

WRITINGS OF D T GRIMSTON

by D.T. Grimston

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by D.T. Grimston, compiled for study and devotional reading.

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Mountain Tops

What a different scene is now before us as we ascend the Mount of Olives with the Man of sorrows and His disciples. The Prince of this world driven away and worsted from the temptation in the wilderness, will now appear again, to try and draw through fear of death God's faithful Son from the path that led to victory. Sorrowful, even unto death, amazed and very heavy was He, as He knelt and fell upon His face in prayer, and so great was His agony as He offered up His supplications with strong crying and tears, that His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. His disciples might sleep under the weight of their sorrow, but He continued agonizing, whilst still perfectly submissive to His Father's will. Well might He suffer, and because of suffering pray, when thus bereft of earthly comforters, an angel only strengthening Him, while yet in perfect communion with His Father, Satan thrust upon Him all the fearful consequences of the position He had taken as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. The martyrs, and still worse, the victim's sufferings in utter separation from God, rose up before Him in all their fearful intensity, and hence the deep-and the more deep because of His absolute perfectness-exercises of soul He passed through. At length the conflict ceases, the cup is taken from the Father's hand (John 18:11), and held fast in faithfulness until the moment came to drain it to the bottom. What scenes of interest are these, and how worthy of our deepest study! But Calvary, too, demands our notice as Jesus once more is seen the central figure of the landscape. Rejected of men, deserted by His disciples, yet in patient love He treads with unfaltering footsteps the lonely road that led to death and judgment. The tears of the sympathizing women; the indifference of the populace; the scorn of those in authority; the insulting conduct of the brutal soldiery, and the blasphemy of the unrepentant malefactor alike fail to move that One whose perfectness was only more distinctly visible as the pressure from without became the more intense against Him. In calm dependence on His God and Father, though feeling most intensely, and the more intensely because divinely, all that was against him, yet completely superior to it, He can tell the women of their danger; He can pour out His soul in intercession for His murderers; He can breathe words of comfort to the dying thief; He can think of His mother's lonely heart, and entrust her to His loved disciple; and, then, God's righteous judgment over, can commend His spirit to His Father's care. Truly this, of all the mountain scenes we have glanced at, is one of deepest moment. But once more the Mount of Olives, so often the blessed Lord's resort while here, and witness to so many occasions of interest, conies before us, as the place whence He ascended to His present place of glory; and surely here, too, we may pause a little to note what passed at that eventful time. Again and again had He appeared to reassure the hearts of His faltering disciples during the forty days that intervened between His resurrection and His departure to His Father's throne, and now the moment had come for Him to take His leave of them. Then, as ever, was His people's cause His care. Assured they were that His absence should only pave the way for a far higher order of blessing than they had hitherto enjoyed. Henceforth the heavens should be opened to them, and the Holy Ghost should dwell within them, to fill their souls With Him whose person

now garnished the heavenlies as He had before adorned the earth. Henceforth Messiah's kingdom should, as to their thoughts, be merged in the far superior glory of the Son of man's dominions, whilst they themselves should take their place as those, and we with them, who form a portion of the mystic man, the body of Christ, the Church of God, the bride. Surely, then, though His departure must cause a blank that His return alone could fill, there was in the measure of blessing accorded in exchange for what they had renounced, far more than enough to compensate for their apparent present loss. A cloud received Him out of their sight, but soon a present Holy Ghost becomes their Comforter and ours, and fills our souls with the unnumbered glories of the Son of God. But one more mountain scene I propose to turn to. It is that unfolded. in Revelation 21:9-27; Revelation 22:1-5, where the bride, the lamb's wife, is seen descending in all her given glory as the Church of God. How beautiful she is, and what a contrast to that which bears her name at present. The title of affection is conferred upon her, and affection towards the One whose blood has cleansed her. Her name is Peace, as with heavenly features, and of God's creation, she is seen descending. His glory is hers, and now no want of singleness of eye obscures her light, but inaccessible to evil, yet with ready welcome to those who can make good their right to enter, she is Christ's epistle, known and read of all men; the display to heavenly principalities and powers of God's manifold wisdom, while the center of God's government of Israel. Man's building now no more disfigures her, but God's workmen's labors have their place in her foundations, whilst divine proportions answer to divine admeasurement. Eternally glorious, the characteristic features of the new man (Ephesians 4:24) are seen in her ways and throughout her internal structure; whilst from her foundations to her gates the precious stones and pearls bear testimony to the fact that she is now God's own reflection (comp. Ezekiel 28:1-26, Exodus 28:1-43); and dear as ever to the heart of Christ (Matthew 13:1-58); and best of all, no temple now obscures the unveiled glory of creations, patriarchs, Israel's God and our Jesus, but they are seen as our center, and at the same time light and glory. The Holy Spirit, too, is there, issuing forth, in unhindered streams of blessing, while the ever fresh productions of the tree of life take the thoughts away from man's to God's own paradise. Service will then be in blessed contrast to all our efforts now, while the Master's presence, and His open recognition of them, and a share in His dominion will be the eternal portion of all whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. How refreshing to turn away from the weakness and failure everywhere around to such a scene as this, and answer as the Bridegroom tells us, "Surely I come quickly "-" Amen, even so; come, Lord Jesus."

D. T. G.

S. A Word on Christmas

A Word on Christmas The children of Issachar obtain honorable mention of the Lord, 'in that they "had understanding of the times to know What Israel ought to do" (1 Chronicles 12:32), and surely to "rightly divide the' word' of truth," and thus understand " what the will of the Lord is," is our happy privilege in the present day (2 Timothy 2:15, Ephesians 5:17).

Let us refer for a moment to Luke 2:1-14. The fullness of time had come and God had' sent His Son into the world. And the eternal Son of the Father was manifested in the form of a little babe wrapped in swaddling 'clothes and laid in a manger, because there was' no room for Him in the inn. Was it a wonder that the angelic hosts. should shout for joy; He had not taken on Him the cause of angels (Hebrews 2:16), but still, for the first time beholding the Son of God-God manifest in the flesh-they could not withhold their suited acclamations, but with one joyous note Of: praise they say (for angels never sing) " Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."..

How suitable to the time this chorus, and how worthy of its object! He had come, the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person, and yet the lowly carpenter's son, to tell out the love of a heart whose depths He alone could fathom, (for who could disclose the secrets of the Father's bosom but the Son who lay there from all eternity?) and the scene which He had selected wherein to display this boundless love was one in which everything that God the Father was in Himself had been for, centuries belied and misunderstood. When sin had entered and run its course unchecked and apparently (save by occasional judgments) unnoticed, and when Satan had obtained complete possession of the human mind. Thus grace had triumphed over sin, and thus God in Christ had risen above the ruin of an apostate world, and shown Himself superior to the evil of man's heart and the only too successful devices of the Devil. Surely God was infinitely glorified in this, and most suitably did the angelic strain commence with "glory to God in the highest," for what could bring more glory to God in all that He was in His own excellency than the presentation of His Son to a world Whose rejection of Him was only too plainly evidenced in that there was "no room for them in the inn." presently a cross and a grave should still more distinctly manifest the world's estimate of its Creator and its Savior, But not only did the advent of Jesus into the world unfold most fully the character of a God of love, but it was the proof that He was ready to establish peace upon the earth where at the time all was din and confusion, Jerusalem had ceased to be the throne of the Lord, so long chosen to put name there, and a Gentile Emperor was in possession of "the glorious land," and amongst his subjects numbered God's ancient people Israel. But the presentation of God's Son to the world was the dawning of another day upon the earth, and He had come to establish peace and to usher in the time men should "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into plowshares " when nation should, not lift up sword against nation neither should war be learned any more (Isaiah 2:4), The Millennial glory of the King of Peace and King of Righteousness was about to replace Jewish, slavery And Gentile oppression, and the knowledge of Jehovah to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Well then might angels add; "on earth peace " to their meed of praise in honor of the only begotten. Son of God.

But not Only was the earth: the special object of. its Creator's Mercy, at this time, but its inhabitants were before Him also as the express objects of His goodness and blessing. He had come to reveal Himself as one whose " delights were with the sons of men," (Proverbs 8:31). Well may we wonder at this, for man had fallen, and the human race had alike sinned and come short of His glory, but such is grace, He had come to rise above the evil of man's heart, and to take His place as the head of the race whose cause He took in hand, and to reduce them with a firm yet loving sway to that obedience that they owed to Him as their Creator and their King-as "King of Nations." The world will yet own Him thug,. (Revelation 15:3-4, for "saints" read nations), and He had come to take this place, and by the removal of Satan's power to show His good pleasure in, mankind, and to claim, at all event, if not their affection, their homage as their rightful Lord and Sovereign

Most suitably then did the angel host celebrate His approach as reflecting not merely the highest glory to God, and introducing peace into a scene of confusion and ruin, but as evidencing that the goodness of God was such that although the carnal mind was enmity against Him, He could, in the fullness of His love, still have His delights in the sons of men.

Such was the angel chorus on the occasion of the birth of the Son of God, the Savior, Christ the Lord.

How sad that we cannot stay here a little longer, and close our eyes to all that happened subsequently. But we must not refuse to speak when the Holy Ghost has directed our attention: to another scene.

Some two and thirty years had rolled away, the babe of Bethlehem had become the fully grown Man; He had encountered at the outset of His ministry the bitter enmity of those who should have owned Him as their Messiah (Chapter 4:29), and now utterly rejected of the Jewish people; can but tell the "band of men whose hearts God had touched;" the flock " that followed Him, " Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather; division, for from henceforth there shall be five in One house three against two, and two against three" (Luke 12:5; Luke 12:1; Luke 12:52).

What a solemn change is here. The sweet current of God's love abruptly checked by the only too obdurate barrier of human unbelief, and the proffered "peace on earth" displaced by hopeless division, and that of a kind Most calculated to try the best affections of the natural man. Oh! why was this? Why did not the world bend at once to the sway of her Creator and her King, and give Him that place that was His right and His due? Alas! for the world and the world's inhabitants. Still God was infinitely glorified, but peace on earth was gone till the time When fearful judgments having been poured forth, "the wolf will dwell with thee lamb and the weaned child shall put his hand upon the cockatrice' den," (Isaiah 11:6-9); and God's good pleasure in men can only be carried out in another and a better way, not to the world as at first proposed, but to an elect company, whom He not willing that any should perish, in grace puts forth His power to save.

"Peace on earth," this measure of the angel's chorus is indefinitely postponed, and now to the faithful there is naught but strife and that of the most trying kind of nature, But is this all? Is variance on earth our only portion? Oh, no! our blessed God has put a new song into our mouth, has compassed us about with songs of deliverance.

We turn to the 19th chapter of Luke, and we find "when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest" (ch. 19: 37-38), What a change is this, and of what a blessed nature! It is the full unfolding of the believer's portion now. Division on earth, but peace in heaven. It is not now the angelic chorus that we hear, it is the disciples strain of joy. Both are equally true, but the unbelief of man culminating in the entire rejection of the Son of God has made a change, and now heaven is the scene of God's delight in men, and the only place where peace exists. The manger of the inn at Bethlehem had led the way to the Cross of Calvary, and a crown of thorns and a reed in the right hand was all that a world " that lieth in wickedness would accord to Him whose right it was to wear the crown of kingdoms, and to wield, the scepter of the world's supremacy. But the crown of thorns has been exchanged for the crown of glory and honor (Hebrews 2:9), and the blood poured out, on Calvary's summit has been sprinkled on the throne of God; peace has been made through the blood of His cross (Colossians 1:20), and He who made it sits at His Father's right hand, waiting till His friends are gathered and His enemies are made His footstool, and in the meantime " peace in heaven" is the ever blessed portion of those who have "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." We can rise above the scene where a man's foes are those of his own household, remembering the words of Him who said, "These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). From " henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (2 Corinthians 5:16). We celebrate not His birth into the world, but His death out of the world, while we adore Him as our present object in glory, and wait and watch and long for Him to come again to receive us unto Himself to be with Him where He is and to behold His glory. D. T. G.

S. God's Lamb

God's Lamb "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Have you, dear friend, ever gazed upon the Lamb of God, whose person and work are brought before us in this passage? The Eternal Word-the Creator-the Light-the Life-the Word made flesh-the only begotten of the Father, is here exhibited to us as God's Lamb! This was not a title which would be quite foreign to the minds of John's hearers. It had been the delight of God before His Son came into the world, to set before the faithful way -marks by which they might be encouraged amid the darkness and wickedness around.

Just as the finger-post encourages the weary traveler as he passes through some lonely scene, telling him that the road he traverses leads to the desired end, so these bright gleams of light in Old Testament times tell us that God had not forgotten His people, and that He would make good His primal promise spoken in Adam's hearing of the Deliverer, the seed of the woman who would bruise the serpent's head.

Let us revert to a few of them-take Genesis 4:1-26 for instance-Sin had entered the world \ 11 en "the Lamb of God's providing" comes in type upon the scene-Abel recognizing the distance that existed between luau and God, and bowing his head to the righteous sentence of God as to sin, owns that nothing will avail with God but the life of a sinless victim, and therefore he takes the "firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof." He saw that the righteousness of God demanded a substitute for sin which had none in itself and who could therefore bear its judgment in death: he submitted himself to that righteousness, and his " more excellent sacrifice" obtained for him the witness that he was counted righteous according to God's estimate of his gift (Hebrews 11:4).

Dear reader, have you bowed to His righteousness, and learned that God accepts the sinner who does so according to His thoughts of the sacrifice of the Lamb of His own providing-His own beloved Son'?

Let us look at another. The moment had come for the trial of Abraham's faith, and the son in whom the promises of God were centered must die. Obedient to the word of God, the father hesitated not a moment, early in the morning he started forth on his sorrowful journey to offer up his only son. Faith triumphs over difficulties: he believed that He " was able to raise him up even from the dead." In simple confidence then he trusted God, and in reply to Isaac's inquiry, he says " My son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering." The decisive moment came-the altar was built-the wood was placed in order,-Isaac -Isaac was bound and laid upon the altar; and the band stretched forth to slay his son-when the voice of God stayed the blow-" Lay not thine hand upon the lad," and turning about he beheld "a ram caught in a thicket by his horns "-another moment suffices to offer him instead of his son; and he rightly named the place "the Lord will provide." In Exodus 12:1-51 we find God displaying to us another picture of His interference in grace to shield man from the impending judgment. That night He was about to pass through the land of Egypt to execute judgment. But His people must be spared, and therefore a mode of shelter from judgment is proposed to them; by sprinkling upon the lintel and door posts of their houses the blood of "a lamb

without blemish." They believed in the coming judgment-they obeyed the directions given-they took the lamb-they killed it-and with the blood upon the door post and lintel they sat down in security and fed upon the one whose blood was the sole ground of their safety on that awful night of judgment; resting simply on the word of Him who said, " When I see the blood I will pass over you." How plainly does this point us to the "lamb without blemish and without spot," by whose precious blood His people are redeemed. (1 Peter 1:18-19.)

Dear reader, have you discovered that you can be sheltered under the blood of God's Lamb, in calm undisturbed serenity, knowing from His own word that "when He sees the blood He will pass over you?"

We are at our journey's end, for these types and shadows have conducted us to the brightness of the presence of " the Lamb of God" Himself-waymarks now are no longer needed; finger-posts are passed and well nigh forgotten in the presence of the glory of the Lamb of God. In obedience to His Father's will He had come (Psalms 40:7-8). In obedience to the same will "He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter," and crucified. God presents Him thus as an object of faith for all who will receive Him. But there was one important difference between the sacrifices of Old Testament times and the Lamb of God. In old times the offerer had to bring his lamb-he was an actor in the proceedings; and without his activity there could be no sacrifice. Not so now-it is God who has provided-God who has brought His Lamb-God who has accepted Him-man could have no share in the work, for the plan had been devised of God, and of God has been accomplished. The sacrifice is of God's providing' therefore the sinner's acceptance is according to the value God sets upon His own Lamb. Have you, my reader, entered into this, can you say, "I am accepted according to the value God sets upon His Lamb, that in love He provided for me?"

Mark now the character of His work.-It is two-fold-He "taketh away the sin of the world;" and He " baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Can anything be more complete, more suitable to the nature of God than this? Not merely do I see my sins removed but I see sin itself dealt with in Christ, when He as God's Lamb bore its judgment-bowed His head and died! How complete a work!---Sin itself dealt with in all its horrible enormity. 'Tis unbelief alone which deprives the sinner of an interest in the work accomplished by the Lamb of God. But this is not all-His work being finished He rises and ascends up where He was with the Father, to give us a more abundant blessing, than before. Those who have received Him are now baptized with the Holy Ghost. Thus uniting them to their absent Head and Lord. " By one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free" (1 Corinthians 12:13). And thus we who have believed are linked to Christ, and to each other.

Now mark the way in which those who first heard the message of glad tidings received it, and through abiding with Jesus received strength to testify of Him-" The two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus."

How simple and beautiful! "Faith" came "by hearing" (Romans 10:17). They heard the word-they received Him-they believed in His name, and all things were but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Him-as in Saul's case the sevenfold crown of fleshly glory (Php 3:5-6), was cast aside in the presence of the more excellent glory of the Lamb of God! They received "power to become the sons of God," and followed Him: and they abide with Him. This was the place that Mary chose (Luke 10:30-42). This again was the place that John took, not because he had a better

right to it than Peter, but because he loved it more (John 13:23); and this is the place that we have an equal right to share; for Jesus says " Abide in me " (John 15:4).

If you know anything of it dear reader, are you cultivating that habitual nearness of heart to Christ: that continual dependence on Him; that constant outflow of affections towards Him of whose changeless love you are assured? To cultivate this, beloved, the result will be, peace flowing " as a river" and abundant fruitfulness. Remember, without Him you can do nothing-and service though outwardly dazzling is worthless, unless flowing from abiding fellowship with Him-habitual nearness of heart to Christ!

Now comes their testimony-" One of the two.... was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother-he first findeth his own brother Simon and saith unto him we have found the Messiah.... and he brought him to Jesus." May we learn our lesson from this too-and go forth fresh from the presence of our Lord to win those who are " without God in the world" to Christ. We may well delight to tell of the One whom we have found; surely like the woman in John 4:1-54 we may say, " Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did;" or like the Mary of John 20:1-31, we may tell of the One who is now ascended to His Father and to our Father, and to His God, and our God. 'Tis thus we know our ascended Lord; may we so testify of Him that those around us (and "thy friends" first, Mark 5:1-43) may know the Lamb of God in the glories of His person, and in the virtues and excellencies of His work! D. T. G.

S. How Do You Worship?

How Do You Worship?

She came not to hear a sermon, although the first of Teachers was there; but to sit at His feet and hear His word (Luke 10:39) was not her purpose now, blessed as that was in its proper place. She came not to make her requests known to Him. Time was, when, in deepest submission to His will, she had fallen at His feet, saying, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had' not died" (John 11:32); but to pour out her supplications to Him, as her only resource, was not now her thought, for her brother was seated at the table. She came not to meet the saints, though precious saints were there, for it says, "Jesus loved Martha... and Lazarus." (John 11:5.) Fellowship with them was blessed likewise, and, doubtless, of frequent occurrence; but fellowship was not her object now. She came not after the weariness and toil of a week's battling with the world to be refreshed from Him, though, surely she, like every saint, had learned the trials of the wilderness; and none more than she, probably, knew the blessed springs of refreshment that were in Him. But she came, and that, too, at the moment when the world was expressing its deepest hatred of Him, to pour out what she long had treasured up (5: 7), that which was most valuable to her' all she had upon earth, upon the person of the One whose love had made her. heart captive, and absorbed her affections. She thought not of Simon the leper-she passed the disciples by-her brother and her sister in the flesh and in the Lord engaged not her attention then - "Jesus only" filled her soul - her eye was on Him-her heart beat true to Him-her hands and feet were subservient to her eye and to her heart, as she "anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair."

Adoration, homage, worship, blessing, was her one thought, and that in honor of the One who was "all in all" to her; and surely such worship was most refreshing to Him. The unspiritual (5: 4) might murmur, but He upheld her cause, and showed how he could appreciate and value the grateful tribute of a heart that knew His worth and preciousness, and could not be silent as to it. A lasting record is preserved of what worship really is by the One who accepted it, and of the one who rendered it. And now, dear reader, is this your mode of worship, or do you on the Lord's day go to hear a sermon, say your prayers, meet the saints, or be refreshed after your six days' toil! Oh! if every eye was on the Lord alone, if every heart were true to Him; if we were each determined to see "no man.... save Jesus only," what full praise there would be! Not with alabaster boxes now, but our bodies filled with the Holy Ghost-a stream of thanksgiving, of worship of the highest character would ascend in honor of the blessed One that now adorns the glory as He once adorned the earth. Be it ours thus to worship Him in Spirit and in truth. Amen! D. T. G.

S. The Kingdoms

The Kingdoms A few words on the difference between the various kingdoms mentioned in Scripture might be found useful to some of your readers. We have the Kingdom of God, Matthew 12:28; the Kingdom of heaven, Matthew 25:1; the Kingdom of the Father, Matthew 26:29; the Kingdom of the Son of Man, Daniel 7:13-14; the Kingdom of the Son of His love, Colossians 1:13; the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 1:11; Hebrews 12:28.

You are introduced to the first named in connection with the Lord when upon earth, for in answer to the Pharisees' demand "when the kingdom of God should come?" He answered them and saith, "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say, lo here, or lo there, for behold the kingdom of God is within you," or as the margin reads it, "among you," (Luke 17:20-21). One has well described it as "the exhibition, or the manifestation of the ruling power of God under any circumstances,"-and, in the person of His Son, God was manifesting His ruling power at this time; God was there in Him.

It is also spoken of as existing at the present time, for in Romans 14:17 we read, "the kingdom of God is not meat and-drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost:" and again, in 1 Corinthians 4:20, "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." In these cases, the ruling power of God is again exhibited, not in the Son, but by the Spirit, who, through His presence 'on earth, produces in those that believe practical righteousness, peace and joy, and in His servants power to correct evil where needed, In Christ, then, during His time on earth, the Kingdom of God was to be seen; by the Spirit now. The Kingdom of God was the circle of Christ's workings previous to His being received up into glory, Now, it is the circle of the Holy Ghost's workings. Scripture would seem to teach that in Christ's day none but He could be in it, for though "among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist," yet, "he that is least in the kingdom of God, is greater than he," (Luke 7:28). The Kingdom of God then was confined to Christ Himself in His day, though every man was pressing into or towards it, (Luke 17:1-6), waiting, as it were, till the Holy Ghost's descent should open the door for them. This took place at Pentecost, and then the new creation entitled every one to enter, (John 3:3-5). And thus the ruling power of God, exhibited only in Christ when on earth, is now manifested in those whose bodies have become the temples of the Holy Ghost. So far as to its divine or proper form. The name however, is applied in Scripture to what the divine' thing has in man's hands become, what we know by the name of Christendom. The " tree " and the "leaven" (Luke 13:18-21), give us its outward dimensions and its internal condition. Outwardly, what was but a grain, a small thing, at Pentecost, has become a huge overgrown mass that shelters even the devil's emissaries; while internal evil and corrupt doctrine has permeated that which was the people's food. What a description of Christendom, and yet how accurate!-a vast system, but rotten within.

Thus Romans 14:17, 1 Corinthians 4:20, describe the present inward or divine aspect of the Kingdom of God. Luke 13:18-21, its external or human condition.

"The kingdom of Heaven," or literally of the heavens, differs from the kingdom of God, and yet, in some respects, resembles it. As we know, the name is only used in the Gospel of Matthew, and this is readily accounted for by the fact that to this Evangelist belongs the task of commending the truth to Jewish consciences, and amongst other things he proves that the kingdom foretold in old Testament writings was that which the Messiah proposed to introduce. He therefore calls it the kingdom of the heavens, because that name coincides with the description given of it in the Law, Psalms, and Prophets,

Israel was taught to lay up the Lord's " words in their heart, and in their soul, and bind them for a sign upon their hand, that they might be as frontlets between their eyes-that their days might be multiplied, and the days of their children, in the land which the Lord aware unto their fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon earth." (Deuteronomy 11:18-21.) It was said of David, too, that his seed should " endure forever, and his throne as the 8 of heaven." (Psalms 89:29.) And likewise it is said of "the power of the gentiles that it should continue till the time that they should know "that the heavens do rule." (Daniel 4:26.)

Hence we may trace throughout the Old Testament allusion made to a time when God's will would be "done on earth" (as the prayer which the Lord then taught His disciples expressed it), "as it is in heaven," (Matthew 6:10). This time the Baptist came to introduce the Messiah, and therefore announced (Matthew 3:2) that "the kingdom of the heavens was at hand." Jesus Himself (100: 4:17) makes the same statement; but instead of His claims being submitted to, they hold a council to destroy Him (100: 12:14), and consequently the kingdom of the heavens assumes a mysterious form (100: 13:11). The mystery being that it should be a kingdom with an absent king, a thing unknown in history-the king being rejected. The 13th chapter presents the kingdom of the heavens to us in six different ways. But before we say a word as to these, we would direct the reader's attention to 100: 11:11-12, which seems coupled with 100: 16: 19, to give us light as to the time when the kingdom commenced.

John Baptist was not in it, blessed as was the position he occupied-the door was not thrown open though Christ was on the throne, until Peter unlocked it on the day of Pentecost, and, then "the violent" (those really in earnest) reached the goal that they had been seeking for since the days of John the Baptist. Thus, then, it could not have been said the kingdom of the heavens is "among you," neither could it be said, " I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of God." The kingdom of God and the kingdom of the heavens are distinct and different. The one existing while the Lord was on earth-the other commencing on Christ taking His seat on the Father's throne. The latter opened by a human instrument-the former inaugurated by Christ Himself. In certain points however, they resemble each other; both having' an outward and an inward, a human (as one may say) and a divine form. As to the outward form, the same similitudes are applied to each-the "mustard seed" and "leaven "-as to the inward, we have in the one case the thing formed by the Holy Ghost, and in the other what the thing formed comes to. Outwardly then, the kingdom of the heavens is like a tarefield, a tree, and leaven. A mixture of the Lord's and Satan's people-that mixture grouped into a huge widespreading system, powerful outwardly, internally corrupt; such is Christendom of the present day. But to faith there is an inner or divine form which the kingdom takes, and this is seen in separate pieces composing " a treasure " precious to God; and in a thing whose oneness and purity reminds us of the excellence of the Church of God as seen of Christ, and in a form of separation from evil that shows us that God delights not in the mixed company of

the first three parables, but in companies gathered apart from the surrounding corruption. These latter are the kingdom of the heavens from God's side. Thus, then, the kingdom of the heavens proper is the rule of the heavens upon earth-the days of heaven-the Lord hearing the heavens, and the heavens the earth. (Hosea 2:21.) This however; was refused by man, and consequently, now the days of heaven upon earth are seen by those to whom it is given, to exist in a mysterious form until Messiah comes to bring in the times of restitution of all things with the trumpet of Jubilee. The kingdom of the heavens thus was openly offered by the Messiah at His advent-refused, and therefore commenced in a mysterious way on His ascension and is running on during the present time and will exist after the church's removal, until the millennium commences; when it will take its proper form, but will be known partly as the kingdom of the Father, and partly as the kingdom of the Son of man.

These both commence and end simultaneously. The kingdom of the Father relating to things above, the kingdom of the Son of man to things below. For the former, the Jewish remnant pray when they say "Our Father... thy kingdom come." They will be gathered as the wheat into the barn and will as the righteous, shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. (Matthew 13:30-43.) A heavenly people; their reward is in heaven in the scene of their Father's, dwelling. The kingdom of the

Father is for the heavenly people. The kingdom of the Son of man for the earthly. The 8th Psalm explains this,-as Son of man He takes the Headship of all below, the place that Adam lost. As Son of man He executes judgment (Matthew 13:41). As Son of man He welcomes into His kingdom the blessed of His Father-the sheep who satisfied His hunger, quenched His thirst, clothed His nakedness, and cheered Him in sickness and imprisonment, (Matthew 25:31-46). An earthly people, they have been counted worthy to "stand before the Son of man," (Luke 21:36).

Thus the millennial "world kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Revelation 11:15) has a heavenly and an earthly aspect-the one embracing only glorified saints, the other, including the earthly ones, having eternal life but not glorified as to their bodies. The one is the sphere of the Father's glory, the other the scene of the rule of the Son of man. Both will alike cease when He delivers "up the kingdom to God even the Father." (1 Corinthians 15:24.)

It remains but to notice "the kingdom of the Son of his love" (Colossians 1:13), and "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," (2 Peter 1:11).

These are quite distinct in their characters from those we have already mentioned, and give us rather the thought of position than display. The one refers to our present place, the other to our future glory.

They are more to be felt than described, and are only mentioned each once in Scripture. Christ has a present kingdom, the Christ whom the world refused to own as king, One which the Father's love bestowed on Him the Son of His affections, and into this, we who have believed have already been translated. It is the region of blessing of which Christ is the center, and Christ in the most excellent way as Son of His Father's love; we may enjoy it though we can't describe it. The other is before us, and a blessed contrast to the things that are "fading away" around us. It is everlasting, and we shall share it with Him, and His desire is that we should enter it, as one may say, full sail-as Paul when he said, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have 'fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me de crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me." (2 Timothy 4:6-8.) May it be ours, then, to add to our faith all these things that 2 Peter 1:5-7 contains, so that not merely an entrance, (we are sure of this as those who are " elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father"), but "an abundant entrance be administered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Amen! D. T. G.

S. The Knowledge of the Holy is Understanding

The Knowledge of the Holy is Understanding

There are few readers of Scripture but have observed with pleasure, the position enjoyed by "the servants" in the well-known marriage scene at Cana of Galilee; and perhaps some of us have connected the privilege enjoyed by them, with the deeper intelligence of the restful Mary as compared with the dullness of her more active sister Martha--and again have linked therewith the place that seemed so natural to "the beloved disciple," in the 13th chapter of John, in contrast with that which the more energetic Peter occupied at the supper table.

It was their nearness to the Lord that gave these "servants" more intelligence than even the governor of the feast. It was the consciousness that she had a sister at home that lived nearer to the Lord than she did, that made Martha call Mary to explain the truth that was beyond her comprehension, saying, "The teacher is come and calleth for thee." (John 11:25-28.) And it was the fact that John was actually leaning on the Lord's bosom, at the moment when He made known that the traitor was amongst them, that led Peter to beckon to him that he should ask who it was of whom He spake. The time will shortly come when we "shall know, even as also" we "are known," and to the part of Scripture which speaks of that day I would briefly direct the reader's attention. It is evident, as we open Revelation 4:4, that the great time of separation to God has taken place, and the saints now on earth, with all their predecessors, are in glorified bodies in the presence of God and of the Lamb. Under the designation of the "four-and-twenty elders" do we see them. The number expresses their completeness-- the name gives to them their representative character. Not one is missing of the thousands of saints that from Adam downwards have been born of God, and have been translated on the coming of the Lord. Their robes point to their priestly character--their crowns to their kingly position. The threatening character of the throne does not disturb them, but the moment the glory of the Creator God, or redeeming Lamb is celebrated, we find them in the fullest activity of praise. But this is not their only portion of blessedness. A challenge to the universe has sounded forth as to who is worthy to open the book of God's counsels and loose the seven seals thereof. And even John is at fault now, and in his weakness weeps. But there are those who are in the secret. Children of the light and of the day are they, and their conscious nearness to the Lord has resulted in the unfolding of His counsels to them, and these on a subject surely unspeakably precious above all others that the heart of God has to reveal. They can tell the sorrowing prophet to dry his tears, for that the King of the royal tribe, the very source of him who, in old time, had suffered and triumphed, had, by means of His mighty victory, not achieved without suffering even unto death, won the right to open and unfold the counsels of God, even though sealed up with sevenfold security. Their absolute and perfect separation to God had resulted in this intelligence, not merely for their own enjoyment, but with power to communicate it to others. And again do we find this wondrous privilege before us in the 7th chapter, and not less intelligent are they as to the identity of the white-robed multitude, than as to the person and achievements of the Lamb.

Thus far for heaven-but upon earth the same principle will prevail. To most of us the scene between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba is happily familiar, and to not a few, the typical as well as the actual force of the passage is discernible. On the former let me for a moment dwell. The application of 1 Chronicles 17:13 to Christ in Hebrews 1:5, leaves no doubt that He is in figure before us when King Solomon sits upon the throne of his glory; and a comparison of Psalms 72:1-20 with 2 Chronicles 9:1-31 removes every difficulty as to the application of the Queen of Sheba in type, to the Gentiles that will come to yield their homage and devotion to the Son of Man, when "neither adversary nor evil occurred." He reigns as King of Righteousness, and King of Peace. What, then, is the result of the nearness of approach to Him? "She communed with him of all that was in her heart; and Solomon told her all her questions, and there was nothing hid from Solomon that he told her not" (vv. 1, 2). Of course, the intelligence of those above is of a higher order than that of those below. But whilst we contemplate with joy, what will be our glory when, with the Lamb above, it is at least our privilege to understand the blessedness of those below, when from time to time they come to render homage to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? With them, as with us, the principle holds good that intelligence will flow from nearness to the source of light and understanding. The question then most naturally suggests itself:-If, in the scenes that are before us, there will be this gracious pro-, vision of our God for the blessing of His people, is there no means whereby we may even now anticipate that time, and enjoy, while here, what will be our eternal portion in the brighter days to come? And does the Scripture teach us nothing on this score, replete as it is with counsel on every subject that we need?

Beyond all question we have the fullest instruction on this head in all parts of the Word, and to some of this I would briefly call the reader's attention. In Genesis 18:17-21, Jehovah says-"Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do...And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know." Whence this condescension, and whence this confidingness of the Lord? The whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And they had said, "Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth...And the Lord said,.... "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth, and they left off to build the city" (Genesis 11:4-8). From this scene of confusion, God, obliged to show mercy on whom He would show mercy-for all deserved to perish-had called Abram apart. Each link with earth was broken. Country, kindred, and father's house had lost their claims in obedience to the word of Him who said, "I am the Almighty God, walk before Me, and be thou perfect" (Genesis 17:1). Lot might choose the well-watered plains of Sodom, but the presence of the Almighty God had superior attractions to Abram, and he henceforward determined to look only for that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And well was he rewarded. While Lot was vexing his righteous soul from day to day with the unlawful deeds of Sodom, Abram was holding sweet and blessed communion with the Lord. His separation from surrounding evil, in obedience to His call, had resulted in unclouded intimacy, and He draws aside the veil to unfold His counsels as to judgment. What a wondrous scene it is, and how precious to see that there was one, at all events, on earth to whom God could tell His mind, and thus provoke to intercession! He will have his place amongst the four-and-twenty elders, and thus on earth his walk corresponded to his position there.

But he is not alone in this path of special blessing. Moses equally shines out as the friend of God, as a glance at Exodus 32:1-35; Exodus 33:1-23; Exodus 34:1-35 will prove. Abram had separated from civil disorders; from religious evil Moses turns away. His attitude is very fine. Before God he is zealous for the people; before man he thinks only of God's glory. And in the deepest sense of what was due to this, he takes the tabernacle and pitches it without the camp. The camp, he knew, was a scene of defilement. God and defilement, he was aware, could not combine, and therefore he took new ground for the dwelling place of God, and most precious did the Lord set His seal upon his faithfulness. "And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.... And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend" (vv. 9-11). What an instructive scene is this, and how full of encouragement! To hold communion with the Lord there must be absolute separation from what is contrary to His being, but when this is insisted on, there is no limit to the revelations of Himself, But it is not only in the palmier days of Jewish history, that this important principle found its response among those to whom the Lord was everything, but even when the sun of Israel was set, and the times of the Gentiles had ensued, do we find it taking expression in the person of such an one as Daniel the prophet. Isaiah 39:7 had had its fulfillment, and Daniel and his companions were chosen to adorn the court of the king of Babylon. But change of circumstances and altered scenes do not, to the faithful, disturb the written principles of the word of God; and, mindful of the Nazarite vow of Numbers 6:1-27, these children set themselves apart for God, and refrained from Gentile luxuries and heathenish defilement. (Daniel 1:1-21) The grace that had given them power thus to rise above the lusts of nature, now bestows upon them their suited reward, and we find, " As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams" (5: 17). Separate from natural evil, as Abraham had been separate from worldly, and Moses from religious defilement, most blessedly does God reward them for their faithfulness. We are all familiar with the next chapter - how the king dreamed a dream, and then forgot it; how none of the wise men of Babylon could in any measure aid the king's too treacherous memory; how death was pronounced on all; and then how God came in, in love, and in answer to the prayer of Daniel and his companions-revealed the secret in a night vision, and thus preserved their lives, and drew forth their heartfelt adoration. Surely we. may say this revelation was the result of their nearness to the Lord, and this the consequence of the refusal of surrounding evil! But not alone in the Old Testament do we find the illustrations of this deeply important principle, but also in the New. Christ had entered on the scene, and, as the Shepherd of His sheep, had passed through the lawful door within the precincts of the Jewish sheepfold. Born at the appointed place, coming at the very time that Daniel's prophecy foretold, of the proper stock-a rod of the stem of Jesse-He had fulfilled in every way what the Spirit of God had pointed out concerning Him; and, welcomed heartily by those who, like Simeon, occupied the porter's place, and were therefore on the watch, proceeds to gather the sheep around Himself and lead them forth. One by one they heard Him; one by one they followed His gracious leadings, and exchanged-starvation, bondage, condemnation, for the blessings of salvation, liberty, and pasture. As sheep, they were the objects of His care.; but He has a higher title for them:- " Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but I have called you friends; for all things I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." What a place of blessedness was theirs! No doubt it had cost them something to follow Him. The fishermen had left their nets, their fathers; the man whose eyes were opened had

forfeited his Jewish rights; but what they had received had more than enough repaid them for all they had left behind. His friends-the friends of the blessed Son of God-and His secrets-the outflowings of the Father's heart towards Him-this was their portion, the portion of those who, through the knowledge of His excellency, had left the worldly, the religious, the domestic circle, for Him. (See John 9:1-41) But not only when the blessed Lord was here did the rule of which I speak find its example in His followers, but even now, while He is absent at His Father's right hand, do we find an illustration of the same. The Ephesians were not only "saints," but "faithful in Christ Jesus" (100: 1:1), or, as we may say, not only set apart, as all saints are, by the action of the Spirit of God quickening their souls, and thus attaching them to God, but they had faithfully maintained (through grace, of course) the position they had assumed. And this expression is the more striking if we contrast it with 1 Corinthians 1:1-31, where the Holy Ghost can only speak of the faithfulness of God. As we know from the Acts, these men of Ephesus had come apart from everything, through the presentation of God's Son; for, Judaism on the one hand, and heathenism on the other, were alike renounced for the superior claims of Christ in glory; and now, though apostolic energy was absent, they still retained their place as saints and faithful ones to Christ. The sheep had been drawn around the person of a Shepherd present with them. These had been gathered to an absent Christ, but still to One who, true to His word, is ever the center, and present in spirit to those who are gathered on divine principles. And what do we read about them? That God "had abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence, having made known the mystery of His will, that in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, even in Him" (100: 1:8-10). What a blessed portion theirs, and ours, who are gathered now on similar principles! Our nearness to the Lord collectively (as was individually the case in John 15:1-27) has resulted in His leading our hearts on to the time when all His counsels as to Christ will have their fullest completion and display. That is indeed and rightly called the dispensation of the fullness of times. Times there have been, no doubt, of varied interest and blessing. Adam had his time, and Noah his. Jew and Gentile times ran and are running out their course. The fullness of time (Galatians 4:1-31) was seen when Jesus trod the earth, and the Church's day exists at present. But in all of these there has been failure of more or less intensity; and therefore it is that God, who is ever careful of His own glory, has appointed a day, and named it "the fullness of times," wherein every single one of His former displays will be made good in the person of that Son, whose object now is, has been, and will ever be, to glorify the Father. He will reign as the second Adam, the Head of all creation; He will govern the world in righteousness, without the fear of failure, like His predecessor, Noah; He will write His laws in His people's hearts, and sit upon the throne of David; He will rise to reign over the Gentiles, and in Him shall the Gentiles trust; He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe. It is to these blessed counsels as to the future glory of the Son that the Holy Ghost would at present introduce those whose privilege it is to be not merely saints, but faithful in Christ Jesus. And surely this is a high and holy privilege, and we should see to it that neither worldly interests, nor religious contamination, nor the joys of nature, creep in to mar the sweet and happy intercourse that is ours, through fellowship with the Father and the Son. In glory, hindrance there will be none to our intelligence and consequent enjoyment. Here it is only through constant occupation with the Son, and watching lest the Spirit within be grieved, that our nearness to the Lord and consequent intimacy, can be maintained. The Lord give us to lean on His bosom to sit at His feet-to identify ourselves so thoroughly with Him, that He may be free to tell us all He sees we

need for comfort, joy and blessing!

D. T. G.

S. The Kohathites

The Kohathites

Walk and service are the characteristic features of the Book of Numbers; access and worship those of the Book of Leviticus. In the former the instructions are given "in the wilderness" (100: 1: 1). In the latter "out of the tabernacle of the congregation" (100: 1. 1). The place is suited to the subject. Again, in Leviticus the Priests are especially in prominence; in Numbers the Levites take the lead. Of these, the family of Kohath come first in order; but before drawing attention to their special line of service, it may be well to notice the peculiar place given to the family of Levi amongst the children of Israel. When the other tribes were numbered they were omitted, but appointed "over the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that belong to it: they shall bear the tabernacle and all the vessels thereof; and they shall minister unto it, and shall encamp round about the tabernacle" (100: 1:50). And again-"Bring the tribe of Levi near and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his charge and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle. And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they shall be wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel." And again-"I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the first-born that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine;. because all the first-born are mine; for on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast: mine shall they be: I am the Lord" (100: 3:6-13).

Thus the Levites had certain things in common with the children of Israel their brethren, and certain peculiar and especial privileges entrusted to them. With the children of Israel they had been redeemed by blood and by power-the blood of the paschal lamb had sheltered them-the "crystal walls" of the Red Sea had been their safeguard; but distinct from them they are especially the Lord's, being taken instead of the first-born of Israel whom He had spared, and unlike them also they are wholly given to Aaron, the High Priest, to minister to him, and to exercise their service in dependence on him. In the accomplishment of their service they were nearest to the tabernacle, and the tabernacle and its contents were their peculiar charge. Are there not even now amongst the Lord's people, all of whom have part in the death and resurrection of Jesus, those whom God has especially selected for Himself to be near Him, to be "wholly given" to Christ, and to exercise their service in dependence on Him alone! To return to the family of Kohath: "Their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the candlestick, and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof" (100: 31). And again, "take the sum of the sons of Kohath... from thirty years old and upward, even until fifty years old;... this shall be the service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation about the most holy things" (100: 4:2, 3, 4). The Gershonites had the charge of the tent with its coverings and the hangings for the doors. To the Merarites were entrusted the boards, the bars,

the pillars, and the sockets; the one bearing the framework, the other the covering of it; but to the sons of Kohath alone was it given to carry. "the most holy things "-all the inner furniture of the tabernacle. And thus their trust, in all its beautiful detail, is mentioned first as of first importance. And we may here remark that when the princes make their offering in 100: 7, whereas two wagons and their oxen are given to the sons of Gershon, and four wagons and their oxen are assigned to the sons of Merari, none at all are allotted to the Kohathites, " Because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that that they should bear upon their shoulders" (5: 9). Too precious were "the most holy things " to be exposed to the rude shaking of the wagons. The gentle, steady shoulders of the sons of Kohath, from thirty to fifty years old, men of maturity, must bear them with all the delicacy of which they were masters. (See 1 Chronicles 2:13-15). May we not say that even now, not only amongst the people of God, the whole company of the redeemed, but also amongst those whom He has drawn apart in special nearness to Himself, there is an inner circle to whom the Kohathite service has been entrusted-those of decision, those of maturity, those to whom the Lord can commit that which most concerns Himself-the glory of the person of His Son '? Not that the sons of Gershon and Merari have not posts of honor too, and work that required activity and intelligence, as the one set up the framework and the other covered it over; but to the Kohathites alone belonged, as we have seen. this inner line of service, the charge of these "most holy things."

" And when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering vail, and cover the ark of testimony with it, and shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue, and shall put in the staves thereof" (100: 4: 5, 6).

It was on the journey that their services came into requisition, for we know from 100: 9: 17, it was " When the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents." And Aaron was the one at whose hands they received their charge. He took down the vail, he covered the ark therewith, he laid over it the badger's skins and cloth wholly of blue, and he put in the staves thereof. It remained for them to carry through the wilderness what he entrusted to them. The same order is observable with the table, the candlestick, and all the other objects of their charge, This has all its precious and peculiar signification. God's saints are on the journey now, laboring to enter into His rest- the "rest that remaineth" (Hebrews 4:11). Jesus guides them in their pathway (Psalms 32:8); and as they travel on, He who is their High Priest above commits to them what He would have them carry for Him through the wilderness. What this burden is, this precious Scripture tells us. The Ark comes first in order, made, as we know from Exodus 25:10-22, of shittim wood and gold, and covered over with the mercy seat and cherubims of glory. Here Jehovah dwelt: as He says Himself, "There I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee" (5: 22)-a fitting type of the One in whom God should yet draw nigh to man, and through whom He should reveal Himself (John 1:14-18). Jesus the Son of God is here before us, God manifest in the flesh; and thus the vail is next referred to as the covering that immediately enveloped the Ark. Of its materials Exodus 26:31, informs us, and Hebrews 10:20, as to its signification. The human form of Jesus is by this unfolded in all its varied beauty-heavenly origin, kingly position, human glory, personal righteousness, and the One to whom all judgment has been committed-being depicted by the blue, the purple, the scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work, with cherubims. Next to this the

badger's skin is placed; and knowing, as we do, how often animals in Scripture are used to represent character (Matthew 10:16), we have no difficulty in seeing that the Spirit of God would bring before us here the watchfulness of Him who, by the word of Jehovah's lips, ever kept Himself from the paths of the destroyer (Psalms 17:4). Although the Son of God in all the fullness of His glory, He was not unmindful that the prince of this world stalked abroad, and therefore was always on the watch to baffle his designs. But over all we find "a cloth wholly of blue," and sweetly are we here reminded that although the utmost vigilance was necessary in the presence of the evil one, yet before the Father He was ever "the Son of Man which is in Heaven" (John 3:13), the celestial color evidencing this more eloquently than words. But this was not the only trust of the sons of Kohath. "And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes and the spoons and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon: and they shall spread upon them a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof" (vv. 6, 7). The structure of this table we learn from Exodus 25:23-30; its freight from Leviticus 24:5; Leviticus 24:9. Formed of gold and shittim wood, before the Lord it ever bore the memorial of the chosen nation in all its primal order. They might fail and did, until "the name of God was blasphemed among the gentiles through them;" but still the twelve cakes of two tenth deals remained, with pure frankincense, before the Lord, the special portion, too, of Aaron and his sons.

What that table did for Israel, Jesus does on high for us and humbling as it is to contrast the so-called Church of the present day with that set up on earth at Pentecost, still we can rejoice to think that the Son of God ever maintains before His Father a memorial of that "one pearl of great price" for which He stripped Himself of His Messianic glory. Twelve was the symbolic number for Israel; "one loaf" expresses the unity of the Church of God (1 Corinthians 10:17). The heavenly covering enshrouds the table, fitly pointing to His personal glory; on this was placed the "continual bread," with its accompanying utensils, and then the scarlet covering, to tell of glory in connection with man (2 Samuel 1:24), the people of His choice, and over all the badgers' skins, as suited to the character of him who knew so well the craft of Satan and the way to meet it (Luke 4:1-13). The exceeding fitness of the cloth of blue between the table and its freight cannot fail to strike the reader, as well as the difference of the order of the coverings. When the ark was in question; the special place occupied by the ark as the throne of God will at once account for the difference. The Candlestick comes next. "And they shall take a cloth of blue and cover the candlestick of the light, and his lamps and his tongs and his snuff-dishes, and all the oil-vessels thereof wherewith they minister, unto it; and they shall put it and all the vessels thereof within a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put it upon a bar." Of the form of this we read in Exodus 25:31-40, of its use in Leviticus 24:2-4. Of purest gold, and with branches perfect as to their number, from evening unto morning did Aaron order the light of it before the Lord continually-as if to tell us that from the evening of this world's darkness to the morning of the day of glory, a Priest after another order sustains in His own person a light for His people, the espoused ones of His choice, in the presence of His Father's throne above. The Son of God, then, the light of His people, is before us, and the clothing is of blue and badger's skin-, to spew that, heavenly to God and to faith, to than and to Satan He is vigilant and wary.

"And upon the golden altar" they shall spread a cloth of blue, and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof." As to the construction of this and its special

use, Exodus 30:1-10 gives us ample information. Formed of gold and shittim wood, it stood before the wail, and morning and evening it sent up its cloud of incense in the presence of the Lord, attended to by the same one that dressed the lamps of the golden candlestick-a beautiful and simple figure (see Revelation 8:3-4) of Him who, lifting up His hands like the evening sacrifice (Psalms 141:2), " ever liveth to make intercession for us." The Lord Jesus is depicted to us here, and still heavenliness within and watchfulness without characterize Him.

"And they shall take all the instruments of ministry wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, and put them in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put them on a bar." What these " instruments of ministry" were the Holy Ghost has not been pleased to particularize, but we, have sufficient before us to lead our thoughts to Him who " came not to be ministered unto but to minister." As the eternal Word, His ear was opened ere He left the glory to do the will of God (Psalms 40:6-8). As Man He took a servant's form (Php 2:7). As a Servant, He spoke of Him who," wakeneth morning by morning, who wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned" (Isaiah 1:4). 'And when His time of earthly service was completed "they seemed unto him but a few days for the love he had to her " (Genesis 29:20). Like the slave of Exodus 21:5-6, He becomes our servant forever. He serves us now, according to John 13:1-38 He will serve us, according to Luke 12:37 : The instruments of ministry give us then the thought of the Son of God in His servant character; and, again, the glory of the heavens and vigilance for earth in figure envelopes Him.

"And they shall take away the ashes from the altar and spread a purple cloth thereon, and they shall put upon it all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it,' even the censers, the flesh-hooks, and the shovels and the basins, all the vessels of the altar, and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it." The description of this we find in Exodus 27:1-8, the use of it the following chapter, vv. 3843, with other passages, teaches us, Morning and evening throughout the year did the sweet savor of the lambs of the first year ascend before the Lord, a continual burnt offering-so evidently designating the lasting character of the sacrifice of the " Lamb without blemish and without spot," " the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The Son of God, God's Lamb, is here before us, and enshrouding that which points Him out to us a purple covering-as if to say that at the moment when He was most contemptible in the eyes of man, before God and to faith He shone out in all the brightness of His kingly glory. Well chosen, though done in unbelief, was the inscription of Pilate; blessed was the testimony of the dying thief-"Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." The offering, and yet the King is set before our gaze, but covered over to the eyes of man with that which tells of how, while rejoicing, he knew how to beware (Php 3:1-2).

Such was " the burden of the sons of Kohath," and we can well conceive with what solemn care they received their charge at the hands of Aaron, and the honor they felt was conferred upon them in their being allowed to act for him in the charge of the most holy of all the holy things. And what a strange sight must it have been, and one so incomprehensible, save to all that were in the secret, to behold this company of men, bearing through the wilderness what was so glorious within but so repulsive without, and yet withal of such deep significance. May it be ours to seek to qualify ourselves for this Kohathite service. The mere fact that we are saved is not sufficient, for all Israel was redeemed, as we have seen; neither is it enough to be wholly the Lord's, for the Gershonites and Merarites, as we have noticed, were this. Those only are represented by the Kohathites who "

set the Lord always before" them, whose appreciation of the Lord in all His varied excellence is such that they desire none else but Him: their hearts are satisfied with Him. He is the one delight of their souls. Their one thought is to please Him until they are with Him where He is, beholding His glory, and precisely as their joy in Him increases their representation of Him here will be manifest to all.

D. T. G.

S. The Temple

The Temple

Although the Books of Kings give us the public history of God's government of Israel, in the Chronicles we rather find the history of His ways in grace; all is told out in Kings, while in Chronicles only those sins are mentioned which exalt the God of all grace-yet, when we come to look at the two books in their typical aspect, we shall find that the Books of Kings surpass the Chronicles, in that the former point us to heavenly, the latter to earthly things. Of this principle the two descriptions of the various buildings erected by King Solomon are a striking illustration. Each have their own peculiar place-each their especial signification.

Let us briefly glance at the description of each, and at their typical bearing.

There can be no question as to whom King Solomon; points when we read in Zechariah 6:12-13, "Behold the; man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the I glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne." It is Christ, the son of David. Joined with Him do we find King Hiram, and he likewise,(how common are these double figures in Scripture!) points us to the One that "shall rise to reign over the Gentiles," and in whom " shall the Gentiles hope" (Romans 15:12). As head of Jew and Gentile, Jesus builds the temple of the Lord.

Cedar trees, fir trees, great stones, costly stones and hewed stones, were the materials needed for the work. Jehovah is the first thought of these united kings, and " the house of the Lord," therefore, is their first design. Compact, and in unison as to its proportions, adorned with porch and windows "of narrow lights," it is surrounded by chambers, the structure of which does not encroach upon the proportions of the house, seeing that their beams are dependent on " narrowed rests " round about. This carefulness with regard to the. Lord's dwelling-place is further brought specially before us when we read that the house " was built of stone, made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building" (1 Kings 6:7). How suited this is to the calm and dignified repose of the One who, when "a great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord;... and after the wind, an earthquake;... and after the earthquake, a fire," was neither in wind; earthquake, nor fire, but in the " still small voice" (1 Kings 19:11-12). Compare also Revelation 8:1.

"The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir," says the Song of Songs (chap. 1: 17); and well chosen were those trees which represent creation's fairest produce. (1 Kings 4:33), and this earth's fertility (Isaiah 55:13) to adorn the home of Him to whom earth and creation alike owe their existence. " Carved with knops and open flowers," creation does its best to do Him honor; while the unseen stones tell us of beauty outwardly, and strength within (verse 18). As in the Tabernacle, so in the Temple, was there the holy of holies, the oracle, where the ark of the

covenant should have its place; but, unlike the wilderness habitation, no veil is here to shroud the glory of Jehovah, but merely a partition formed of doors of olive tree and chains of gold, with which most precious and lasting material the whole house was also covered. When we learn from Revelation 3:18 that gold signifies Divine righteousness, in contrast to human, wretchedness, the wondrous suitability of this is evident, as well becoming the house of the "righteous Lord," that "loveth righteousness" (Psalms 11:7). The unvarying accompaniments of the throne, the cherubims, come now into prominence, and their very material, like that of the doors, seems to tell us that the One in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen (2 Corinthians 1:20) is now enthroned in glory; they are made of olive trees (Romans 11:17). But the accomplishment of promises and triumph over the king's enemies ever go together (Luke 1:51-55; Luke 1:71-74), so we find the "palm trees" too brought in to tell of victory (Revelation 7:9); and what a beautiful combination must it have been when "all the walls of the throne round about" were carved with figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers within and without, and the floor was "overlaid with gold," and the doors of olive tree were adorned with "carvings of cherubim and palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid with gold," and the two folding doors of fir tree were "covered with gold fitted upon the carved work" (verse 29-31). How sweetly does it remind us that righteousness and promise, victory and creation's blessings, can now be blended together in perfect harmony.

Seven years was the house in building. Perfection in spiritual things gives a period to the formation of the house. How could it be otherwise with the work of such a Workman? But though first in order, and rightly so, was the House of the Lord built, there is yet another structure that occupies King Solomon; and though there may not have been the same energy in exercise as when the house of the Lord was in course of construction, yet in due time his own house was completed.

Next in order comes the house of the forest of Lebanon, with its porch of judgment, its pillars and its windows, denoting, doubtless, government characterized by firmness and perspicuity—ever the features of the throne of God. (Revelation 4:6-7.)

And, lastly, private affections have their place as well as public government; and Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had taken to wife (a bride culled from the world, for Egypt is ever a type of this world's glory), is not forgotten, and a house is erected specially for her who is the object of his love.

Durability, and that of the choicest kind, is evidenced in all these structures by "costly stones, according to the measures of hewed stones sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping.... stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits." And now we pass from the various (beautiful in their variety) structures themselves, to their internal fittings and arrangements. And first in order come the "two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece," with their "two chapters of molten brass," and "nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain work," and these adorned "with pomegranates," and "lily work." And these were erected in the porch of the temple, or house of the Lord; and when erected, duly entitled, "He will establish," and "In him is strength."

How eloquently do these, standing as they do at the entrance to the dwelling of the "Most High, possessor of heaven and earth," tell of the power and stability of the throne of Him who governs man righteously, yet inseparably from graciousness. And this again consistently with the purity of

His nature. The brass, the pomegranates, and lily work are blended together in perfect unison.

If the pillars bear witness to the power and stability of the throne, the sea, which comes next in order, testifies to the holiness of Him who sits upon it. And though the oxen with their faces every way, may tell us of the patience that bears with evil throughout the universe (Matthew 5:45), yet "the brim thereof... wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies," and the "bases of brass," with their "borders" of lions, and oxen, and cherubim, and the "wheels," and the "ledges... graved with cherubims, lions, and palm trees," most assuredly remind us of the purity found to perfection in Him-His righteousness, that demands it from those who approach Him-His power in dealing with those who disregard it-His government in favor of the righteous, and against the wicked-the rapidity with which he carries out his purposes, and the victory that must follow when He has taken in hand the case. The lavers, the shovels and the basins, conclude the work of this widow's son of Naphtali, whose father was a man of Tire, a simple figure of Jew and Gentile. But of what inferior order was his work to that of Solomon, for it is not without a purpose that the Spirit of God has recorded that Solomon built the house of the Lord-His own house-the house of the forest of Lebanon, and even that of Pharaoh's daughter; to Hiram were entrusted the lesser work of pillars, sea, lavers, basins, shovels. Cast of "bright brass" they might be, and without weight, but no one but Solomon must build the house or construct the vessels of gold that remain yet to be spoken of. For the house of the Lord were they, and of material suited to His glory. The altar, the table for the shewbread, the candlesticks, with their suited flowers, lamps and tongs, the bowls, the snuffers, the basins, the spoons, the censers, even to the hinges for the doors, were all to be of gold, and all to be the work of Solomon. How careful of His glory is the God who has thus recorded with minutest accuracy the material and structure of everything that He has ordained to surround Himself, from the house to the hinges of the doors!

Let us now turn to the Book of 2 Chronicles, chap. 2. At once the difference strikes one. " Solomon determined to build an house for the name of the Lord, and an house for his kingdom." It is not so much the person of the dweller that is here before us as the dominions of the King-the earthly kingdom rather than the heavenly home. And this differ-once is manifest throughout. In Kings no site hi named; in Chronicles, the Mount Moriah at Jerusalem is special{ designated as the place of the Lord's selection. And yet King Solomon takes an interest in it, and built it, seeing it is for Jehovah, sweetly reminding us of Christ attention to His Father's interests, whether heavenly or earthly. It has its glory too, " garnished with precious stones for beauty, and the gold was gold of Parvaim (ch. 3:6); but yet "the wail" is there (verse 14), telling of distance and imperfect access to the throne. The altar, too, brass (chap. 4:1), the lavers wherein to wash the offering in the sea for the priests to wash in (verse 6), remind us that we are not by any means on the same exalted ground we have already gone over from the Book of Kings; for whatever the privileges of the earthly subjects of the millennial throne of the Son of Man, they can in no way be compared to the higher order of privilege accorded to the heavenly saint.

I must leave the reader to draw his own conclusion from the comparison of these two accounts, merely adding a word as to the typical import of the various buildings all other Scriptures would seem to unfold them to us. As we have observed, in Kings we have rather the public government of Israel; in Chronicles, God's ways in grace; but in the former, types of heavenly things; in the latter, types of earthly ones. This, by attentive study, can be easily ascertained. May we not then expect in the one the heavenly glory I the Father and the Son to be set before us; in the latter the

earthly glory of the Son of Man.. The house of the Lord, with its chambers, may surely tell us of the Father's house with many mansions (John 14:2) There He dwells in the atmosphere of love peculiarly His own. The love of His Son has formed this place for Him and not only for Him, but for those whom the same love has been pleased to gather around Himself-the companions of His glory, the sharers of His home. He has His own peculiar home, but immediately grouped around Him are the "chambers," the "place" that the Son has gone to prepare for us. But the Son, as well as the Father, has His own peculiar glory; as "Son over his own house" (Hebrews 3:6), the droll of His interests, the sphere of His attentions. He thinks of us, He cares for us, He meets our every need; and in connection with this peculiar place, this place of special preciousness to us, He builds "His own" house. But more than this, there is the house of the forest of Lebanon, with its porch of judgment, reminding us that public sway will be the portion of Him to whom every knee shall yet bow and every tongue confess. From the heavens He must reign till He hath put all things under Him (1 Corinthians 15:25-27). It therefore tells us of the glory of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And lastly, this fourfold picture is completed by the house of Pharaoh's daughter, telling us that whatever may be the joys of the Father's home, the sense of the care of Him who rules over His own house, the grandeur of the time when saints will follow in the train of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Bridegroom still will not permit the Bride to forget His precious love, that love that proved its fullest measure when He gave Himself that He might sanctify, having cleansed her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. Truly this is love, "strong as death," that "many waters cannot quench."

It remains but to notice the scene of His earthly rule, the house of His kingdom. Jerusalem will yet be the throne of the Lord. Represented there, no doubt, He will be by the Prince of the house of David, but the earthly Jerusalem will be the scene of His government as the heavenly one will be that of His grace and glory.

How happy to have one's portion there!

D. T. G.

S. Was Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper?

Was Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper?

Few will deny that the descent of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:1-47) was the commencement of the Church of God, builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. Most will admit that 1 Corinthians 11:23-34 contains an entirely new revelation as to the Lord's Supper for the Church of God, given to the Apostle Paul, because the truth of the Church was first revealed to him. None can refuse the truth that 1 Corinthians 10:17, and ch. 5:11, effectually exclude such as Judas from the Lord's Table; seeing, that on the one hand to members of the body only (those whose bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost) belongs the one loaf; and on the other, communion with a "covetous" man, if "called a brother," is carefully guarded against and forbidden. But even to those who assent to these facts it will not be without interest to inquire whether the traitor was really at the table when the Lord gave the bread and the cup to His disciples in remembrance of Him.

Matthew 26:17-25 gives us the account of the celebration of the Paschal Feast, the announcement of the fact that the traitor was there, and the Lord's assent to the question of Judas, indicating that he was the guilty one. Mark 14:12-21 substantiates this, omitting the latter clause. John 13:1-30 confirms it, adding the fact, which the others omit, that Judas goes out immediately on receiving the sop, and omitting (in character with his gospel) what Matthew and Mark mention, the new supper in remembrance of Him. In their gospels it clearly comes in after the departure of Judas (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26).

Now let us turn to Luke 22:1-71, and here 5: 21 presents an apparent, but not an insuperable difficulty.

It is now generally admitted that Mark and John alone preserve the historic order, the order of time-Matthew grouping events together to present a dispensational, while Luke does so to give a moral picture. Let us read vv. 19, 20, parenthetically (and in this those who have arranged the paragraphs have assisted us), and the difficulty vanishes; 5: 21 connects itself with 5: 18, the order of time becomes the same as that of the other Evangelists, and Judas is found to have no place at the last supper, though his "hand was" on the table "when the Passover was being celebrated. The Late D. T. G.

[These remarks of one who has "gone before" will be read with interest by many, as an inquiry in measure into the question at head of paper, and often proposed. They are not dogmatic, nor are they put forth as such.-Ed. W. of T.]

S. Worship.

Worship.

John 12:1-2.

Abridged D. T. Grimston in "Words of Truth," 1871.

She came not to hear a sermon although the first of teachers was there; nor to sit at His feet and hear His word (Luke 10:39). She came not to make her requests known to Him; time was when in deepest submission to His will she had fallen at His feet, saying, "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died" (John 11:32). Nor to pour out her supplications to Him was now her thought, for her brother was seated at the table. She came not to meet the saints though precious saints were there, for "Jesus loved Martha . . . and Lazarus." Fellowship with them was blessed and of frequent occurrence, but that was not her object now. She came not after the weariness of a week's battling with the world to be refreshed from Him, though like every saint she had learned the trials of the wilderness, and knew the blessed springs of refreshment in Him. But she came at the moment when the world was expressing deepest hatred of Him to pour out what she had treasured up, the most valuable thing she had on earth, upon the person of the One Whose love had made her heart captive and absorbed her affections. "Jesus only" filled her soul; her heart beat true to Him, and she "anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair." Adoration, homage, worship, blessing was her thought in honour of the One who was all in all to her. Surely such worship refreshed Him! The unspiritual might murmur, but He upheld her cause and appreciated the grateful tribute of a heart that knew His worth and preciousness. Thus a lasting record is preserved of what worship really is! If every eye were on the Lord alone, every heart true to Him, each determined to see "no man save Jesus only," what full praise there would be. Not with alabaster boxes now, but our bodies filled with the Holy Ghost, a stream of thanksgiving and highest worship would ascend in honour of the blessed One who now adorns the glory, as He once adorned the earth. Be it ours thus to worship Him in Spirit and in truth.

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