it is the will of God not only that we should be blameless and harmless, but, being in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, we should give testimony to the Lord Jesus—“shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life,” &c. (Philippians 2:15.) So in Thessalonians, where the apostle, by the Spirit, is contemplating the saints as surrounded by those who are in darkness and unbelief—having no hope, and without God in the world, he beseeches them not only to be sober, but to be putting on. Observe! “putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.” In this way they would indeed shine as lights in the world. They would be known, in an unbelieving and dark place, as those who trust God; as those who do labors of love—who love the Lord, His word, His ways, His saints, and His blessed gospel of salvation to precious and immortal souls in a world that crucified Him, and still rejects Him; and as having an intelligent hope of glory in a world that has “no hope”— the expectation of the coming of the Lord, and of being caught up to meet Him in the air. This is something more than the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, peace with God, standing in Christ, relationship with God as His children, &c.; for it involves “putting on;” it necessitates the activities of the heart flowing forth in testimony to the Lord in a world of sin and darkness, and declares that

He is worthy not only to be served, but to be trusted, to be loved, and to be waited for.

Fellow Christians! are our souls going forth in true testimony to the Lord? Do those who surround us know us as those who really live and walk by faith, and therefore have no fellowship with unbelieving ways and conversation? Do we labor in loving ways as we have opportunity in the name of our Lord Jesus? And are we known as unsettled on earth because we are waiting for God's Son from heaven? If so, the light does indeed shine; we have put on "the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation." But what a poor thing it must be in God's sight, if He sees our heads filled with Bible knowledge, and this breastplate and helmet not "put on."

Let us see to it, beloved, that we never fail to put on our testimony garments!

BATTLE GARMENTS.

In Ephesians, where the believer's standing as now seated in heavenly places, and his new relationships are treated of, he is recognized as battling with wicked spirits in heavenly places, which seek to encompass him with "wiles," or to inflict "fiery darts," to withstand his entering into the place and character of blessing in Christ Jesus in the heavenlies, in which God in His grace has set him. Satan, though he cannot hinder our eternal salvation, does try to hinder the believer's communion and joy. We are therefore exhorted to put on the whole armor—the panoply of God—and stand consciously in and enjoy the blessings God has graciously given us in His own presence inside the vail. The breastplate here is therefore called "the breastplate of righteousness," that is, practical righteousness; for if this be lacking, it is manifest that it would give Satan a crevice in which he might effectually lodge one of his "fiery darts." The believer therefore is here exhorted to "put on" the panoply of God, to be strong in the Lord, and thus to withstand Satan, and take possession of, stand in, and enjoy the marvelous position and blessings God has so graciously given him in Christ Jesus in heavenly places. This conflict is often sharp; for Satan and his hosts so withstand us that we are said to wrestle against principalities and powers, &c. It is not wrestling with flesh and blood, not battling with circumstances down here, but conflict with wicked spirits as to our standing, abiding, and enjoyment inside the vail, where our Lord Jesus is. These battle garments then must be "put on," the conflict must be entered upon, if we would be consciously in our true place inside the vail. This battling, too, implies the activities of the soul going out in faith and love, skillfully using the truth, and conscious of being in the place of entire dependence, crying unto God with all prayer and supplication, &c., and having but one weapon of attack— "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." How important, nay, more, how absolutely necessary, it is, that we should "put on" these battle garments, if we would triumph over Satan, and possess and enjoy our true resources of happiness and strength which our gracious God and Father has given us in Christ Jesus in heavenly places.

Dear Christian reader, do you know the sweet liberty and joy of standing consciously before God in all the acceptableness of Christ, as already seated in Him in heavenly places, having all your springs, resources, and blessings in and through Him? Depend upon it, unless we enjoy our real blessings inside the vail, we shall never really take our true place here as going forth "to Him outside the camp bearing His reproach."

WALKING GARMENTS.

In the epistle to the Colossians, the believer is not looked at as in the heavenlies, nor simply as a child of light in the midst of darkness; but he is seen as “risen with Christ,” who is his life. (Chap. 3.) His walk, therefore, should be according to it—the outflow of resurrection life. He is therefore also enjoined to “put on;” but what? not battle garments, for the subject is not conflict; not testimony garments, because it is not simply the manifestation of light in the midst of darkness, though every act of godliness must be more or less that; but he is to “put on,” so to speak, walking garments; he is to walk, as we have said, suited to such as are “risen with Christ.” Christian walk, therefore, is living out this new-creation life in Christ—to “put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another in love,” &c., to be forgiving like Christ, encircling all with a girdle of love, peace ruling the heart which sings with grace to the Lord, so occupied with Him that His word dwells richly in us, and that we do everything in His name. Thus we shall be practically Christ-like, we shall walk as He walked. The path is holiness, love, faithfulness, and truth. It is obedience, self-sacrifice, Christ-honoring; happy too, for “wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” What a life of absolute dependence, self-abnegation, and continual occupation with the Lord Jesus this walk involves!

We may add a word from 1 Peter 1:13, where believers are exhorted to “gird up the loins of their mind.” The reason for the figure being here used of girding up is obvious; for in this epistle the believer is looked at as a stranger and pilgrim on earth, ruing on to the inheritance reserved for him in heaven. The path being encompassed with “afflictions,” “trials,” and “manifold temptations,” the loins must be girded. Like those in the east, whose journey lies in a rough and thorny way, find it absolutely necessary to fold up their long, flowing garments, and gird them round their waists, lest they might be caught by the thorns and briers of the way, and thus get entangled and detained in their journey; so we must gird up the loins of our mind. We should be so sensible of the dangers and difficulties of the way as to feel imperatively the importance of bracing up the energies of our souls, and go forward, onward, and upward in the might of the Spirit. Cheered too with the hope of glory, the inheritance reserved for us in heaven, we should, be prepared to avoid every entanglement, and overcome every obstacle in our path. So may it be with us, dear Christian reader, that the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be magnified by us, and in us!

“Him.”

A MUCH and long afflicted child of God, whose memory had been greatly impaired by disease, speaking of her inability to call to mind a whole verse of Scripture, expressed, at the same time, unfeigned thankfulness for the comfort and stay of soul she experienced in meditating upon that one word “HIM.”

Of HIM what wondrous things are told!

In HIM what glories I behold!

For HIM I'd gladly all things leave;

To HIM, my soul, forever cleave.

In HIM my treasure's all contained;

By HIM my needy soul's sustained;

From HIM I all things now receive;

Through HIM my soul shall ever live.

With HIM I daily love to wait;

Of HIM my soul delights to talk;

On HIM I'd cast my every care;

Like HIM I one day shall appear.

Bless HIM, my soul, from day to day;

Trust HIM to bring thee on thy way;

Give HIM thine undivided heart;

With HIM O never, never part.

Take HIM for strength and righteousness;

Make HIM thy refuge in distress;

Love HIM above all earthly joy,

And HIM in everything employ.

Praise HIM in cheerful, joyful songs,

To HIM unceasing praise belongs;

'Tis HE who does thy home prepare,

With HIM thou'lt be forever there.

Habakkuk

FEW prophets were more exercised in soul about the state of God's people, and what they were passing through, than Habakkuk. It was quite a burden on his heart. He beheld iniquity, grievance, spoiling, and violence; he saw the wicked compassing the righteous, and that true judgment did not go forth. He called upon God, but obtained no answer. He made supplication for the people, but He did not save. All this he could not understand. He is instructed that God would raise up the Chaldean, a terrible and dreadful people, to march through the land, and to possess dwelling-places which were not theirs. But it should not last; for after a certain time his mind would change—he should pass over and offend, imputing his power unto his God. Still, the prophet could not make out why Jehovah should thus allow the wicked to devour the righteous, and catch them as fishes in their net. He still, therefore, appeals to God, and resolves to be on his watch-tower, and wait for His answer. He learns, therefore, that God must govern His people and deal with evil, whether it be transgressions through wine, or theft, or covetousness, prospering by unjustly doing evil to others, or idolatry; and he sees that Jehovah is in His holy temple, and that all the earth should be silent before Him. He also learns that the life of the just must be a life of faith, and that in the end there shall be blessing; “for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;” and in meditating on God's character and ways with His people he could rest in the day of trouble. He finds, therefore, happiness alone in being occupied with Jehovah, the God of his salvation, hover trying and disappointing things around may be, whom he found to be his strength to enable him to walk safely in his high places.

Zephaniah

IN Zephaniah we have the fierce anger of Jehovah poured out in His governmental dealings with His idolatrous and disobedient people; the cleansing in judgment of the polluted and oppressing city Jerusalem; the execution of judgment on the nations which had despised and afflicted His people; and lastly, the bringing into their promised blessing a remnant which shall honor Jehovah, and be made by Him a name and a praise in the earth, when the daughter of Jerusalem shall be glad, and rejoice with a whole heart.

Zephaniah prophesied in the reign of the pious king Josiah. The Lord by him pronounces terrible judgments, so as to consume all things, and cut off man from off the land. He will stretch out His hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the idolaters and them who have turned back from the Lord, and have not sought Him. The prophet goes on to declare that the day of the Lord is at hand—the great day of the Lord is near. He will search Jerusalem as with candles. A day of wrath and distress shall be upon men, because they have sinned against the Lord, from whose hand neither their silver nor gold can deliver; for it is a day of the Lord's wrath, and He will make a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land. (chapter 1)

But with all these judgments, as is usual in the prophets, a spared remnant is contemplated. "The meek of the earth" are exhorted to seek the Lord, and work righteousness; for it may be that they may be hid in the day of Jehovah's fierce anger. He will turn away the captivity of the remnant of the horn of Judah. "The residue of my people" shall spoil Ammon and Moab, who have magnified themselves against the people of the Lord, "and the remnant of my people shall possess them." God will also stretch out His hand against the north, and destroy the Assyrians. (chapter 2)

But the city is filthy and polluted, disobedient, deaf to the voice of His correction, and draws not near to her God. Her princes are roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves; her prophets are light and treacherous persons; her priests have polluted the sanctuary, and done violence to the law: the just Jehovah is in the midst thereof, and brings His judgment to light; but the unjust knoweth no shame. He cuts off the nations, wastes their streets, and destroys their cities; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of His jealousy. "Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, and serve Him with one consent." "I also will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid. Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; for the King of Israel (Messiah), even the Lord, is in the midst of thee.... The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; He will save, He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing." Thus the prophet Zephaniah concludes by showing us what blessing and glory await God's people Israel, when Messiah shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously.

The Lord Our Righteousness

“Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”— Rom. 10:4.

“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 Thou art mine,
While Thou dost live, and God is just.
Clad in this robe, how bright I shine!
Angels possess not such a dress:
Angels have not a robe like mine—
Jesus the Lord’s my righteousness.

Tomorrow; or, Why Delay?

“I INTEND to be a Christian,” is no doubt the sincere utterance of many a heart. Few perhaps really intend to go to hell, and be in eternal burnings; but most do intend to try to reach heaven in a way of their own, and when convenient to themselves, instead of in God’s way, and today, and because He commands them to repent and to believe the gospel. To put it off, as another said, “to a more convenient season,” seems now to be the fashionable way of avoiding the keen edge of the gospel of the grace of God. “It is all true,” say some, “but I cannot come to the Lord Jesus just yet.” “I like to hear it,” say others, “but my business, my family, my circumstances, my engagements stand in the way just now.” A man, when pressed by the writer to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, replied, “I have not time.” “Not time!” said the writer; “how much time is required to believe on Him whom God hath sent?” Dear reader, do think of this. How long did it take the poor, bitten, dying Israelite to look to the serpent of brass and live? The writer added, “It was seeing that I was on the brink of eternal damnation that compelled me to flee at once to the outstretched arms of the loving Saviour, and thus find eternal life through faith in His name.” Oh, it is marvelous what weak and foolish reasons men will plead for rejecting the love of Jesus, who so delights to welcome and save every sinner that comes to Him! But when He says, “Come unto me,” He means, “Come now”—today, not tomorrow; and delay not.

“Make haste and come down; for today I must abide at thy house;” and when one sinner did come down and receive the Lord Jesus, He could most truly add, “This day is salvation come to this house.” It is, then, coming to Jesus now, just as you are, just now, with all your sins, and guilt, and ruin—utterly unclean, utterly undone, now; for “behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

And again, “Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts”—not tomorrow, but today. For your life is but as a vapor; eternity is at hand; the Saviour is quickly coming.

Alas! how many have been suddenly surprised to find themselves in outer darkness, shut out from the presence of the Lord Jesus, and that forever. They intended to be saved; they intended to be Christians by and by; they intended not to be in hell-fire; but Satan deceived them, sin deceived them, their own hearts deceived them. They heard of the precious sinner-loving Saviour, and refused. He said, “Come now,” and they kept back. He shouted by His servants in their hearing, “He that believeth not shall be damned,” but they heeded it not. They neglected His great salvation. They loved not the voice of the Good Shepherd.

They despised the precious story of His cross, His bitterest agonies, blood-shedding, and death for the ungodly. They preferred the present gratification of the pleasures of sin. They chose to side with the murderers of Christ, rather than bow to Him as their Saviour and Lord. They trifled with sin, death, judgment, eternity. They overrated things of time and sense, because they willingly undervalued the atoning work of the Son of God to save sinners. Deaf to His loving entreaty — “Come!” clinging to the sandy foundation of misplaced confidence, deceived by false religiousness, puffed up with the flattery of those around, ensnared by carnal confidence, relying

on uncertain intentions, they have not a 'suspicion that all this time they are rejecting the Saviour's "Come now," and practically saying, "No," "not now," but "tomorrow," or "a more convenient season;" and thus trifling, unbelieving, their sin-loving hearts go on, till the summons from Him "in whom we live and move and have our being," "who has fixed the bounds of our habitation that we cannot pass," reads to them the solemn sentence, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." Thus hurled from time into eternity, the remorseful utterance of the heart is, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." No wonder it is said of such, "There shall be wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

Let the reader consider that God is now publishing the glad tidings of His love, as manifested in the accomplished work of His beloved Son; that He commands these glad tidings to be preached to every creature; and that He saves, and delights to save, and saves forever, every sinner that comes to Him through the Lord Jesus. Can you refuse this love? Can you any longer neglect this great salvation? Can you think of Jesus and all His sufferings, blood-shedding, and death? Can you think of Him now in heaven at God's right hand, crowned with glory and honor, thus welcoming you to His pierced bosom, and ready to embrace you with His pierced hands? And can you any longer hold back? Is not the earnest utterance of your heart, while looking up to Him—

Just as I am, and waiting not,

To rid my soul of one dark blot,

To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,

O Lamb of God, I come!

Once more beware of trifling. Shun every thought of further delay. Let the word of God warn you. Let the fatal experience of others arrest you, and awaken deepest concern in your soul. A lady, now with the Lord, said, on one occasion, "I was told a circumstance that occurred sometime since, which I believe to be true... There was a family of three daughters; the two eldest were converted, but the youngest was gay and thoughtless. Often did her sisters talk to her on religious matters, and entreat her to become a Christian; but she replied that she intended to become a Christian when she had enjoyed a little more of the pleasures of this world. One morning, when she came down to breakfast, her sisters observed that there was something amiss, and inquired if she were ill. 'Oh,' said Annie, 'there is nothing wrong! I have had a dream; but it is only a dream!' Her sister said, 'Will you tell it to me?' Annie replied, 'I will; but it is only a dream! I dreamed that I had died, and was carried away to a beautiful place, such a place as I had never seen before. There was a great white throne, and He who sat on it had a smiling countenance. Around the throne was an innumerable company, clothed in white robes, and they danced and sung; but I did not know the step, neither did I understand the music. I had not been there long before the King left the throne and came towards me, with His features lighted up with smiles, and asked me why I did not join in the dance and music. I replied that I had not learned the step, neither did I know the music they were singing. In a moment His countenance changed from smiles to frowns, and in a loud voice he cried to those who were standing by, "Bind her hand and foot, and take her away! Take her away! Take her away where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth!" And as they were taking me away I awoke. But it was only a dream! Her sister then lovingly urged her to cast the world aside, and follow Christ. Annie replied, 'Well, I shall go to the ball tonight; but it

shall be the last!' 'Oh, Annie, do take this warning from God!' said her sister. 'Oh,' she replied, 'it was only a dream! I have made an engagement. I cannot break my word; but it shall be the last. Tomorrow I will become a Christian.' In the evening she went to the ball, and joined in the giddy dance, when all of a sudden there was a cry that 'Annie — had fainted.' The usual restoratives were applied, but all in vain. She never spoke more; she was dead. Oh, sinner, dear sinner, do not put it off till tomorrow; learn the step now, learn the music of heaven now, and you shall join the ransomed host in bliss!"

“You’ve Deceived Me.”

SATAN is a mighty deceiver. To deceive and destroy souls is his chief work. He is spoken of in Scripture as the one “which deceiveth the whole world.” He hates God’s people, it is true, and accuses them before God; but he blinds and deceives the unsaved by every artifice in his power. He blinds the thoughts of the unbelieving, so that the radiancy of the glad tidings of the glory of the Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine forth for them.

This foul purpose of Satan’s to deceive souls is accomplished either by his directly influencing the heart and mind by injecting false thoughts, thus leading into a false way, hardening the heart and conscience, and the like, or indirectly affecting souls through the medium of human agents. That the latter is common enough we sorrowfully know. Nor are the warnings of Scripture against these ministers of Satan without most solemn significance.

The practice of deceptive ways abounds on every hand. From early youth many children are taught what is directly false, both as regards God and their own souls; and almost as soon as they have knowledge of good and evil, their dearest friends help thus to entangle their simple and unsuspecting hearts in the meshes of Satan’s net. As they grow up, some are taught systematically to deceive, sometimes in a half-jesting way we grant, but not the less deceptive on that account. However the evil heart of fallen man may laugh and make a mock at sin, we know that it is written of the Lord Jesus that “He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.” (1 Peter 2:22.) But how true is it in the present day that the young, in a thousand forms, and often in the commonest trifles, become familiar with, and often expert in, the practice of deception. So that when the opportunity offers they are fittingly prepared to lay for others the fatal snare of plunging them into a never-ending eternity under the effectual power of Satan’s blindfold.

Nor do we believe such instances to be uncommon. Medical men, nurses, and other false but well-meaning friends, often lend themselves to buoy up with false hopes the lingering sufferer, lest the shock of consciously passing from time into eternity should hasten the dissolution. Deceived as to their own souls, they then propagate their deception under the plea of affection and friendship. But such things ought not to be. If the same person were in health and strength, but in a deep sleep in a house which you saw to be in flames, would you not rush in, and at once rouse by every means in your power the unwary sleeper? To be sure you would; and why? that the body might be preserved from burning, if not from death. Then why not be equally faithful and kind as to people’s souls when you see them on the brink of an eternal gulf?

How little, alas! the moral, the educated, the refined, or even many of the religious, are aware that the vast amount of deception around us, in its varied and multiplied forms, is Satan’s crafty work. He cares not where you look, or what objects occupy your heart, provided it be not the Lord Jesus Christ. You may go anywhere, or be anything you like, provided you do not take the only true place of a lost and guilty sinner, and come to the Lord Jesus Christ as your only Saviour. You may make any amount of profession, hold the most scriptural and orthodox creed, be as indefatigable as you like in works of benevolence, provided you are only a foolish virgin, and have no oil in the lamp. If

deception is the masterpiece of Satan's work now, it is clear that the most perfect counterfeit must be that which comes nearest to the truth; and if he be the deceiver of souls, he will surely do all he can to keep them from taking refuge in the Lord Jesus Christ as the alone way of escape from the wrath to come, the only way to the Father. How imperatively important then it is that all who read these pages should escape Satan's fatal snares and false artifices by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as their alone Saviour, and then, instead of seeking to deceive others, such will seek to attract them to the loving heart of the Son of God, who, though now in heaven, still, with outstretched arms, says, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

It is most appalling to think of souls discovering in their last moments that their dearest friends have deceived them. And yet such instances are not simply imaginary, but profound realities, as the following account shows. We subjoin the extract with the view of laying before our readers what we trust will tend to awaken in the hearts of those who read it the importance of manifesting true and faithful love to souls according as we have opportunity.

"A young lady in the town, a beautiful and accomplished girl, was taken ill of consumption. For many months she lingered on, during which time my mother constantly visited her, and seized every opportunity of reading and praying with her, and of speaking to her about her soul, and directing her thoughts to Christ. The invalid was an amiable girl, and well-disposed to listen to my mother's advice; but, unfortunately, her mother, who was a gay, worldly woman, seized every opportunity of turning all that was said to her into ridicule after each visit, and constantly told her she was in no danger, and thus buoyed her up with false hopes of ultimate recovery. Can there be any greater cruelty than to keep the sick in ignorance of their danger? or to deceive the dying with false hopes of life?... It is the last refinement of inhumanity—Satanic deceit, which a devil might envy. Deceived, however, by her mother's repeated assurances that she was in no danger, and sure to recover, the poor girl paid little heed to my mother's advice, and still rained careless about her soul, hoping she had many years of life still before her. Gradually, however, she got weaker, but still paid little attention to her friend's earnest warnings and prayers, as her mother continued to assure her she would soon be well again. This was a cause of much sorrow to my mother, who saw the poor girl's life fast ebbing away, and knew how shamefully she was deluded by her cruel parent; and again and again she faithfully warned her of the danger of trifling with the solemn concerns of her soul, but all to no purpose. At length the poor girl died. My mother was not with her at the time, though she had seen her only a few hours previously. Anxious, however, to hear some account of her friend's last moments, she inquired of the nurse who had attended the poor invalid about the circumstances of her death, and the nurse's answer was, Oh, Miss Maria, it was the most dreadful sight I ever saw! When Miss — felt she was dying, she tried to raise herself up in bed, and looking at her mother with a countenance wild with terror, she exclaimed, "You've deceived me! I am dying, and I shall curse you throughout eternity for not having told me of my danger!" A solemn and fearful warning to friends to avoid the terrible crime of deceiving the dying.

Salvation

An Extract.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” &c—EPH 1.

I REFER to this to show the condition, as also the spirit, which alone produces worship. Is it any wonder that one cannot get the world to worship? It is not a question of educating men up to the point. The question is, When are people brought into the Christian state? It is then incumbent on them to worship in spirit and in truth. You see the same relationship here— “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings.” He is not merely going to bless. A man who is waiting to be blessed may be a hopeful person; but he is not yet set free, as in Romans 8:2, &c.

I remember well, some time ago, during the revival movement, being often pained by rash expressions from men talking lightly upon the grace of God. The truth is that bringing a man from darkness to light, from Satan’s power to God’s, is a serious thing; but I do not believe its reality unless there be a true (I do not say a deep) work in the conscience of the individual. I see this in the case of the woman of Samaria. Christ brought the whole truth of her life into the light. She was convicted. There is no grace unless faith be connected with repentance. Here we see all their blessings; but the point I refer to is that it is a present reality. When the children of God have the Spirit as a well within according to His word, then we have Christian worship.

Take another passage from Scripture, the Colossians. The apostle says, in chapter 1, “Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, and to all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness; giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Now, just contrast these words with any liturgy that was ever invented— “which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light!” Do ye think that those persons who believe it would be very much afraid of sudden death? that is, of a speedy going to heaven to be with Christ? Why is it that professing Christians are in such dread of sudden death? It is because they think of a needful preparation for death. It all arises from an uncertainty about the Christian deliverance already effected. What is wanted, even by real children of God, is a better, a truer, knowledge of what salvation is—not a state we are hoping for, but in which we stand virtually now. The Old Testament speaks not of the Father and the Son as the New, or of salvation in the Christian sense of the word; but the one does not set aside the other; they are the complement of each other. In the Epistle to the Ephesians referred to, salvation is always spoken of as past and present. It is a state that flows from what has been done by and in Christ. But then, quite in another way, we are waiting for salvation. We have got the salvation of our souls, we are waiting for the salvation of our bodies. But the salvation of the soul is as completely effected as it can be; redemption is wrought by Christ and accepted of God, and the Holy Ghost is already poured out on man. It is a solemn thing to affirm the possession of the Holy Ghost, but at the same time nothing is more sweet. Yet, let me tell you, that many good men are

mistaken by founding the basis of it in something in themselves, instead of what Christ has done, sealed by the Holy Ghost. He never sealed until the work of redemption was done. In the Old Testament times, there was never any saint without being quickened by the Spirit of God; but they could not have His seal until redemption was accomplished, as in Ephesians 1. So here we see saints described as “giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Deliverance and Purity

The flesh never changes. Is it necessary, then, that I should get a bad conscience? Certainly not; we should distinguish between deliverance and purity; we should not assume that we must sin. The existence of flesh does not give a bad conscience; but I never can excuse myself for allowing the flesh to act; for if I kept close to Christ it would not act. This we have to lay to heart. The existence of flesh does not stop communion, but the allowance of it does.

We are always to recognize that we have died with Christ, and should have it in power; for how can Satan tempt a dead man? The question of power is conneed with being dead with Christ.

We shall be like Him, not now, but when Christ shall appear. This hope purifies, but that is another thing. We ought now to walk as He walked; but we shall be conformed to the image of His Son.

We have died with Christ. Are you content to have died there? Is there nothing in your heart you would like to hold back from God?

“Complete in Him.”

“I am complete in Christ; I am without a care.”

NOT a care is hovering o'er me,

Not a shade is on my brow;

For my soul is stayed on Jesus,

And my trust is in Him now.

Yes, sweet Saviour, Thou art with me,

And I revel in Thy love;

For I know, “complete in Thee,” Lord,

I shall dwell with Thee above.

Many dear ones I am leaving;

Yes, I part “without a care;”

For I pray—while they are grieving—

They, they all, Thy grace may share.

That with me, in yonder glory,

They may see Thee face to face;

And with multitudes adore Thee,

For Thy free and wondrous grace.

“Not a care” is hovering o'er me,

For I am “complete in Thee;”

Soon I'll sing the rapturous story

Of Thy matchless love to me.

G. D.

The Life of Faith

An Extract.

WHAT a practical thing is faith! The Christian is a child of faith, called to live a life of faith; and a life of faith is simply living upon the word of God.

Noah spent a hundred and twenty years in building the ark. What urged him? what sustained him in his work to the end? Simply the word of God.

Abraham left his country, his father's house, separated himself from all the ties of nature, and lived in the wilderness a pilgrim and a stranger. What sustained him? Simply the word and promise of God. And so with all God's people of old, the word of God was everything to them—it separated, sustained, and comforted them; they lived upon it, and died reposing in it. Oh that we had more of this now! Not more knowledge of God's word, but more living on what we do know. We want to take that word as they took it, to separate us from the world, to rejoice in it, and to live upon it. It is not so much the knowledge of the word that is wanted now, as the word brought home to the heart by the Holy Spirit, the word making us more humble, more holy, more separate, more the "peculiar people." Our happiness does not flow from our knowledge of the Word merely, but from our measure of subjection to it.

Christian, throw not your affections away on this poor, dying world! Think what a Saviour you have, and what glory is before you. Oh, brush away the poor, paltry things of time and sense from before your heart, and live for Jesus! Live on the word, carry it into every scene and circumstance of your daily life, and make it the atmosphere of your soul. Be what you seem to be, the cross will meet you in new places, and on every side; but in thus meeting and bearing it, you will have within you the witness of the Spirit that the Lord loves you; you will have a fresh and continued enjoyment of His presence, and an "abundant entrance" into His everlasting kingdom. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

The word of God is the ground of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ is the object of faith, God Himself is the source of faith. Seeing Him who is invisible is faith in exercise; holiness is the fruit of faith, and "it is written" is the language of faith. It is by faith, not for faith, that we are justified.

It is a happy thing to live to some purpose. We may apologize to our consciences now for our lukewarmness and conformity to the world; but cannot do so when our Master comes to ask us what use we have made of our talents.

Haggai

Hager, Zechariah, and Malachi prophesied after the return of the people from Babylon. They are, therefore, called by many post-captivity prophets.

The energies of those who had gone up from the captivity to Jerusalem soon began to flag. True they had despisers and opponents to contend against; but they seem to have settled down with the idea that the time had not come to go on with the building of the temple. At this time Haggai is stirred up to carry the word of the Lord to the governor of Judah and to the high priest. He prophesied on four different occasions.

First, on the first day of the sixth month, he refers to the inconsistency of their living in ceiled houses, while God's house—the temple—was lying waste. He bids them to consider their ways, and reminds them of the drought, scarcity, and poverty they had experienced, as under the chastisement of God, for thus neglecting His house. He encourages them, therefore, to bring down wood from the mountains and build the house, and assures them that Jehovah will take pleasure in it, and be glorified. The effect of Haggai's admonitions was, that they hearkened to the prophet, and feared God, so that the governor, high priest, and all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God. (chapter 1)

Secondly. About seven weeks after the first prophecy, Haggai encourages the people to be strong, assures their hearts that God will be with them, and that His Spirit remaineth among them as when they "came out of Egypt; that as to means, the gold and the silver are His; that when He shakes the heavens, and the earth, and all the nations, He will fill this house with glory; and that the latter glory of the house shall be greater than the former glory, and that in this place the Lord of Hosts will give peace. (chapter 2:1-9.)

Thirdly. About two months after this, Haggai has again a word from the Lord. He asks the priests two searching questions:

1st. Can anyone, even if he "bear holy flesh," by touching it, sanctify anything in the world? To which they answered, No.

2nd. Could a defiled person defile others by touching them? To which they replied, Yes. For while man cannot sanctify, by his natural powers, anything to God, he may defile others by his uncleanness, two very important principles, and especially so for a people in a dispensation in ruins, exercised as to returning to God and accepting divine ground in obedience to His will. The prophet's declaration that follows these questions is very solemn: — "So is this people, and so is this nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is every work of their hands; and that which they offer there is unclean." (chapter 2:14.) He then informs them that God had chastened them with blasting and mildew, because they had not turned to Him; but He now encourages them with the assurance that He will bless them from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. (chapter 2:19.)

Fourthly. Again, on the same day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto Haggai to speak to Zerubbabel, and to inform Him that when He shakes the heavens and the earth, and overthrows kingdoms, in that day He would make Zerubbabel, His servant, as a signet; for I have chosen him, saith the Lord of hosts. No doubt the true seed of David, the Messiah, is referred to here.

Haggai seems to have prophesied in the second year of Darius; but the temple was not finished till the sixth year of Darius, about four years after his first prophecy. (Ezra 6:15.)

Zechariah

No. 1.

JERUSALEM is the prominent subject of Zechariah's prophecy, though the temple has its place in it, and especially the Messiah, by whom Jerusalem's future glory will be established. It is by the remnant which returned from Babylon that Messiah is put to death ■ "wounded in the house of His friends;" but the house of David shall be cleansed from sin and uncleanness by the fountain opened in the One whom they pierced, when every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord.

About two months after Haggai began to prophesy, the heart of Zechariah was moved by the Lord to encourage the people to turn unto Him, to warn them not to be as their fathers, and to remind them that God's words had always been fulfilled in His dealing with them. (chapter 1:1-6.)

Three months later the prophet had a vision of "a man riding upon a red horse," standing "among the myrtle trees," and behind him other "red horses, speckled and white," by which he learns that "the earth sitteth still, and is at rest," notwithstanding the humiliating state of Jerusalem the last seventy years, and that the Gentiles helped forward the affliction. The Lord is sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease, and declares that He will return to Jerusalem, have mercy on it, build the temple, comfort Zion, and yet choose Jerusalem. The "four horns," emblems of power, which scattered Judah, &o., are to be frayed and cast out by other instruments, which he saw, "four carpenters." (chapter 1:7-21.)

The vision of "a man with a measuring-line in his hand," to measure Jerusalem, shows that Jerusalem is again to be the object of divine favor. We have therefore the future restoration of Jerusalem in peace and blessing. Those who have been spread abroad as the four winds shall be brought back. After the glory, judgment will be executed upon the nations which spoiled God's people. It shall be the time of singing and rejoicing for the daughter of Zion, for Messiah shall come and dwell in her midst. In that day, when the Lord shall inherit Judah, and shall choose Jerusalem again, many nations shall be joined to the Lord. Well may the prophet here add, "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord!" (Chap. 2)

Looking at Joshua the high priest, in filthy garments, as representative of the state of the people, God shows that He can cleanse and fit them for His own presence, and make them a nation of priests, clothed in righteousness before Him. No doubt THE BRANCH is Christ; and the stone tells us of Him upon whom all Israel's blessing is built, through whom the iniquity of the land is removed in one day. (Chap. 3)

But if the people are thus blessed, so that they call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig-tree, the prophet "is wakened out of his sleep" in the next chapter to see that the source and power of all blessing is divine— "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." This he learns from the vision of the golden candlestick with the seven lamps therein, and seven pipes. The temple shall be finished, and all shall be established by the anointed

priest, and the anointed king, in perpetuity of blessing; for he is told that the two olive trees which he saw on either side of the candlestick, are the two anointed ones which stand by the Lord of the whole earth. (chapter 4)

Iniquity, however, must be judged, as the prophet next learns from the “flying roll.” The wicked in Israel must be taken away. He is told also that a woman, which he saw sitting in the midst of the ephah, is wickedness, and the ephah he saw carried away to build a house in the land of Shiner. (chapter 5)

The prophet then sees four chariots, with different colored horses in each. The black horses go into the north country, and the white follow them; the grizzled go toward the south country, and the bay horses walked to and fro through the earth. All this may refer to the government of God in the four monarchies; but the latter part of the chapter shows that all concerning the establishment and glory of the temple is to be accomplished by Christ, “the man whose name is THE BRANCH,” who shall be both the anointed king of Israel and priest— “a priest upon His throne, the true Melchisedec,” and the counsel of peace shall be between Jehovah and Him. It need scarcely be added that we have not the Church here, but the temple at Jerusalem, and Israel’s future blessing in the earth under the personal government of the true Messiah.

Eternity.

WE have read of someone who said that the only word he remembered of a sermon he had heard was the word ETERNITY. This word he could never shake off from his mind; it was a distress to him, until he knew that he was saved, and had assurance from the infallible word of truth that he would be forever in glory with the Lord Jesus. And marvelous it is that many more are not equally arrested by the telling, solemn word ETERNITY. It may be that the ear is dull of hearing, because the word is so often brought before them. Still, however men may treat the word, it is certain that every one who reads these pages will be either a partaker of “eternal glory” with God and the Lamb, or be in “eternal fire” with the devil and his angels. Men may reason about it, and try all their powers to endeavor to turn and twist these divine statements, nevertheless the facts remain the same. The word of God endures forever. The counsels of God are unaltered. And it is the attentive consideration of these realities that arouses the conscience, and leads the sin-convicted soul to cry out, “What must I do to be saved?” The possibility of persons being consigned to that place “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” was abundantly taught by the sinner-loving Saviour. He faithfully warned the careless. He touchingly appealed to their consciences as to whether it would not be “better to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched.” (Mark 9:43-48.) He knew the awful eternity that awaits the unbelieving. He saw how diligently men were cultivating present gratification and gain, at the sacrifice of eternal blessings and the loss of their own souls. He, therefore, on another occasion, faithfully declared, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” How incalculably weighty, then, is the subject of ETERNITY, and how small the most momentous matters of time are when contrasted with it!

But whither are we bound? To which of these termini are we hastening? Are we at this moment treading the broad road which leads to everlasting destruction? Or have we discovered the mistake, repented, and turned to God through Jesus, who was crucified for sinners, and thus entered by the strait gate into the narrow road which leadeth unto life? Which is it? Are we

venturing our hopes as to ETERNITY on our works, feelings, self-advancement, or other forms of building “upon the sand”? Or have we so entirely renounced self in every form as totally unfit for God, and so wholly accepted the Son of God, who was crucified for sinners, as the only foundation, the alone ground of salvation and way of peace? If the latter, your hopes are built securely on that rock from which nothing shall ever dislodge you. “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3:11.) And whoever believeth on Him shall not be confounded. (1 Peter 2:6.)

But many are indifferent. They neither ask themselves, nor will they permit others to ask them the question, “Where will you spend eternity?” But it must, sooner or later, be answered. The momentous subject must be realized, either in everlasting misery or in everlasting happiness. Then why not face it now? Why not?

“Where will you spend eternity?

Say not, I cannot tell;

The question means but good to thee,

And will be answered still.

To shun the light, or shut the sight,

The cup of wrath may fill;

ETERNITY where wilt thou spend?

Don't say, I cannot tell;

The life thou lewest now will end

In HEAVEN or in HELL.” Which?

No words can possibly convey the importance of the subject. It needs no argument. It is a simple question for the conscience before God. To be in hell-fire, lifting up the eyes in torments, and longing for a drop of water to cool the parched tongue of one tormented in that flame, is the Saviour's own description of the misery of a lost soul. This, dear reader, you know. Then is it not worth a serious thought, a moment's solemn consideration, a quiet calculation, according to God's word, whether you will be there forever or not? Is it possible you can thus refuse to listen to the voice of the Son of God? Or can you think lightly of the apostle's question, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”

Be, then, like a wise man, who builds his house upon the rock. Be a wise virgin, and take oil in the vessel with the lamp; and so rest in the faithfulness of God to His own word, that, like Timothy, through the Scriptures, you may be “wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.”

God saw us, because of our sins, justly exposed to condemnation, to eternal misery, and His love moved in deepest compassion toward us. He provided a Saviour, who made peace by the blood of His cross— “He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Thus God, instead of condemning us, has, in deepest love to us, condemned our sin in His own holy, well-beloved Son, that, by His death, we might be reconciled

to God, by His blood be cleansed from sin, and now stand, by faith in Him, righteous and accepted before God. This God gives to every one that believeth. The gospel is sent to proclaim this, and God is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish. He saith, "Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man (the Lord Jesus) 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.) Well, then, might the dear apostle exclaim, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

"ETERNITY! Eternity!

How long art thou, eternity?

As long as God is God, so long

Endure the pain of hell and wrong;

So long the joys of heaven remain.

O lasting joy! O lasting pain!

Ponder, O man, ETERNITY!"

Remission of Sins

IT is strengthening to ponder the various expressions our gracious God and Father uses to assure us of His entire forgiveness of sins. It would seem as if He delighted to vary the terms He employs to meet every variety of state of soul, and that the sin of doubt and unbelief in this matter might be expelled from the heart, that we might be without excuse. I subjoin a list of the greater part of the terms so used by our blessed God in His Scriptures of truth; I also add some of the references to the passages where they occur: ■

Blotted out. Isa. 43:25 Acts 3:19.

Covered. Psalms 32:1; 85:2; Romans 4:7.

Not imputed, or reckoned. Psalms 32:2; Romans 4:8.

Removed. Psalms 103:3,12.

Taken away. Isaiah 6:7.

Put away. Hebrews 9:26.

Passed away. Zechariah 3:4.

Passed by. Micah 7:19.

Cast behind thy back. Isaiah 38:17.

Cast into the sea. Micah 7:10.

God's face hidden from. Psalms 51:9.

Not beheld. Numbers 23:21.

Sought for, and none. Jeremiah 1:20.

Sought for, and not found. Jeremiah 1:20.

Made an end of. Daniel 9:24.

Finished. Daniel 9:24.

Subdued. Micah 7:19.

Pardoned. Isaiah 55:7; Jen 33:8; Micah 7:18.

Forgiven. Psalms 103:3; Romans 4:7; Ephesians 4:32.

Not remembered. Jeremiah 31:34.

Borne. Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:2.

Purged. Psalms 65:3; Hebrews 1:3; 9:14.

Remitted. Acts 10:43; Hebrews 10:18.

“I Shall be Satisfied.”

Psalms 17:15.

Oh, Thou art fair, Lord Jesus!

Fairer than all beside;

Fairer than earth's fair sunshine,

Or ocean's glittering tide:

Fair in Thy shadeless glory,

Fair in Thy changeless love,

Fair in redemption's story,

Fair on the throne above!

But oh! to my soul Thou'rt fairest,

As I muse on the bridal morn,

When the home which Thou prepared,

Thy blood-bought shall adorn;

Then, then, shall she rise to greet Thee,

Thine own, Thy chosen bride;

Then, then, shall mine eyes behold Thee,

And I shall be satisfied.

Risen Life

“WHAT is the sweetest object of your heart?” said the writer to a respectable Christian woman.

After a moment’s consideration she replied, “Oh, sir, it is Jesus in the glory that is the most precious object of my heart.”

“And how long has the Lord Jesus been precious to you?”

“Why, sir, I have known Him for a long time as my Saviour, but it is only about six months that I have seen that I have risen-life in Him.”

This reply was striking, and forcibly reminded us how seldom we find a believer in these days who seems to have apprehended, with soul enjoyment, the precious fact of what it is to be “risen with Christ.” And yet nothing could be found in Scripture more plainly revealed; and, in the days of the apostles, it was one of the points of truth which believers were taught, that they had died with Christ, and were risen with Him. Our blessed Lord, who, when He left the world, and promised to His disciples the Holy Ghost, the other Comforter, assured them that when He did come they should know that He was in the Father, and they in Him, and He in them. Hence we find this truth so commonly accepted that letters were addressed by the apostles to saints as those who were in “Christ Jesus.” But, in the present day, even true Christians, sincere souls, have so drifted away from the new position and character of the blessings in Christ in which the grace of God has set them, that comparatively few can now be found who say that they enjoy the precious faith that they are risen with Christ, blessed in Christ, accepted in Christ, complete in Christ, and preserved in Christ. Those who do can surely confess themselves to be of “the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” (Philippians 3:8.)

It is realizing their own association with Christ, who is now in heavenly places, knowing Him as our life and righteousness before God, that we are united to Him by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and are led by the Spirit into the contemplation of His infinite worth, personal excellencies and unchanging faithfulness, who loved us and gave Himself for us, that makes Him so precious and attractive to us. He then becomes, in our experience, the absorbing, commanding, and satisfying object of our hearts. No marvel, therefore, that one should speak of Christ in the glory as the most precious object of her soul. It must be so, if Christ be rightly known. It cannot be so, if self in any form, or the world, or anything in it, be sought as an object! It is well, therefore, to know, though it is often learned by a painful and disappointing experience, that the flesh profiteth nothing, that the world is under judgment, and that Christ Jesus, the risen and ascended Son of God, whom the world rejected, is the One to whom God now directs us, not only as a Saviour, but as the alone becoming and satisfying object for our souls. “We see Jesus.” “Consider Him.” “Looking unto Him.” “Live a life of faith upon the Son of God,” and other Scriptures abundantly confirm this. The heart that tries this proves it. It is known in no other way. Christ, the object of our heart, is the secret of true joy and strength.

A Little Talk With Jesus

A little talk with Jesus,
How it smooths the rugged road!
How it seems to help me forward
When I faint beneath the load!
When my heart is crushed with sorrow,
And my eyes with tears are dim,
There's naught can yield me comfort
Like a little talk with Him.
I tell Him I am weary,
And fain would be at rest;
That I'm daily, hourly, longing
For a home upon His breast.
And He answers me so sweetly,
In tones of tenderest love,
"I'm coming soon to take thee
To my happy home above."
Now this is what I'm wanting—
His loving face to see;
And I'm not afraid to say it,
I know He's wanting me."

Calvary

IN “the place that is called Calvary,” or onward to that place from the garden of Gethsemane, we see the great crisis, as we may surely call it, where all are engaged in their several characters, and all disposed of, answered or satisfied, exposed, or revealed and glorified, according to their several deserving. What a place, what a moment, presented to us and recorded for us, by each of the evangelists, in their different way!

Man is seen there, taking his place and acting his part, wretched and worthless as he is. He is there in all variety of conditions; in the Jew and in the Gentile; as rude and as cultivated; in the civil and in the ecclesiastical place; as brought nigh or as left in the distance; as privileged, I mean, or left to himself. But whatever this variety may be, all are exposed to their shame.

The Gentile Pilate is there, occupying the seat of civil authority. But if we look there for righteousness, it is oppression we find. Pilate bore the sword, not merely in vain, but for the punishment of those who did well. He condemned the One whom he owned to be “just,” and of whom he had said, “I find no fault in Him:” and the soldiers who served under him shared or exceeded his iniquity.

The Jewish scribes and priests, the ecclesiastical thing of that hour, seek for false witnesses; and the multitude who wait on them are one with them, and cry out against the One who had been ministering to their need and sorrow all His days.

They who passed by, mere travelers along the road, men left in the distance, or as to themselves, revile, venting impotent hatred as so many Shimeis in the day of David. And disciples, a people brought nigh and privileged, betray the common corruption, and take part in this scene of shame to man, heartlessly forsaking their Lord in the hour of danger, and when He had looked for some to stand by Him....

Satan, as well as men, shows himself in this great crisis. He deceives and then destroys. He makes his captive his victim, destroying by the very snare by which he had tempted. The bait becomes the hook, as it always does in his hand. The sin we perpetrate loses its charm the moment it is accomplished, and then becomes the worm that dies not. The gold and silver is cankered, and its rust eats the flesh as if it were fire. The thirty pieces of silver does this with Judas, the captive and the victim of Satan.

Jesus is here in His virtues and His victories; virtues in all relationships, and victories over all that stood in His way. What patience in bearing with His weak selfish disciples! what dignity and calmness in answering His adversaries! what self-consecration and surrender to the will of His Father! These were His virtues, as we track Him on this path, from His sitting at the table to His expiring on the cross. And then His victories! The Captive is the Conqueror, like the ark in the land of the Philistines. He put away sin and abolished death.

“His be the Victor’s name

Who fought our fight alone.”

God is here, God Himself and in the highest. He enters the scene, as I may express it, when darkness covers all the land. That was His acceptance of the offer of the Lamb, who said, “Lo, I come.” And such offer being accepted, God could show no mercy. If Jesus made Himself sin for us, it is unrelieved, unmitigated judgment He must have to sustain. The darkness was the expression of this. God was accepting the offer, and dealing with the Victim accordingly, abating nothing of the demands of righteousness.

And then, when the offer has been fulfilled, and the sacrifice rendered, and Jesus has given up His life, when the blood of the Victim has flowed, and all is finished, God, by another figure, owns the accomplishment of everything, the fullness of the atonement, and the perfection of the reconciliation. The veil of the temple is rent from the top to the bottom. He that sits on the throne, that judges right, and weighs all claims and their answers, sin and its judgment, peace and its price and its purchase, gives out that wondrous witness of the deep, ineffable satisfaction He took in the deed that was then perfected “in the place that is called Calvary.”

What a part for the blessed God Himself to take in this great crisis, this greatest of all solemnities, when everything was taking its place for eternity!

And further still. Angels are here also, and heaven, earth and hell, sin, also, and death, yea, and the world too.

Angels are here, witnessing these things, and learning new wonders. Christ is seen of them.

Heaven, earth, and hell are here, waiting on this moment; rocks and graves, the earthquake, and the darkness of the sky, bespeaking this.

Sin and death are disposed of, set aside and overthrown; the rent veil and the empty sepulcher, publishing these mysteries.

The world learns its judgment in the sealed stone being rolled away, and the keepers of it forced to take the sentence of death in themselves.

Surely we may call this “the great crisis”— the most solemn moment in the history of God’s dealings with His creatures. Wondrous assemblage of actors and of acting’s, God and Jesus, man and Satan, angels, heaven, earth and hell, sin, and death, and the world, all occupy their place, whether of shame or of defeat, or of judgment, of virtues and of triumphs, of manifestations and of glory. This is the record of each of the evangelists in his several way, or according to his own method, under the Spirit. Our speculations can find no place. We have but to take up the lessons which they teach us, lessons for an ascertained and well-understood eternity. J. G. B.

The Closet

An Extract.

1 Sam. 17.

DAVID had been preparing for public service in the secret school of God. God will always have to do in secret with that soul which He intends to serve Him in public. In the desert he had learned the resources which faith has in God—he had slain the lion and the bear.

Are not our failures invariably here, that we have not been in secret with the living God? This is the essential and primary matter. Do we esteem communion with God our highest privilege? Our strength is in walking in fellowship with the living God. David had already gone through trial, and had already therefore proved the God in whom he trusted. There had been dealings between his soul and God in the wilderness. O beloved, where is it that the saints really learn to get the victory? I believe where no eye sees us save God's.

The heartily denying of self, the taking up the cross in secret, the knowing the way in the retirement of our closets to cast down imaginations and everything that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God; these are our mightiest achievements. The closet is the great battle-field of faith. Let the foe be met and conquered there. He who has much to do with God in secret cannot use carnal weapons. And this should show us the importance of coming forth from the presence of the living God into all our service, that we may be thus prepared to detect and mortify all the pretensions and advances of the flesh. It is sad indeed to see a saint trying to fight in the Lord's name, but clothed in the world's armor.

David said moreover, "God hath delivered me out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear; He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine."

He knew that one was as easy to God as the other. When we are in communion with God, we do not put difficulty by the side of difficulty; for what is difficulty to Him? Faith measures every difficulty by the power of God, and then the mountain becomes as the plain. Too often we think that in little things, less than Omnipotence will do, and then it is that we fail. Have we not seen zealous and devoted saints fail in some trifling thing? The cause is, they have not thought of bringing God by faith into all their ways. Abraham could leave his family and his father's house, and go out at the command of God, not knowing whither he went; but the moment he meets a difficulty in his own wisdom, and goes down into Egypt, and what does he do? — he constantly fails in comparatively small things.

Zechariah.

No. 2.

The latter portion of the book of Zechariah, extending from the seventh chapter to the end, gives many details as to the restoration of Jerusalem, and the person, rejection, sufferings, sin-cleansing

work, and reign of Messiah.

Nearly two years after the last prophecy, the word of the Lord came again unto Zechariah, solemnly to ask the people and the priests, if, when they mourned and fasted during the past seventy years, they did it unto the Lord? A very searching question. He also appealed to them to “hear the words that had been cried by the former prophets.” (chapter 7:1—7.)

Again, the prophet testifies against their refusal to hear, and their hardness of heart, which had brought great wrath upon them from the Lord of hosts, even desolation of the land, and scattering of the people among the nations whom they knew not. (chapter 7:8-14.)

The word of the Lord again came to the prophet to assure the people of the return of blessing to Jerusalem; that Messiah would yet dwell in her midst; that Jerusalem would be a city of truth, the holy mountain, old men and old women dwelling there, and the streets full of playing boys and girls; that the Lord of hosts would save His people from the east and from the west, the ground give her increase, and the heavens give her dew, and the remnant of His people possess all these things; “that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.” Then the feasts of the fifth, and seventh, and tenth months shall be to the house of Judah feasts of joy and gladness; many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts at Jerusalem; yea, ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold of the skirt of a Jew, saying, “We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.” (chapter 8)

The daughter of Jerusalem is called on to “rejoice and shout,” because the meek and lowly King cometh just and bringeth salvation, who will cut off the horse and chariot from Jerusalem, and speak peace to the heathen, whose dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth. (chapter 9)

In answer to their prayers, God will give them blessings, and make the house of Judah “as His goodly horse in the battle.” The heart, too, of the men of Ephraim shall rejoice in the Lord; they shall remember Jehovah in far countries, shall be brought out from the land of Egypt and Assyria, when the pride of the Assyrian shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away; and He will strengthen His people in the name of the Lord, “and they shall walk up and down in His name.” (Chap. 10.)

Although “their own shepherds” are out off, yet the Lord graciously recognizes “the poor of the flock.” The rejection of Messiah, His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver which were cast to the potter, are found in the eleventh chapter. We have also the Antichrist, and the summary judgment he, “the idol shepherd,” will meet with, in the last verse. The two staves, “Beauty” and “Bands,” show that Jehovah can unite both Judah and Israel together; but the staves were cut asunder that He “might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel;” but the remnant, “the poor of the flock,” waited upon the Lord, and knew that it was His word. (chapter 11)

Yet Jerusalem shall be “a burdensome stone for all people,” and “a cup of trembling,” though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it; for the Lord will open His eyes upon the house of Judah, save the tents of Judah first, and smite with madness and blindness every horse of the people; for in that day the Lord shall defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and smite all the nations that come against it. (How impossible to apply such language to the church, and how

unaccountable it is that any child of God can do so!) The prophet goes on to show, that so deep and real will be the repentance wrought in the heart of the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem when they look on Him whom they have pierced, that they shall mourn every family apart, and their wives apart, as one who is in bitterness for his first-born. In this way will there be true restoration of heart, and relationship established with God according to the efficacy of the work of Him who died for that nation. (chapter 12) Hence the next thing the prophet presents to us is the fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness, which is followed by practical separation from idolatry, the unclean spirit passing out of the land, and even parents executing unsparing judgments on a son who is a false prophet. Then the meek and lowly Jesus, who was wounded in the house of His friends, is declared to be the man who was shepherd and fellow of the Lord of Hosts, and though smitten by Him, and the sheep scattered, He will yet bring in blessings upon a remnant, "the little ones." Of those who are "in all the land" (the two tribes) He will cut off two parts, leave a third part therein (in the land), who shall be "brought through the fire," be thus tried and refined, to whom He will say, "It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." (chapter 13)

As we have seen before, all nations shall yet be gathered together against Jerusalem, the city be captured, the houses rifled, half of the city go forth into captivity, and the residue not be cut off. At this moment the Lord Himself will be personally revealed from heaven, who will fight against those nations.

His heavenly saints will accompany Him. (See Rev 19.) His feet will stand on mount Olivet, from whence He ascended. The mountain will be rent in twain, so as to produce a very great valley, when the people will flee. Then Jerusalem will be blessed, be safely inhabited, and know no more utter destruction. The personal glory of the Lord will be so resplendent as to alter day and night; "at evening time it shall be light." Living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, both in summer and winter. The Lord shall be King over all the earth. To Him every knee shall bow.

Some of those nations which had fought against Jerusalem will be so smitten by the Lord, that their flesh shall consume away while they stand, and every man's hand shall rise against his neighbor. Judah shall fight, and obtain great wealth from the heathen. Those who are left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles; those nations who refuse to do so shall have no rain; but as Egypt has no rain, its punishment shall be different.

In Jerusalem, in that day, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD shall be on the bells of the horses, and every pot in Jerusalem shall be holiness to the Lord. Neither shall the Canaanite be any more in the house of the Lord. Blessed time, indeed, when the true Messiah, who died for that nation, has His rightful place as the seed of Abraham and the Son of David!

Malachi

THIS little book concludes the writings of the prophets. It was given much later than the books of the other post-captivity prophets. No doubt it was the last; for the law and the prophets were until John, and Malachi looks on, not only to the ministry of the Baptist as the Lord's forerunner at His first coming (chapter 3:1), but also to the ministry of Elijah, which is to be put forth, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. (chapter 4:5.)

Malachi exposes the very corrupt condition of the people who came up from the captivity. God had no pleasure in them. Like the end of professed Christianity on the earth, we see the form of godliness and the denial of the power thereof. The source of their terribly foul state is traced by departure from the sense of their being objects of divine love—a most important point. The prophet's first words therefore are, "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? "But for Jehovah's unchanging love, they must have been consumed. (chapter 3:6.) They are then led back to the sovereign acting's of divine grace in taking Jacob up, and refusing Esau against whom the Lord hath indignation forever. Though the priests and people had profaned Jehovah's name, counted His service a weariness, put polluted bread upon His altar, offered the blind and lame for sacrifices, yet the prophet enjoins them to turn to God, and that He will be gracious to them. Blessing, however, shall be abundant among the Gentiles, and His name great among them.

The priests are threatened to fall under God's curse if they do not lay to heart their evil ways. They had caused many to stumble. Judah had dealt treacherously, and that too against the wife of their youth, yet the Lord hateth putting away. (Chap. 2).

The Lord, however, must judge; so when He has refined them as silver, and purged them as gold, then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant. Let them then return unto the Lord, and He will return unto them. If they really returned unto the Lord and obeyed His word, then they should prove His goodness, and all nations call them blessed.

A remnant of God-fearing ones, however, is distinguished by the prophet as speaking one to another and thinking upon His name, who were precious to Jehovah, in that, when He makes up His jewels, He will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (chapter 3) But the day of the Lord is coming, ushered in by the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness," when the wicked will be cut off, and the faithful in Israel be blessed. It need hardly be said, that the God-fearing men referred to are Jews. When the church is addressed, she is taught to look for the Lord as "the Bright Morning Star," which we know precedes the sun-rising. Thus the Christian's hope is to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air; but the faithful Jew hopes for blessing to be brought to him in the earth by Messiah coming to them. Then we shall appear with Him. (See Rev 22:16; Colossians 3:4.)

Why Refuse?

THE world is under sentence of judgment. It only awaits the executioner. Speaking morally, it lieth in the wicked one, and by its wisdom knows not God. Satan is its prince. But soon all will be changed; the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire taking vengeance, &c. This, however, is the world that many are so eager to possess, and to find in it a position of honor and distinction. Man labors and strives for happiness in it. This is worldly merriment. Yet, like the crackling of thorns under a pot, though it make a great noise and glare, it soon goes out; but men are kept moving on by a constant succession of changes. Though it refused, and hated, and put to death the holy Son of God, it tries to ignore the fact, and to go on in willing ignorance or forgetfulness of it. But the word of the Lord is unchanged, "Now is the judgment of this world." Sin reigns, and death is constantly at work. The earth abounds with violence and corruption, and men have "no hope, and are without God in the world." Sometimes, when God is outwardly acknowledged, it is a God of their own imagination, not "a just God and a Saviour," not "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Superstition, idolatry, priestcraft, and men-exalting doctrines, it is to be feared, go far to make up the religiousness of many; so that sincere souls longing for salvation are often hindered and entangled by the doctrines and traditions of men, which feed the pride of self-righteousness, and foster confidence in the fancied powers of human intellect. Many, too, are so deceived, by the name of Jesus being tacked on to endorse and accredit what is false, that, like Zaccheus, they exalt themselves to a position of eminence, if perchance they might catch a passing glance of the Saviour, instead of coming down to the place only of receivers, and finding present and lasting blessing, like him who afterwards heard the word of Jesus, and "made haste, came down, and received Him joyfully." But what of God in all that is going on in this day of bustle and activity? God calls. He hath spoken to us in these last days by His Son, and He still speaks concerning His Son in the gospel of His grace. God speaks of His love, His love to man as a sinner and a rebel against Him; "for God COMMENDETH HIS LOVE toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8.) God speaks, then, to man of His love; He tells us of His own Son pouring out His soul unto death upon the cross to purge sins and save sinners, and says that He "so loved the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus God speaks, and points to Christ who died for the ungodly, to assure us of His love, and to attract our hearts to full confidence in Himself. Thus God gives remission of sins and eternal life to all who believe on the name of His only begotten Son.

God calls; but who hears? The ears of many are dull of hearing. "God hath spoken once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not." But man is active in opposition to God, his "mind is enmity against God," so that he closes his ears, and refuses to listen to God's voice, and he will not have the gift of God, which is eternal life. God calls, and man refuses. How distressing this is! Man would not have Christ to reign over him, and he will not now obey God's voice in the gospel, which is declared for the obedience of faith among all nations. Is it possible that thoughtful, calculating, intelligent men really choose the pleasures of sin and trifles of a moment, and refuse eternal realities and everlasting happiness? Is it so?

The infidel refuses the authority of God's word, and the value of Christ's work, because his proud heart will acknowledge no higher order of thought than human intellect, and totally disclaims the idea of his being so morally bad as to need such a sacrifice for sin.

The rationalist refuses the glad tidings, because he will believe nothing that he cannot understand. He flatters himself that he is capable of judging God's ways, and also of judging God's word, instead of being judged by it; and despises the thought of having a mind so corrupt and alienated from God as Scripture declares. He entirely reverses the divine order. Scripture says, "By faith we understand. The rationalist says, "I must understand first, and then I will believe."

The ritualist refuses God's call to receive present remission of sins, present peace with God, the present possession of everlasting life through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, because he has abandoned Christianity, except in name, and embraced principles of Judaism. He has gone back to a position of distance from God, outside the vail, to an earthly order of priesthood, and a worldly sanctuary; thus refusing God's blessed truth of being "perfected forever by one sacrifice," of belonging to the heavenly priesthood, and of present liberty of access inside the vail where Jesus is.

Careless souls refuse God's salvation by Christ, because they prefer to gratify the lusts of the flesh. Like profane Esau, they sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

Dear reader, "see that ye refuse not Him that speaketh." Will you, can you, any longer turn from God's matchless love in Christ? "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." (Job 36:18.)

Resurrection

RESURRECTION of the dead simply, or the grave giving up the dead that are in it, would not be victory. The dead might be summoned from their graves, just to abide judgment; as those not written in the Lamb's book of life will be. It is resurrection from the dead that is victorious; and it insures redemption, and this great result, that "whosoever will call on the name of the Lord shall be saved;" for "the Lord" is Jesus in resurrection, the purger of sin, and the abolisher of death. (See Romans 10:13.)

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is a great fact. Whether we will hear, or whether we will forbear, there it is, and cannot be gainsayed. Neither can we escape from its application to ourselves. It has to do with us, with each of us, again I say, whether we will or not. It has its different virtue, its twofold force and meaning; and each one should know how it addresses itself to him. Still, there it is, and none can elude it. Jesus risen and glorified is set above us and before us, as the sun is set in the heavens, and the creation of God has to do with it.

And who could pluck the sun out of the sky?

The glory seated itself in the cloud, as Israel went through the wilderness; and Israel must know it to be there, and have to do with it there, be they in what condition they may. It may conduct them cheerfully, if they walk obediently; it will rebuke and judge them, if otherwise. But there it is, as over them and before them, and they cannot elude its application to them, again I say, be they in what condition they may.

So again. Prophets come from God among the people. There they are; and whether the people will hear, or whether they will forbear, they shall know that prophets have been among them. They cannot gainsay the fact, or elude its application.

And so again. Christ in the world, in the days of His flesh, was a kindred fact. Satan had to know that as a fact, and as applying to him; and man had his blessing brought to him by it, or his guilt and judgment aggravated. The kingdom of God had come nigh; and of this, and of the force of it, they had to assure themselves.

And just according to all this is the present great fact of the resurrection. Jesus is risen and exalted. He is ascended and glorified. We might as well pluck the sun out of the sky, as try to escape from the application of this great fact to our condition. It speaks of "judgment" and of "mercy," as we either look at the cross of Christ with convicted, interested hearts, or as we despise it and slight it. It has a voice in the ear of all. It speaks, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. There is, hover, this distinction to be observed, and it is serious, —to enjoy it as God's salvation, we must personally, livingly, by faith, be brought into connection with it now. If we slight it all our days, it will bring itself into connection with us by and by.

This is, surely I may say, serious. It brings to mind Mark 5. In spite of Satan, whether he would or not, the Lord Jesus brings Himself into connection with him in the person of the poor Legion of

Gadara, in order to judge him, and destroy his work. But He does not put Himself and the virtue that He carried in Him into connection with the poor diseased woman in the crowd, till she, by faith, had brought herself and her necessity to Him.

This distinction has a deeply serious truth in it. If we, by faith, use not a risen Jesus now, and get the virtue that is in Him, He will visit us by and by with the judgment which will then be with Him. No deprecation will then avail—no seeking now can but avail.

The sequel is well weighed. It is vain for man, or the world, or the god and prince of it, to resist the risen Christ; it will be found to be but kicking against the pricks; self-destruction. It is vain for the sinner who trusts in the risen Christ to be doubting, for God has justified him. The righteousness of God is his who pleads redemption and ransom by the blood, —the God-glorifying atonement of Jesus. His death was the vindication of God in full glorious righteousness. Let God now pardon the vilest—the cross entitles Him to do so—and yet maintain His righteousness and moral glory in all perfectness. Yea, it is the righteousness of God which accepts the sinner who pleads the cross; for as the cross maintains God's righteousness, that righteousness is displayed in making righteous the sinner who pleads it.

And here I may add, we are ignorant of God—we have not the knowledge of Him, as the Apostle speaks (1 Corinthians 15:34)— if we do not receive the fact or doctrine of resurrection. It is by that that God in such a world as this shows Himself in His proper glory. The enemy, through sin, has brought in death, and the Blessed One is displayed in victory over him; but this is only done by that great transaction which puts away sin and abolishes death. And resurrection is the witness of that.

The disciples were quite unbelieving as to this great fact, even after it had taken place. They were, at that time, exhibiting some very gracious and earnest affection, but they were betraying full unbelief as to this fact. But this is natural. More readily would we occupy ourselves for Him, than believe that He has occupied Himself, fought and conquered, suffered and triumphed, for us.

With earnest affection the Galilean woman visited the sepulcher. With boldness Joseph and Nicodemus claimed the body. It was something more than spices and ointments that embalmed it—it was love and zeal, and earnestness and tears. Magdalene lingers about the tomb, and Peter and John go to it as with rival haste. The two on the road to Emmaus, while they talk of Jesus, are sad; and godly kindlings stir in their hearts, as their fellow-traveler makes Him His subject. All this was gracious affection; but with all this they were unbelieving. With this occupation of heart about Him, they did not receive the great fact of His victory for them.

The Lord is not satisfied with this. How could He be? Sinners must know Him in the grace and strength that has met them in their need. The disciples come to the sepulcher diligently and lovingly; but still this will not do. By faith we must see Him coming to us as in our graves, and not think of going to Him in His grave. We are the dead ones, and not He; He is the living One, and not we. The Son of God entered this scene of ruin as a Redeemer of the lost, and as a Quickener of the dead. It is that which we must know. He was tender, knowing how to appreciate the affection; but He rebuked the unbelief, and stayed not till He carried the light of this great mystery to their hearts and consciences. "They worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy"— thus, in spirit, as I may say, offering their meat-offering and their drink-offering, as on the bringing of "the sheaf of the first-fruits," out of the field, in the beginning of harvest. (See Lev. 23:9-13.)

J. G. B.

“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.” (John 5:24.)

The Security of Christ's Sheep

"They shall never perish"— John 10:28.

Tim believer in our Lord Jesus Christ has passed from death unto life. He is spoken of in Scripture as "not in the flesh," "not of the world," "not under law," but "washed from sins," and "in Christ Jesus"— accepted in Christ, blessed in Christ, preserved in Christ, and complete in Christ. He is therefore created in Christ Jesus, and stands before God in all the acceptableness of Christ Himself. He was dead in sins, he is now alive unto God. He was guilty before God, but he now has "remission of sins." He was afar off, he is now made nigh. He was a child of wrath, he is now a child of God. He was an enemy to God, he is now reconciled to God by the death of His Son. Hence he is now regarded by God in an entirely different position and relationship, and is therefore spoken of as justified from all things, sanctified in Christ Jesus, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ, and sealed with the Holy Spirit of God as the earnest of the inheritance. Could anything more be revealed to show us our perfect security in Christ? What worship and thanksgiving flow from our hearts, when we, by faith, enter upon this new character of blessing which the grace of God has given us in Christ Jesus! What solid ground of confidence! No marvel that the apostle should say, "Therefore we are always confident." It is not what I feel which is the ground of my security, but what God has wrought for me, and what He has made me in Christ Jesus and through His precious blood. As long, therefore, as I am enjoying God's thoughts of His own love and grace to me in Christ Jesus, I can only praise and give thanks. But if I forget this and descend from His truth, His rich mercy and goodness to me in the death, resurrection, and ascension of His own Son, and become occupied with myself, I get off the true ground of confidence and blessing. Weakness, unhappiness, and it may be, doubts and fears, will then easily set in. But consciously abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ, as risen with Him, and complete in Him who is our righteousness and life, we go on worshipping the Father, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh. Most assuredly the finished work of Christ on the cross is the foundation of all our blessings, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, and, unless our old man had been crucified with Christ, we should still be in the flesh; but, blessed be God, we have died with Christ, we are risen with Christ, we have eternal life in Him, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption."

Our hearts being thus happy in the Lord, we peacefully enjoy His truth, become drawn into obedience to His word, and delight in His ways. We may have to judge ourselves on account of failure, but we know that we are always presented before the eye of God in the acceptableness of Him, who always appears before the face of God for us. Our aim is not to sin, but if we do sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

If ever it could come to pass

That sheep of Christ might fall away,

My foolish, fickle soul, alas!

Would fall a thousand times a day.
Were not Thy love as firm as free
Thou soon wouldst take it, Lord, from me.
I on Thy faithfulness depend,
At least I to depend desire;
That Thou wilt keep me to the end,
Be with me in temptation's fire:
Wilt for me work, and in me too,
Wilt guide me right, and bring me through.
No other hopes have I beside,
If these should falter I must fall;
I look to Thee to be supplied
With life and strength, and heaven, and all.
Rich folks may glory in their store,
But Jesus will relieve the poor.

The New Testament

As we have seen in our previous meditations, the books of the Old Testament abundantly set forth the character of God—His goodness, power, holiness, wisdom, and faithfulness; His patience too with a perverse and rebellious people, and His constant readiness to turn to them and to bless them; and though often obliged to chastise, He always eventually stood up for them, and humbled their adversaries. We see also that those who trusted in God were always helped and blessed. For a Christian, therefore, to be ignorant of the divine teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures, would not only be connected with great lack of knowledge of God and His ways, but with serious loss of the encouragement they minister to the life and walk of faith. We must not forget also, that as God's blessings could only flow out to man since he fell through the sacrifice of Christ, we have oft-repeated, and varied typical instruction, concerning different aspects of His infinitely precious person, and work.

But in the New Testament the Son of God Himself is set before us, and His personal glory, redemption-work, and moral excellencies are largely and attractively unfolded. Here also we find that the Holy Ghost has come, and His Godhead, indwelling, personal acting's, and operations, are blessedly set forth. The Father's counsels in Christ are also brought out; so that it has been truly said that "the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." In the Gospels, we are in company with our adorable Lord, and trace His steps, hear His words, contemplate His marvelous acting's, and admire His perfect wisdom, holiness, and love. This is, no doubt, why Christians so often like to read this part of Holy Scripture. The Epistles instruct us in the mystery of the church, and the calling, standing, present acceptance, special blessings, relationships, hope, and walk of the believer. The failure of the church as a corporate witness for God in the earth ending in judgment, with instructions to the faithful in the last days, are also here. But, in the book of Revelation, the curtain which now hides the future is lifted up, and we are divinely instructed as to the great principles now working in the earth and their results. We are here led by the Spirit to look down into the lake of fire, and behold the eternal doom of the unbelieving, and also to turn our eyes upward to the everlasting joy and unchanging blessedness of those who are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb.

THE FOUR GOSPELS.

Every attentive reader must have been struck with the diversity of the four gospels. Even in the narration of the same event, considerable difference is found to exist. The reason is obvious. While each writer was divinely inspired for the work, it is clear that it was the province of each to give a different aspect of the personal glory and ways of the blessed Lord. While no parts, therefore, of these Holy Scriptures can possibly contradict each other, it is clear that, because each evangelist gives a separate line of instruction, the labor of the natural mind to harmonize the four Gospels must always be unsuccessful. To suppose that each merely wrote an account of our Lord and His blessed ways, as each best knew and remembered, would be to lower the idea of an inspired account to a mere human production. It is, moreover, certain that this was not the case,

but that they recorded and put together facts, sometimes independent of their chronological order, as they were divinely directed; so that on some occasions one omitted what he was most familiar with, and others who had no personal acquaintance with the fact were led to narrate it. For example, John was the only one of the four evangelists (Matthew 26:37) who was present in the garden with our blessed Lord at the time of His agony, when “He sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” But John writes nothing of it in his Gospel; whereas Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, who were not present, are the instruments used to give us such touching details of Gethsemane.

It was Matthew’s office to write of our adorable Lord as the Messiah, Mark as the perfect servant, Luke as the Son of Man, and John as Son of God— “the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” All the Gospels, therefore, begin differently. Matthew introduces Him as “Son of David, the Son of Abram;” Mark as “Jesus Christ, the Son of God;” Luke as the holy thing born of Mary, “called the Son of God;” John as “the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God; the Word made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Nor are the terminations of each Gospel less remarkable, each too in keeping with the subject of the book. Matthew gives us no account of our Lord’s ascension, but concludes his Gospel by setting forth Jesus risen, standing on the earth, and instructing the apostles of the kingdom—representing the Jewish remnant—as to the discipling of the nations, which we know will not take place till after the church is gone. Mark sets our Lord before us as finding no rest till He is risen, ascended, and sitting on the right hand of God; Luke concludes his account of Jesus the Son of Man as risen, eating broiled fish and honeycomb, promising the Holy Ghost, leading His disciples out as far as to Bethany, parted from them, and carried up into heaven. John ends his Gospel by an account of Jesus risen, ascending to His Father and our Father, His God and our God, breathing on His disciples the Holy Ghost, caring for them, and alluding to His coming again. Observe, too, the gradation in the termination of the four Gospels. Matthew concludes with Jesus risen; Mark with Jesus risen and ascended; Luke with Jesus risen, ascended, and promising the gift of the Holy Ghost— “power from on high;” John with Jesus risen, ascended, breathing on His disciples the Holy Ghost, and speaking of His coming again.

The general structure and contents of each Gospel remarkably agree with the aspect of the Lord which each evangelist introduces. Matthew, therefore, treating of the Messiah character of our blessed Lord, gives many points of precious truth, in keeping with this subject, which are not found in any other part of Scripture. He alone speaks of Him as “born King of the Jews.” The expression, “the kingdom of heaven,” is found only here, and is repeated about twenty-eight times; for the hope of Jewish people is a kingdom “as the days of heaven upon the earth.” (Deuteronomy 11:21.) The expression, too, “the end of the age,” only occurs in this Gospel. Here only have we a detailed account of the Sermon on the Mount, as it is called; and the twelve apostles of the kingdom are charged to confine their ministry to the house of Israel. Here only have we a full record of “the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” because, though they give instruction to us now, they will be specially applicable to the remnant of Israel by and by, when the Lord shall “cast out of His kingdom them that offend and do iniquity.” Matthew only gives a full report of our Lord’s prophetic discourse as to His coming again to the earth and the end of the age, and of His judgment of the sheep and goats when Christ sits as King upon His throne; and His brethren after the flesh deeply realize Jehovah’s faithfulness to His promise to Abraham, “I will bless him that blesseth thee, and

curse him that curseth thee.” In this Gospel only is recorded the wicked utterance of the apostate Jews, “His blood be on us, and on our children;” or the fact narrated that the soldiers were bribed with money to declare the palpable falsehood that while they slept the disciples came by night, and stole the body of the Lord Jesus. And, as before alluded to, here only is the commission given (not by Jesus ascended in glory, but) by Jesus risen and standing on the earth, to the apostles of the kingdom, to disciple (not Jews, but) the nations, and to baptize them “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Thus the Lord looks beyond this present church-time altogether, and appoints a ministry of His faithful people on earth (no doubt the Jewish remnant) after the church is gone. This ministry is here contemplated to continue until the Lord comes out of heaven with us in flaming fire, “the end of the age;” hence He adds, “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world” (age).

In Mark we have no account of the Lord’s birth. “Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” is here looked at as the perfect servant, going on day by day in faithful, untiring devotedness to Him who sent Him. The words “anon,” “straightway,” “immediately,” occur many times. On one ‘occasion we are told that “they could not so much as eat bread.” His feelings as Jehovah’s servant are peculiarly noticed. We read once that “He looked round about on them in anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts;” and another time, that “He sighed deeply in His spirit.” Still He went on, and accomplished all the work appointed Him, until He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. He commissions the eleven to “go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Luke, presenting Jesus as the woman’s Seed—Son of Man—brings out many points, not found in any other book, of the Lord’s ministry and ways, strikingly in keeping with his subject. Here only have we a detailed account of the circumstances connected with our Lord’s birth, and “that holy thing, the Son of God,” and “Son of the Highest,” contrasted with a child full of the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb, and “prophet of the Highest.”— John. The Lord’s genealogy is here traced to Adam; and in this gospel only is the account of Simeon’s taking the holy child in his arms; the ways of Jesus at the age of twelve years; His deep compassion for the widow of Nain; the story of the good Samaritan; His being received into Martha’s house; the parable of the prodigal son, as it is called, and also of the rich man and Lazarus. And, to pass on, it is Luke alone who speaks of our Lord in Gethsemane, “sweating as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground;” or that He prayed for the Jews, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do;” and said to the believing thief, “This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise;” or that records the conversation with the two disciples going to Emmaus after He was risen from the dead. This evangelist only tells us that He enjoined His disciples, when they were affrighted, supposing they had seen a spirit, to handle Him, and see; for, said He, “a spirit has not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have;” and then took a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb, and did eat before them. It is Luke who enters so fully into the Lord’s ministry of the Scriptures to them, and that, while in the act of blessing them, “He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.” The commission here is to preach “repentance and remission of sins in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

In John we see Him who “is in the bosom of the Father”— “the Son of God”— “the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” We therefore find Him here disclosing the counsels and love of the Father’s heart. This Gospel is unlike any other book in Scripture. All is peculiarly in keeping with the subject proposed. It is the ministry of “life,” and “light,” and “love.” He is “the life,” the giver

of life, and of the water of life, and is the bread of life. He is “the light of the world,” and those who follow Him have “the light of life.” He so declared the Father’s love, that He spake the words of the Father, and that the Father who dwelt in Him did the works. So that he that had seen Him had seen the Father, that the Father was greater than He, though it was equally true that He and the Father were one. But, for all His love, He had hatred—they hated Him without a cause. And, after being rejected by Israel, He brings out the marvelous discourse of chapter 14, 15, 16, and the prayer recorded in chapter 17. Here, specially for our comfort during His absence, He refers to the Father perhaps forty times, and many times to the Holy Ghost, the other Comforter given to us while He is away. Nor can He leave the earth after He is risen from the dead without sending to His disciples the message, “I ascend unto my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your Go;” thus showing that, through the grace of God, in virtue of His finished work, they would now be brought into the same relationship with His God and Father as Himself. In the last chapter He shows His tender care of His own, even as to food for the body, enjoins them who love Him to care for His lambs and sheep, and to follow Him in expectation of His coming.

The Hindoo

A HINDOO, on the coast of Malabar, having had his conscience awakened, inquired of various Fakeers (or devotees) and Brahmins, how he might make atonement to God for his sins. All agreed that it was by torturing and wasting his body that his guilt was to be expiated; and the mode of doing this, which was most confidently recommended, was the following: "Thou must drive," said the Fakeer, "a number of iron spikes, somewhat blunted, through thy sandals; and on these sandals thou must place thy naked feet, and walk to the sacred station, at the source of the Godavery River (distant four hundred and eighty miles). If, through loss of blood, or weakness of body, thou art unable to proceed, thou mayest halt, and wait for healing and strength. When thou hast performed thy penance, thou mayest hope that thy soul will be cleansed."

The poor Hindoo was in earnest to save his soul; and, severe as the penance was, he did not hesitate to undergo it, but immediately set out on his painful journey. At length he could go no further; and, though unwilling to lose time in so great a work, he felt himself absolutely compelled to halt beneath the inviting shade of a wide-spreading banyan tree.

It happened that a Christian missionary resided near the spot; and beneath the canopy of this very tree he had been accustomed to take his stand, and to proclaim the words of life, in the native language, to all who would gather to hear. The poor foot-sore devotee had not been there long before the missionary came to his wonted labor. He cried aloud, "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin." (1 John 1:7.) He began to describe what sin was in the sight of God; he appealed to the conscience of his hearers, and pressed guilt home upon them; he showed the utter hopelessness of man's saving himself by any self-imposed doings or sufferings; and he proceeded to show the adequacy of God's way of salvation, through the blood-shedding of his own well-beloved Son.

These glad sounds fell upon the ears of the attentive Malabar man like rain on the thirsty soil. He drank in every word; and at length, plucking off his torturing sandals, he sprang up, and cried out in exultation "This is what I want! this is the thing for me!" He followed the missionary home; gladly received the Word, and believed it; and became a living witness that the blood of Jesus Christ does indeed cleanse from all sin: and that it had cleansed him.

Notes of an Address

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”— Matt. 11:28-30

“There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”— Heb. 4:9.

WE need to consider the peculiar circumstances under which the blessed Lord uttered these most precious words, in order to grasp their true force and richness. The chapter shows that the time was most trying. Sorrow and rejection met Him on every hand. The preceding verses present to us three sore kinds of trial which deeply pressed on the heart of the loving Saviour, just before He thus, with outstretched arms, declared His willingness to welcome and give rest to every conscience-stricken, sin-burdened soul that came to Him.

1. In the beginning of the chapter we find that John, who had so long stood forth in Israel as the Lord’s faithful forerunner, and now shut up in prison, began to doubt the reality of the whole thing, and sent two of his disciples to Jesus, saying, “Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?” This must have been most painful to the Lord’s tender heart; nevertheless, as always in the blessed Son of God, the pressure of painful circumstances only caused the savor of His infinite perfectness to be the more manifest. He then, in sweetest gentleness and love, replied, “Go and show John again what things ye do hear and see,” &c.; and then, turning to the people, instead of speaking of His servant’s weakness and failure, He declared that He was more than a prophet, and the greatest that had been born of women.

2. Then, again, when He surveyed the nation so dear to His heart, He could only liken them to children playing in the market-place, for they had trifled with God’s claims, and rejected His messengers. John had been sent with a ministry calling them to repentance, but they said of him, “He hath a devil;” Jesus came with the glad tidings of the kingdom, and they called Him “a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.”

3. He also keenly felt His rejection by the cities wherein He had wrought such mighty works, and especially Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, and strikingly touches on the responsibility to God men are under, according to the character of the ministry and the advantages they had known. These cities, for instance, had heard the ministry of Christ Himself, and witnessed the miracles that He had accomplished; but what was the result? “They repented not;” and so hard and unbelieving were they, that the blessed Lord declares, that if the proud and wicked cities of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, had had the privileges of these cities, they would have repented long ago. This very solemnly sets before us the weighty fact, that increased privileges entail increased responsibility, and therefore are followed by severer judgment; for our Lord added, “It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.”

All these things must have sorely grieved the tender heart of the sinner-loving Saviour, for who ever felt so keenly as He? But what was His relief? Surely in this, as in all else, He hath left us an

example that we should follow His steps. He turned to His Father. We read, “At that time”— “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes,” &c. This was our Lord’s resource in this time of sorrow and rejection; and here, too, He found a source of thanksgiving in these things being revealed to babes. In this we learn the true secret of blessing by the gospel. Men’s carnal wisdom, reasoning powers, and calculating minds, hinder their reception of God’s words; but the child-like, believing disposition hearkens to God’s message, receives it because He speaks, and doubts not that He is faithful to His own statements; thus, while the wise of this world stumble and perish, the babe-like mind receives God’s word because it is His word, and has eternal life and blessing. Hence we are told that the Thessalonian believers “received the word of God... not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” (1 Thessalonians 2:13.)

It was under these circumstances that our blessed Lord thus poured out the deep love of His heart, spite of all the rejection and sorrow He was then experiencing, in crying out, with open arms, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Observe, then, that Christ here takes the place of a Giver, the giver of rest. This no one else could give, and no one but He has ever proposed. Many have proposed to give riches, honor, and wisdom, but where in this restless world has rest been found?

Surely it is because it can nowhere be found that the gracious Saviour declares His readiness to give it— “I will give you rest.” How many at this moment are fruitlessly trying to obtain rest in some other way! But the lesson must be learned by those who are taught of God, that the Lord Jesus is the alone source of rest. The rest He gives is rest of conscience, and rest of heart is found only in walking with Him. The rest that remaineth is future and eternal.

1. As to rest of conscience, He only is the Giver. Neither works nor ordinances ever gave rest of conscience. The blood of Christ alone purges the conscience, it cleanseth from all sin. It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul; hence it is written, that we are “now justified by His blood.” This is not rest in self, nor rest in circumstances, which so many are striving after, but rest of conscience, perfect peace in the very presence of an infinitely holy God; because the precious blood of Christ, which was shed for many for the remission of sins, tells us of sins borne, sins judged or suffered for, sins purged, and sins remitted to every one that believeth. How true it is then that

“None but Jesus

Can do helpless sinners good!”

And this mercy, too, He delights to bestow, and that even to the vilest of men. Hence He calls, He invites, He welcomes such to Himself as the Giver of rest. His arms of mercy are stretched out to every sin-stricken soul, and His gracious word is, “Come!” “Come unto Me!” Not do this or that, but “Come!” Not feel different, but “Come!” Not go here or there, but “Come!” Not get better first, but “Come!” Just as you are, “Come!” Heavy-laden souls, “Come!” Working, toiling, sin-burdened souls, “Come unto Me, and I will give you rest!” How blessed this is, and how simple too! It attracts every sinner who will be attracted to the Saviour. It draws the unclean to Him to be washed! It welcomes burdened and distressed souls to Himself for healing and rest! Oh, that precious word

“Come!” How it lays open to us the Saviour’s heart! How it tells out the delight He has to seek and to save the lost! Surely

“He makes no hard condition,

‘Tis only look and live.”

And why is it that so many are trying to cover up, or to excuse the workings of a sin-accusing conscience? How is it that others are trying to make a Saviour of their feelings, their attendance on religious duties, ordinances, and the like? Because they know not the rich grace of this precious Saviour, who said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” They entirely overlook this sweet little word “give.” They are deceived with the false thought, that they must do something for it. They know not that it is “without money and without price,” and that, just as they are, in all their sin, distress of conscience, and sense of guilt and burden of transgressions against God’s holy word, that the Saviour bids them come to Him and have rest. Oh, if they did but simply come to Him, come now, come with all their sins, what rest He would give them even in the very presence of God! He would tell them of His love to man? sinful man; that He died for sinners, preaches to sinners, and saves every sinner that comes to Him. By His Spirit He would apply His word and the value of His precious blood to their consciences, and make them rest in His presence, in the consciousness that their scarlet sins had been made white as snow, that they are justified by His blood, and perfected forever by that one offering which He once offered.

Dear souls, I repeat, how simple this is! You have not rest of conscience before God. You are, because of this, afraid of death, and hell, and judgment. You cannot bear the thought of coming into God’s presence. You know you have not yet been reconciled to God. Then hearken to the sweet voice of Jesus— “Come!” Oh, there must be this meeting between the Saviour and the sinner ere peace and rest can be known! He is the Prince of peace. He made peace by the blood of His cross, and He gives rest to all who simply come to Him. Will you, then, come to the Lord Jesus Christ for rest? Come now, come as you are, come to receive from Him rest of conscience. Consider again, I beseech you, His precious words, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Observe here how aptly this describes the state of a sin-stricken soul; he is greatly burdened; his sins are an intolerable load upon his conscience; he is indeed heavily laden; and yet withal he struggles. He vainly hopes to amend. He labors and strives for relief of conscience. But with all his “labor” he is “heavy laden;” and it is to such Jesus utters the voice of welcome, saying, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden? and I will give you rest.”

He alone can relieve the conscience; He only is the source of rest, and it is a free gift— “I will give you rest.” Oh, the blessedness of thus obtaining rest for the sin-burdened, self-condemning soul through Him who died for the ungodly, whose blood purges the conscience, and cleanses from all sin!

2. But there is another rest— “rest of heart.” Many persons who have no doubt that all their sins are forgiven, are yet restless, hankering after something of earth, easily disquieted, because they are looking for rest in self or circumstances, instead of real rest of heart, which is only known in living and walking with the Lord Jesus. This rest therefore is conditional; it is connected with walk.

It cannot then be enjoyed by those who are walking carelessly, or in disobedience; and is not spoken of as a gift, but as that which is found, — found by those who walk with the Lord. Our Lord therefore said, “Take My yoke upon you.” This is clear and decisive. In no other way can rest of heart be known than by truly casting in our lot with an earth-rejected Saviour, which necessarily severs from everything that is opposed to Him. It is not merely knowing redemption by Christ, but knowing Christ Himself, being yoked with Him, walking with Him, going on step by step with the Lord, working together with Him; and, while thus enjoying His sweet presence, we share His rejection and dishonor. The heart is thus looking to Him, occupied with Him, drawing from Him, leaning upon Him. Christ therefore is to such the Teacher and the Exemplar. Hence He goes on to say, “Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.” And if thus we own Christ as our Teacher, and Christ as our Exemplar, and we learn of Him, and, instead of self-will and self-confidence, we imitate Him who was meek and lowly in heart, our souls will find constant peace and rest. “Ye shall find rest unto your souls.” How blessed this is, and how important to see, that while Christ gives rest to the self-convicted conscience, in virtue of His finished work, yet the secret of true rest of heart is abiding in Him, walking with Him, personal intercourse and acquaintance with Him. Let none therefore expect “rest of heart” who are not walking with the Lord in obedience to His word, willing subjection to His mind, serving and honoring Him with singleness of eye and heart. All such know full well that His yoke is easy, and that His burden is light.

3. There is a rest that remaineth to the people of God. This is perfect, and forever. Rest of conscience many have, and rest of heart too, but they have not perfect rest; they have not yet rest either as to self or circumstances. But for these we wait. Now the body groans— “even we ourselves groan within ourselves;” now the Spirit maketh intercession within us with groanings which cannot be uttered. All creation groans. But there will be a keeping of sabbath—perfect rest—by and by. When the Saviour comes He will change this body of humiliation, and fashion it like unto His glorious body. We shall be caught up to meet Him in the air; He will conduct us to the Father’s house, where all is peace, and love, and glory. Nothing defiling can be there. No sorrow, nor sin, nor death can ever soil that holy place. There God and the Lamb are the light and the glory. There the virtues of His once shed blood give everlasting title to glory, and ground for ceaseless adoration and praise. Always gazing upon His face, perfectly satisfied with Him, delighting more and more in His perfections, and worth, and glory, we shall know a rest eternally unbroken, eternally perfect, eternally blessed. Rest of conscience Jesus now gives to all sin-oppressed souls who simply come to Him. Those who walk with Him find rest of heart, and know well that “there remaineth a rest to the people of God.”

My Priest

I need no priest save Him who is above;
No altar but the heavenly mercy-seat;
Christ's finished work, which speaks of pardoning love,
By which in holy peace my God I meet.
I need no blood but that of Golgotha,
No sacrifice save that which on the tree
Was offered once, without defect or flaw,
And which, unchanged, availeth still for me.
I need no vestments save the linen white,
With which, through grace, the Lord has clothed my soul;
He shares with me His seamless raiment bright,
And I, in Him, am thus complete and whole.
I leave to those who love the gay parade,
The gold, the purple, and the scarlet dye;
Mine is the robe which cannot rend or fade,
Forever fair in God's eternal eye.
I need no pardon save of Him who says■
"Neither do I condemn thee; go in peace!"
My Counselor, Confessor, Guide He is,
My joy in grief, in bondage my release.
Forgiven through Him who died and rose on high,
My conscience from dead works thus purged and clean,
I serve the service of true love and joy,
And live by faith upon a Christ unseen.

[An Extract.]

“John,” I said to an old man I had employed to work in my garden, “do you think you are ready to meet your God?”

“I fear not, sir,” was the reply, as he leaned his hand upon his spade and wiped his brow; “I know I must be born again, and I am afraid I cannot say I have been so.”

“Well now, John,” I answered, “I am sure you are not one of those who think they can do anything towards being born again; that they can by works, or prayers, or sorrow, qualify themselves for the new birth that they know they require.”

“Oh no, sir,” said he, “I am not so ignorant as that; I have read my Bible, and I know that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Though I am a poor man now, sir, I once had a comfortable farm, and received in my time a very good education.”

“Well, John, I am very glad you see what you say you do, that man by nature is so radically bad that he can produce nothing that God can receive, and that, therefore, it is absolutely impossible that he can do anything towards being born again. And now, John, can you tell me how a man must be born again? for we know that unless he is so, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5.)

“I fear, sir, I must ask you to explain it to me, for that is just the point I have often longed to know, and to which I have never yet attained.”

“Well, John, I will tell you as simply and plainly as I can (I opened my Bible at John 3:14, 15), and that in the words of Scripture: ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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.’ Now, here you have the love of God, the work of Christ, the sinner’s faith, and the result attained to. God loved the world, and proved His love by the gift of His only-begotten Son. Christ, as Son of man, in man’s place, was lifted up upon the cross. He thus becomes the object of faith to the universe, and the promised blessing is to ‘whosoever’—anybody. The moment we believe on Him we possess eternal life; or, in other words, are born again.”

“I never saw it so plain, sir, before,” said John; “I had thought there was far more in it than that,” and he seemed to look brighter as he spoke.

“No,” said I, “there is no more than what I say, and the comparison the Lord uses makes it still more plain. You remember in Numbers 21 how, because of the people’s sin, the Lord sent serpents to bite them, and many died of their wounds; and when they cried to the Lord, He told Moses to set a serpent of brass on a pole, and that whoever looked at it, his bite would be healed; and now, just in the same way, those who are under God’s wrath on account of their sins, have but

to turn the eye to Christ, to believe on Him, and their judgment is at once removed, and they receive the gift of eternal life—that 'heavenly thing' to which the Lord alludes in verse 12; that new existence; that life in resurrection, that completely takes the recipient of it beyond the reach of death, and brings him into the heavenly kingdom, the kingdom of God."

"Well, sir, I think I understand it now," said John; "I am very much obliged to you."

I did not speak to him again for some days, preferring to wait to see whether it was really the work of God in his soul; but when I did so, I could have no doubt the Lord had sealed him for His own, and from that moment he grew steadily in the things of God, and presently desired to be associated with the Lord's people in the remembrance of Him who died for them. He took his place among us, and seemed very happy in the Lord, and fully to enter into and enjoy worship in spirit and in truth.

But ere long his health broke down. An asthmatic affection seized him, and it became evident that he was not long for this world. I scarcely remember anything more enjoyable than my visits to him, for he could not face the sharp spring winds. To seek in any way to minister to him was out of place, and undesirable. I used to sit and listen to him worshipping the Lord. His frame was wretchedly emaciated; but it seemed as if, while the body became weaker, the Holy Ghost, who had come to dwell therein, had fuller liberty, and made his unutterable groanings (Romans 8), by anticipation, change almost to songs of praise. His constant theme was Christ; and he seemed to have the person of the Lord most vividly before him. "Oh, the brightness of Christ!" he would say; "Oh, the brightness of Christ!" One could almost have said he beheld literally the glory of the Lord from the sense he seemed to have of His beauty. He suffered much, but nothing dimmed his joy from first to last; and one morning, as he lay upon his bed, he just turned to his son, who was sitting by the fire, and said gently, "James, remember the Lord," and then passed to his rest without a struggle.

We shall meet again; but while Jesus tarries, I rejoice to think of one whom I still sometimes think I can hear saying, "Oh, the brightness of Christ!"

Dear reader, can you join your voice to his, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day?"

G.

Jesus is Able

ABLE to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25.)

ABLE to succor them that are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18.)

ABLE to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8.)

ABLE to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. (Jude 24.)

ABLE to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. (2 Tim.1:12.)

Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is ABLE even to subdue all things unto Himself. (Philippians 3:21.)

ABLE to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20.)

Believe ye that I am ABLE to do this? (Matthew 9:28.) I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is ABLE. (2 Timothy 1:12.)

According to your faith be it unto you. (Matt. 29.)

Matthew

No. 1.

As this evangelist gives the Messiah aspect of Jesus, we have special instruction concerning the nation of Israel, and dispensational truth, as well as many precious and instructive lessons for ourselves. The Lord, who knew all things, anticipated His rejection, and looked forward to the condition and circumstances of the persecuted and faithful remnant of the Jews, who will be manifested after the church is gone. Chapter 10 and 24 are examples of this, and tell us of His deep sympathy with them. It is when we apprehend the divine character of the book that we understand its true bearing, or can read it with the profit and enjoyment it is calculated to impart.

Matthew opens by introducing the Lord to the reader as “Son of David, and Son of Abraham.” As the Messiah, the true Son of David, who is yet to reign before His ancients gloriously, is the special character of the book, his relation to the royal line is first mentioned, and then His connection with Abraham, unto whose “Seed” all the promises were made, in whom all are to be established. The Lord’s genealogy is therefore traced from David to Joseph, who is shown to be of the royal line. Hence the angel of the Lord addresses him as “Joseph, thou son of David,” and tells him to take unto him “Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” He therefore took unto him his wife, and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son. Joseph called him Jesus, as he had been commanded; but according to the testimony of the prophet, this virgin’s child should also be called “EMMANUEL, which, being interpreted, is God with us.” Thus Jesus was born son of Mary, having no blood-relationship with Joseph; but being Joseph’s step-son, Jesus was legally in the royal line of connection with David’s throne.

In the second chapter, Jesus is announced as “born King of the Jews,” and is worshipped and honored by the men of the east, who had been led to Him by divine guidance. But the condition of the nation is sad indeed. A command goes forth from Herod, and is carried out by the people, to destroy all the young children in Bethlehem, from two years old and under, hoping to include the Messiah. But this only gave occasion for God to carry out His own purposes by the flight into Egypt, and to fulfill the Scripture— “Out of Egypt have I called my Son.” This chapter shows how entirely unfit the nation was to receive the Messiah; hence we find in the next chapter that John appears in Israel as the Lord’s forerunner, according to the testimony of the prophets Isaiah and Malachi. He calls upon the people to “repent,” for the true Messiah was there, and therefore “the kingdom of heaven” was “at hand.” He baptized with the baptism of repentance those who took that place; but he called the religious sects “a generation of vipers,” and declared that judgment was at hand— “The ax is laid at the root of the trees: therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” While he baptized with water, there was One coming whose shoes he was not worthy to bear, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and fire. “He would thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner, but burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

A remnant hears John's voice, and take the ground of repentance, and are baptized. Jesus takes a place with these, and, as the fulfiller of all righteousness, is baptized too. But over Him the heavens open, the Holy Ghost descended and abode upon Him, while a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Thus the man Christ Jesus is publicly owned in Israel, from the glory, as Son of God, by the Father and the Holy Ghost, and that, too, in connection with a repentant remnant of Israel. It is well to notice also here, that through the redemption-work of Jesus He has brought us into His own place; the heaven is open to us—the veil rent—the Holy Ghost has come down to anoint us, and dwell in us as the sons of God, according to the riches of divine grace. (chapter 3)

After Jesus had proved Himself to be invulnerable to Satan in temptation, the wicked state of the nation is again made manifest by Jehovah's faithful servant John, the Lord's forerunner, being put into prison. Accordingly, the Lord goes forth with the glad tidings of the kingdom which John had announced, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" only the Lord adds to this His power to bind Satan, to cast out the unclean spirit, and heal all manner of sickness. These were points of deepest interest to a Jew who was intelligent in the Scriptures of the prophets, and should have shown him that Jesus was the Messiah. (chapter 4:17, 24.)

By this time a few in Israel had accepted the testimony, received the Messiah, and became His scholars and followers. The Lord then takes them apart, gathers them to Himself (thus showing His divine character), separating them from the corrupt nation. Having taken them up into a mountain, He instructs them in the presence of others as to the character of those belonging to the kingdom, the true principles on which the kingdom must be set up, and the conduct suitable to such as will be in it. Our Lord begins by showing that it is not the self-sufficient, but "the poor in spirit," that can be in the kingdom, and that "the meek" will inherit the earth. Such, being surrounded with an apostate people, must suffer for righteousness' sake; but the persecuted are assured of reward in heaven. In the kingdom there will be least and greatest, but they must all have a better righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees. They, too, should love their enemies; and lust cannot be tolerated. The Lord also gave them a form of prayer, perfect for those who were getting on kingdom-ground, praying for the kingdom to be fully set up, when the will of God will be done on earth as in heaven. The soul-breathings becoming the members of Christ's body are not found in this prayer; for there is no remission of sins through the blood of Jesus; no asking in the name of the Lord Jesus, nor recognition of the need of the Spirit to help in prayer; but, as before said, it is a prayer given to and perfectly adapted to those who did not know anything of atonement or redemption, but, having received the Messiah, longed for the kingdom to come—the Father's kingdom. (chapter 6:9-13.) He would care for His own. They should consider the fowls of the air, and lilies of the field, and not be anxious about food and raiment; but "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and then all these things would be added to them. They should expect their Father to answer prayer. (What lessons there are here also for us.) There will be "false prophets," but they shall be known by their fruits. There is a broad way and a narrow way; but few enter into the strait gate. Happy those whose hopes are built upon a rock. (chapter 5-7)

The Word of God

WHEN man takes the place of competency to judge the word of God, it is not God's word to him at all. It begins with a lie—infidelity. In 1 Corinthians 2:7-12, we have revelation by the Holy Ghost; in verse 13, an inspired communication; then, in verse 14, spiritual discernment. If, then, man's mind works on the word, all kinds of heresy must result.

To Correspondents

R. A. H., JERSEY. — We are cheered by what you say of blessing received through the pages of The Evangelist. The Lord be praised! To Him be all the glory!

1. With regard to your question on Luke 24:32— “Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” We must remember that it was after their eyes were opened, and they knew Him, and He had vanished out of their sight, that the two disciples, going to Emmaus, thus expressed themselves. We must also consider that the Scriptures which our Lord expounded were concerning Himself. How, then, could the burning of heart they spoke of be other than joy and gladness? The word translated “burn” means “kindled with emotion;” and while it is quite true that the Lord did at first reprove them, saying, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe,” yet what could be the effect of that but to attract them to Himself, to prepare them to listen to the sweet Scriptures concerning Himself which He was going to set before them, that they might know Him as risen from the dead, and as still caring for their comfort and blessing?

2. You say, “Was Christ’s righteousness imputed to us who believe, for it is written we are ‘made the righteousness of God in Him’?” Now, where, we ask, in Scripture, do you find the expression, “Christ’s righteousness”? We are told that “the righteousness of God, by faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe.” (Romans 3:22.) But, observe, this is the righteousness of God. We know also that “God made Him (Christ) sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21.) But here again observe it is the righteousness of God, and that it is ours, not through Christ’s law-fulfilling, but as a result of His having been made sin for us upon the cross. Hence Paul exclaimed, “That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” (Philippians 3:9.) Notice here again that it is the righteousness which is of God. No doubt, as we have seen, it is in Christ that we are made the righteousness of God; and we are further taught that, being in Christ, “God hath made Him to be unto us righteousness.” (1 Corinthians 1:30.) We have not, therefore, a righteousness apart from Christ Himself. Observe, further, that this righteousness in which we stand now before God is not merely a garment thrown over our old Adam nature which Christ obtained for us by law-fulfilling. Far from it; for the believer is not now seen by God standing in his old Adam nature, but in Christ. “Ye are not in the flesh,” “not under law,” “not of the world,” Scripture tells us, but “in Christ.” Christ having borne our sins on the tree, and suffered for them, and made there sin for us, when “God condemned sin in the flesh,” both our sins and the old nature—the corrupt tree and its fruits—are gone from before God, having been judged in Christ on the cross; so that we have died with Christ, died under the judgment of God out of our old state, and are now alive to God in another Head—in Him who is the other side of death in resurrection and ascension. And it is in Him risen and ascended that we are accepted, blessed, complete, and preserved, and who is our righteousness, for we are made the righteousness of God in Him. The believer, then, is “in Christ,” is “not in the flesh,” has no standing, or life, or righteousness, apart from Christ Himself. This is

entirely God's work, suitable to God, according to the nature of God, and for the everlasting praise and glory of God. We are made, then, the righteousness of God in Christ, not by law-keeping, but by His having been made sin for us, and, as our Substitute and Sin-bearer, suffering all the righteous vengeance of God due to us, and glorifying God in it all. No wonder, then, we are told, that "if righteousness come by the law, then Christ has died in vain." (Galatians 2:21).

T. H., PLYMOUTH. — Thanks for your kind letter. We question the suitability of the lines enclosed for this magazine. We would gladly send the copies you desire if they were at hand. May the Lord greatly bless your soul!

The Three Aspects of Salvation

Notes of an Address.

“Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” (1 Peter 1:9.)

“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you.” (Philippians 2:12,13.)

“The salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:5.)

THAT the word “salvation” is used in Scripture in different senses the above texts most clearly show, and the lack of discerning these distinctions accounts for the difficulties which some have found in gathering the Lord’s mind as to these and other portions of the written Word. Thus, for instance, in one epistle we are spoken of as already saved— “who hath saved us;” and yet, in another epistle, salvation is put before us as yet future — “to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” The truth is, that when we are spoken of as “saved,” it applies to the present salvation of our souls; but when salvation is referred to as yet future, it points to our being bodily and completely saved— “caught up to meet the Lord in the air.” The same distinction may be observed as to other points of doctrine. For instance, we read in some places of the believer having the present possession of eternal life. Jesus said, “He that believeth on ME HATH everlasting life.” (John 6:47.) And elsewhere he is spoken of as hoping for eternal life— “In hope of eternal life.” (Titus 1:2.) Again, as to redemption; in some Scriptures we are told that we have redemption — “In whom we have redemption through His blood;” and in another place we are described as looking for redemption— “Waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.” (Romans 8:23.) But these seeming contradictions are not really so, but state precisely the truth; so that, whether it be “salvation,” “eternal life,” or “redemption,” we have all these marvelous blessings both in a present and future sense—the present, as concerns our souls, the future, referring to its full accomplishment as to our bodies. Only, as regards salvation, we have a third use of the word for those who, having received the salvation of their souls, and are waiting for the coming of the Lord for the change and salvation of their bodies, for they are called daily to save themselves from the evils to which they are exposed. It is therefore called “your own salvation.” May the Lord help us to enter into His own gracious instruction concerning each of these three aspects of salvation!

1. PRESENT SALVATION. “Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” What an eternally momentous matter is the salvation of the soul! “God breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” Though God only hath immortality, yet He is able to give immortality; thus man has perpetuity of existence, and must be either in glory forever with the Lord Jesus, or forever enduring the misery and torment of the lost! And who can tell the unhappiness of a lost soul? Did not our adorable Lord most emphatically appeal to His hearers, saying, “What shall it profit a man, though he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” And yet how few seem to believe this? How seldom

any are crying out, "What must I do to be saved?" Men know, as a fact of every day occurrence, that people die, and they arrange accordingly as to this life; but is not the old motto very common still, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die"? little thinking that after death is judgment. But about the soul, how few seem concerned as to whether they are saved or lost! Worldly advancement and ease, with its passing honors and attractions, seem, alas! too frequently the objects which engross the heart. Thus people pull down their barns and build greater, saying to their souls, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up in store for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." But of such it is added, "God said unto him, Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" How solemn this is, and yet how truly it portrays the condition of multitudes around us!

Nor does the picture end here; for our Lord did not leave His hearers in ignorance of the future miseries of a lost soul. He first referred to the ease, and pomp, and luxury of a man abounding with this world's wealth; clothed with purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day. All was suddenly stopped by the chilly hand of death. "The rich man died, and was buried." And what then? Had not his mortal remains been laid in a costly sepulcher? Had not many mourners followed his body to the grave? Had not wealth, and earthly honors, and all that man and means could do, been used to adorn the imposing funeral, and garnish the costly tomb? But what then? While the body awaits the resurrection of judgment, under the eye of Him who is "Lord both of the dead and of the living," where is the soul? Did not our Lord go on to announce the thrilling intelligence, that "in hell," yes, in the flames of hell, "he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom"? And, to give vent to his bitter anguish, "he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." This is the experience of a lost soul; and he is told that there is no comfort, no relief, no mitigation of his sufferings, and no escape from the torments of that flame. "But this is only a picture," say some. "But a picture of what?" we reply. Surely nothing less than a divinely drawn illustration of the misery and suffering of those who have been seeking to gain the world, and have lost their own souls. This man obtained some of its "good things" no doubt; but he cared for his body: he fed it sumptuously, and decked it with costly raiment. He cared not for his soul, and now he finds the torments of hell to be a never-ending reality. And we must never forget that God is able to destroy with never-ending destruction both body and soul in hell. What an immeasurable distance there is between a soul lost and a soul saved!

But, blessed be God, Jesus came from heaven to save— "to save sinners." This was the outflow of purest, sweetest love. He came to save, save fully and forever, the lost. To this end justice must be satisfied, the demands of infinite holiness met, righteousness accomplished, and God glorified, so that the Father's eternal purpose may be accomplished in having us as "sons before Him in love." Jesus, the Son of God, therefore came into the world and died to save, so that, cleansed by His blood, and raised up with Him, and seated in Him in heavenly places, we might be eternally secure. The grace of God thus brought salvation, and that too in its fullest, widest sense; though at present we receive by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ "the salvation of our souls." Our sins having been suffered for under the wrath of God by Jesus, and God having condemned sin in the flesh in Him who was made sin for us, and having given to us eternal life in Him risen and ascended, we are not only delivered, and that judicially in righteousness, from all guilt and condemnation, but we

have eternal life in the Son of God, who is now crowned with glory and honor. All this has been done for us; the work has been accomplished, and we are saved in the way of faith. "Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls." The finished work of Jesus being the ground of faith; the word of God the warrant for, faith; Christ Jesus, who was on the cross, but now in the glory, the object of faith, and the soul's salvation now received the end of faith. How blessed, then, it is to be a saved soul! not only securely sheltered from coming wrath, but to have the certainty of peace made, sins forgiven, of being born from above, and now a child of God through faith in Christ Jesus! What praise and worship are due to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for bringing to us this marvelous salvation! Surely we can sing,

"He saw me ruined in the fall,

And loved me, notwithstanding all;

He saved me from my lost estate:

His loving-kindness, oh, how great!"

2. Now let us consider the second sense in which this word salvation is used in Scripture— "Work out your own salvation." When a person is saved, he finds himself surrounded by everything that is opposed to his soul's blessing. "The world lieth in the wicked one." The flesh profiteth nothing. Satan, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, and men are often the instruments of his evil purposes. Hence the believer is exhorted to "work out his own salvation with fear and trembling."

Peter said, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40.) Again, saith the Spirit to the saints, "Let no man take thy crown." (Rev. 3:11.) "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (Colossians 2:8.) "Put off the old man, and put on the new." (Ephesians 4:22-24.) "Have no confidence in the flesh." (Philippians 2:3.) "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7.) Thus the saints are instructed to beware of men, to have no confidence in the flesh, to resist the devil, and to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. And surely these, and many other Scriptures, show what snares and temptations surround the children of God, and what vigilance and strength they need to save them day by day from everything that would grieve the holy Spirit of God, dishonor the Lord Jesus, and damage their own souls.

It was to the Philippian saints that the apostle thus wrote to work out their own salvation. He addressed them as "saints in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:1.) They were very dear to the heart of Paul. He calls them his "brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, his joy and crown." When he was with them at Philippi, he so cheered and instructed them, so fed their souls with the "sincere milk of the Word," that he says of them they "always obeyed." But now he was absent from them, they were cast upon God for daily strength, and grace, and vigilance. Being without apostolic care and oversight, he exhorts them to be faithful in their daily walk and conflict—to work out their own salvation, with fear and trembling, and in doing so to realize the fact that, being God's children, and His Spirit in them, "it is God that worketh in them, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." What can be more simple? And how destructive and blinding to apply such a scripture to the unconverted! As we have seen, it was addressed to saints. It was their own salvation which should exercise their hearts and consciences while passing through a scene entirely opposed to God, and

having to grapple with things which dishonor the Lord and damage souls. For this, God was working in them. Being in Christ, and the Holy Ghost in them, born of God, children of God, they now had a power by which they could overcome—they could do all things through Christ which strengtheneth them. Hence they were exhorted to be imitators of Christ, to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, shining as lights in the world, and holding forth the Word of life, &c. (Philippians 2:15, 16.)

Thus we see that those who have received the salvation of their souls, and are waiting for the salvation or redemption of their bodies, are now recognized as passing through a world where they are to shine as lights, and to save themselves from the many snares which surround them; to do this, too, not in a presumptuous and self-confident spirit, but “with fear and trembling,” because it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. There is nothing, then, in this passage to justify the feeblest believer having any fear as to his security; for the people thus addressed are “saints,” and “in Christ Jesus;” that is, they have been “perfected forever” by the one offering of Christ; they have passed from death unto life; they are accepted in the Beloved, and are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

3. We are waiting for “the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time”— “the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body.” This will be when the Lord comes. “He will change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” Having received the salvation of our souls, and saving ourselves day by day from what is contrary to the Lord’s mind in obedience to His word, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be clearer. Everyone knows that redemption is not now applied to the body. The bodies of believers are not different from the bodies of unbelievers; but when Christ comes, the bodies of believers will be changed in a moment, and then translated. The apostle says, “We (believers) shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” (1 Corinthians 15:52-54.) What a glorious prospect! How great this salvation, and how perfect! All of God, and all of His grace. “For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” It is sweet, therefore, to see that our being bodily taken to glory to be with Christ, and like Christ forever, is all of the free favor, the rich, unmerited love of God to us. “We look, then, for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,” and expect to be caught up to meet Him in the air, and taken bodily into the glory of God, and that entirely because God is rich in mercy in His great kindness toward us in and through Christ Jesus. And how full and simple is the testimony of Scripture about this. When it will take place we know not; but it is our unspeakable privilege to wait for God’s Son from heaven. “For 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, shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds; to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” What a triumphant future! What a great salvation! Truly the hearts of God’s saved ones can now exultingly cry out—

“How sweet the prospect is!

It cheers the pilgrim’s breast:

We're journeying through the wilderness,

But soon shall gain our rest.

Hallelujah!

We are on our way to God."

But how appalling is the state of those who neglect this great salvation. They do not, perhaps, neglect to be virtuous, or kind, or to cultivate the proprieties of life, or respect for much that is called religion; but, alas! alas! they do neglect this great salvation. "How," says the apostle, "shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Oh, dear souls, if you continue to despise God's gospel, and refuse this great salvation, how can you escape being left behind for judgment when the Lord comes for His own? How can you escape the eternal miseries of the lost? How can you escape being banished from God's presence forever? Oh, that you may receive the Lord Jesus Christ now! know Him who was dead and is alive again as the object of faith! and then it may truly be said of you, that you receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

“Looking Back.”

“No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”— Luke 9:62.

IT was a lovely summer evening when we returned from a cottage-meeting high on a Scottish hill-side, and wended our steps by the banks of the deep-ravined led back to town. Though now eight o'clock, so inviting was that calm eventide, that we began to sound aloud the glad tidings of salvation in the midst of the ancient borough. One after another spoke, hymn after hymn was sung, but still an eager few pressed close to hear the word of life, like the crowd in the temple who “hanged on the lips” of Him who was the first declarer of the great salvation. (Luke 19:48.) The old town-clock chimed ten, and, although the passers were few, yet a little knot lingered round the preacher. One man, evidently laid hold on by the truth, accosted a brother standing by, and desired to converse with the speaker. Gladly we adjourned into the house of a Christian near at hand, and there the man told his piteous tale. He was a shepherd. Once he had rejoiced in the consciousness of the Saviour's love; but, becoming unwatchful, and “looking back,” he had “fallen from grace,” for years living as if he never had “tasted that the Lord was gracious,” but was aroused in measure to realize the terribleness of his state. “Oh!” he cried, “there's abundant mercy for the sinner wha never believed, but there's nane for me. Thae words aye come ta my mind, ‘He that pits his han' ta the plough, an' looking back, is na fit fu the kingdom o' God;’ If any man draw back my soul shall have na pleasure in him.” Poor convicted man! Satan also had been insinuating that he would ultimately be lost by misrepresenting God and His truth to him. Long and earnestly we strove to assure him of the unchanging mercy and love of our God, of the eternal security of all who ever are His, and exhorted him to make an unreserved confession of his self-will and sin to the Father, pressing upon him the truth of 1 John 1:9, 2:1, 2. Knowing the powerlessness of words alone, we all dropped on our knees, lifting the heart and voice to Him who is near unto all that call upon Him, pleading for the Spirit's unction and needed grace. It was refreshing to our souls to hear the strong man break forth in unreserved supplication, unburdening his heart before the throne, asking the restoration of soul, and the sustenance of the almighty arm. Long we tarried; then he left us, wrapping his plaid round his shoulders, for a long walk o'er the hills to his shepherd home, regardless of the lateness of the night.

Perhaps, dear soul, you too have been “looking back,” “drawing back,” slighting Him who once was all your salvation and all your desire. Once you set out to run the heavenward race; but, neglectful to get rid of every weight, and your darling besetting sin, you have gradually given it up, and, like Pliable, returned to the city of Destruction, soon to be at rest with old comrades and old pursuits. But why so? Ah! did not the enemy, that old serpent, wile you, first of all, out of your strong tower of private prayer? The desire to pray becoming weaker, bowing the knees and reading the book became distasteful; then, the shield of faith lowered, you became an easy captive. The company of the “spiritually-minded” was shunned; the associations, literature, and habits abandoned in the first delight of the soul at the discovery of the preciousness of Jesus were again taken up. Soon the mind, not being “set” on “brighter things above,” became entirely

occupied with self-pleasing. The “living by faith” exchanged for walking by sight, and a backslider in heart full of his own ways. (Proverbs 14:14.) Away from the Lord in heart, there is no wickedness of which you may not be guilty. Some may be startled at this, but it is only too true in the sad history of many. The flesh, only kept in check when “walking in the spirit,” will surely break out, and the fruits of corruption be manifest, which are these — “Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying’s, murders, drunkenness, raveling’s, and such like.” (Galatians 5) Your separateness lost, you have become like the subject of Jeremiah’s wail: “How is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed!”.... Her Nazarites were purer than snow, they were more ruddy in body than rubies, their polishing was of sapphire. Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets; their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

Oh, dear soul, arouse thee! humble thyself under the mighty hand of God! Confession is the road to recovery. “Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13.) “I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” (Psalms 32:5.) Get thee back to thy Lord’s feet, once pierced for thee, and there bow down; let His unchanged love melt thy heart. No sins are too aggravating, too vile, for Him to blot out; no faithlessness too galling for His mighty love to overlap. “He abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.” Thou has strayed from Him; He yearns over you. “Turn, O backsliding children; for I am married unto you.” “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings.” Now He recalls you! Return! Come! Think of all the joys of the Father’s love, the fullness of His home! Arise, gird up thy loins with this truth! Gather up thy garments, too long soiled with the dust of Sodom, lest you at His coming be found naked; and let the deep, real, and Spirit-wrought purpose of thy soul be: “I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.” Thus thou also shalt consummate His joy, and know, deep down in your soul, that of you He is saying, “It is meet that we should be merry, and be glad; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” Henceforth let the spirit of your heart be■

“O Lord, how does Thy mercy throw

Its guardian shadow o’er me,

Preserving while I’m here below,

And guiding safe to glory.

“As weaker than a bruised reed,

I cannot do without Thee,

I want Thee here each hour of need,

Shall want Thee, too, in glory.

“And though my efforts now to praise

Are often cold and lowly,

A nobler, sweeter song I'll raise,
With all Thy saints in glory.
"We'll lay our trophies at Thy feet,
We'll worship and adore Thee,
Whose precious blood has made us meet
To dwell with Thee in glory."

D.

Matthew

No. 3.

WHEN the Lord came down from the mount, He was approached by a leper. A sad disclosure of the degraded state of the nation. Why was not his upper lip tied up, and he crying, "Unclean, unclean?" Or, why was he not cleansed by the priest according to the prescribed ordinance? (See Leviticus 13, 14.) But this sad state of things served to show that One was there who was Jehovah, who could touch a leper without being defiled, and heal him immediately by His word; while it brought out also the grace of His heart, and the readiness in Him to heal the nation, however sunken in uncleanness and moral degradation. When Jesus healed his leprosy, He sent him to show himself to the priest, who, being a kind of prime minister, was the true medium of appeal to the nation. But there was no answer; and this silence only further manifested their sad condition.

The Lord then turns to a needy Gentile, a centurion's servant, whom He heals at once, and declares that He "had not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." This appears to intimate that, though Israel refuse Immanuel, His blessing would flow out to the Gentiles; and He declares that the children of the kingdom, the natural heirs, will be cast out, and the Gentiles enjoy millennial blessings with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (chapter 8:11, 12.)

The healing of Peter's wife's mother, the rebuking of the winds and the sea, and the casting out of devils, were further proofs of His Messianism as able to set up the kingdom, although He felt so rejected that He said He had not where to lay His head. (chapter 8)

In the ninth chapter, the palsied man sets forth the helplessness of the nation, as the leper had declared its uncleanness. But here again the power of His Messianism was set forth. The prophet Isaiah had connected Israel's future blessings with forgiveness of sins, and healing of diseases (chapter 33:24); and in Psalms 103 millennial glory is celebrated with thanksgivings to Jehovah for healing all diseases, and forgiving all iniquities. These two blessings are combined in our Lord's dealings with this palsied man. He said, "Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house." This was a remarkable testimony to the presence of Jehovah Jesus, the true Messiah, and they ought to have known Him; but "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." However, "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Still, He did not come to mend a ruined nation, but to bring in what was new. The garment was too old and rotten to be merely patched, and the bottle must be new to receive and retain the new wine. That the nation of Israel will be revived by and by, according to the divine purpose, was most true, even though it be dead like Jairus' daughter, and the true Messiah be "laughed to scorn;" but before that, a needy, helpless woman (like the church), has faith in Him as a present Saviour and Deliverer. When the nation knows their true Messiah, and are blessed by Him, they will be like the blind who receive sight, and blessings will flow largely and abundantly to those around.

Tell Jesus

“WHATE’ER thy sin, whate’er thy sorrow be,
Tell all to Jesus. He who looketh where
The weary-hearted weep, still draweth near
To listen fondly to the half-formed prayer,
And read the silent pleading of a tear.
Lose not thy privilege, O silent soul!
Pour out thy sorrow at thy Saviour’s feet!
What outcast spurns the hand that gives the dole?
Oh, let Him hear thy voice! To Him thy voice is sweet.”

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